

# Londonderry Times

January 29, 2026 ♦ Volume 28 – Issue 4

A FREE Weekly Publication



The town has lost another family-owned farm. The family of Elwood Orchards recently announced the farm's closing on social media.

Photo by Chris Paul

## Elwood Orchards Closes, Leaving Legacy and Uncertainty

CHRIS PAUL  
LONDONDERRY TIMES

After more than a century as one of Londonderry's most beloved agricultural landmarks, Elwood Orchards has closed its doors, ending a 115-year tradition that shaped the town's identity and created memories for generations of local families.

The announcement came directly from the Elwood family, who shared their gratitude with the community and reflected on

the thousands of visitors who made the orchard part of their annual traditions. They spoke of the laughter in the corn maze, the couples who returned year after year because the maze had been their first date, and the families who came back each fall to pick apples and take photos among the trees. "We have wonderful memories and we thank you for that," the family wrote.

Elwood Orchards began in **continued on page 8**

## Proposed School Budget Under Default as Plan Gets Finalized

ALEX MALM  
LONDONDERRY TIMES

The Londonderry School Board voted to send its proposed operating budget to the Deliberative Session after holding its annual public hearing, finalizing a spending plan that - unusually - comes in below the district's Default Budget.

After amendments, the proposed FY27 operating budget stands at \$94,960,409, down from the original draft of \$95,176,009 presented at the start of the budget season. If voters reject the proposal in March, the Default Budget of

\$95,234,013 would take effect instead.

Superintendent Dan Black noted earlier in the process that the district intentionally crafted a proposed budget lower than the default, despite overall cost pressures.

"The budget is up by nearly \$4 million," Black said at the outset of budget season, explaining that the district worked to keep the proposed plan as lean as possible.

Tax Rate Impact Slightly Lower Than Default

If approved, the proposed operating budget

would result in an estimated FY27 tax rate of \$9.87, an increase of 52 cents over FY26, or 5.51%. The Default Budget would raise the tax rate slightly higher, to \$9.89, a 53cent increase, or 5.68%.

Black emphasized that while both budgets reflect unavoidable cost increases, the proposed budget offers the lower tax impact.

Drivers of the Increase: Benefits, Salaries, and Pupil Services

During the public hearing, Black outlined the major factors contributing to the year **continued on page 8**

## Legal Expenses on Library Investigation Strains Budget

ALEX MALM  
LONDONDERRY TIMES

The Londonderry Town Council spent part of its Jan. 21 meeting discussing how to handle potential legal expenses tied to an investigation involving the Leach Library - a cost that Town Manager Shaun Mulholland warned could strain the municipal budget if not addressed proactively.

Mulholland told the Council he had been in email communication with Library Trustees Chair Liz Thomas, who informed him that the Library had received a complaint requiring a

formal investigation. The Town Attorney, he said, advised that the matter must be investigated, but insurance will not cover the cost.

"The Library has to have an investigation that needs to occur," Mulholland said. "It's unclear who's going to pay for that."

Because the expense cannot be submitted to the Town's insurance carrier, Mulholland explained that the cost will need to be absorbed either by the Library or by the Town. If the Town pays, he said, the money will have to come from within the existing operating budget.

"If it comes from the Town side of the budget, then we have to make budget reductions elsewhere," he said.

Mulholland noted that under the Town's draft financial policy - which has not yet been finalized or voted on - he is required to notify the Council when unexpected legal expenses arise.

**continued on page 2**

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# Town Council Split on HR Warrant Articles as Staffing Needs Come Into Focus

ALEX MALM  
LONDONDERRY TIMES

Two warrant articles aimed at expanding staffing within Londonderry's Human Resources Department will move forward to the Deliberative Session, but both advanced without the support of a majority of the Town Council after a divided vote at last week's public hearing.

The proposals come at a time when the Town is facing increasing administrative demands, a growing workforce, and heightened expectations around employee vetting, investigations, and benefits management. Human Resources Director Tara Koza and Town Manager Shaun Mulholland both argued that the department is stretched thin and needs additional support to function effectively.

## PartTime HR Assistant Proposal Draws Mixed Reactions

The first warrant article asks voters whether they support adding a parttime human resources assistant "to provide support to the Human Resources Department through essential administrative support tasks." If approved, the position - and its funding - would become part of both the operating and default budgets in future years.

The proposed cost is \$44,812, with an estimated tax rate impact of \$0.006.

Mulholland said the position is needed to help manage the growing workload associated with benefits administration, which includes both current employees and a sizable retiree population.

"This is a huge issue -

we have retirees who we manage for plus the existing workforce we have," Mulholland said, noting that benefits management has become increasingly complex.

Koza told the Council that she and the HR Administrator are spending a significant amount of time on administrative tasks that could be delegated to support staff. Freeing up that time, she said, would allow the department to focus on higherlevel responsibilities such as policy development, employee relations, and longterm planning.

Despite the department's concerns, the Town Council voted 2-3 against recommending the article. Councilor Ted Combes and Vice Chair Shawn Faber supported recommending it, while the remaining

members opposed.

## Second Article Seeks HR Specialist for Investigations and Background Checks

The second warrant article proposes creating a parttime human resources specialist at a cost of \$58,218. According to the warrant language, the position would "assist with the tasks necessary to conduct workplace accident investigations, employee background investigations, and internal investigations."

Like the first article, the position would become part of both the operating and default budgets if approved by voters.

Mulholland told the Council that the Town currently lacks a consistent process for background checks outside of the Police Department.

"We do not do that

for anybody else, any other employee of the Town," he said.

He stressed the importance of thorough vetting, noting that discovering issues after hiring can be costly and difficult to resolve.

"There are consequences to not vetting people, and it's costly," Mulholland said.

He also pointed out that having an inhouse staffer trained to conduct internal investigations could save money by reducing the need to hire outside firms. The specialist, he said, could handle routine investigations at a significantly lower cost than an external investigator.

As with the first article, the Council voted 2-3 against recommending the proposal, with Faber and Combes again in support.

Next Steps Ahead of

## Deliberative Session

Both warrant articles will now move to the Deliberative Session, where residents will have the opportunity to debate, amend, and ultimately decide whether the positions should be added to the Town's staffing structure.

The split vote underscores an ongoing tension between the Town's growing administrative needs and the Council's concerns about long-term budget impacts. Supporters argue that the HR Department is understaffed and that failing to invest now could lead to higher costs later. Opponents expressed hesitation about adding recurring positions without clearer longterm projections.

Voters will have the final say when the articles appear on the March ballot.

## Library

Continued from page 1  
"So I'm giving you a heads up in accordance with the new policy," he said.

Council Vice Chair Shawn Faber suggested that Mulholland prepare a memo clarifying what legal services are auth-

orized and what falls outside the scope of prior approvals. He said the Council wants to avoid a situation where legal bills accumulate without explicit authorization.

Councilor Dan Bouchard argued that the Library should carry its own legal line within its

budget. Mulholland responded that the challenge is the unpredictability of the cost.

"The only problem with that is what number would you put in there," he said, noting that investigations can vary widely in scope and expense.

Mulholland empha-

sized that choosing not to investigate would be a mistake, warning that failing to address the issue could expose the Town and the Library to greater financial and legal risk.

"The fear is that they decide not to investigate it," he said. "And if they don't, it will cost them a significant amount more money."

Instead, Mulholland said he prefers to work collaboratively with the Library Trustees to manage the process and keep costs down. "They need to address these issues," he said.

He also acknowl-

edged that the Town's legal budget will exceed its current allocation regardless of how the Library matter is handled. "Either way, we are going to be over the legal line in the budget," he said, adding that cuts will be required elsewhere to maintain a balanced budget.

Thomas told the Council that when the Library received the complaint, they immediately brought it to the Town Attorney, who advised that an investigation was necessary. She said the investigator being considered was recommended through

the Town and that the Trustees are committed to minimizing expenses.

"We're doing everything we can to keep the cost down," Thomas said.

She also noted that the Library is expected to come in under budget for the fiscal year, which will help offset some of the legal costs. A formal quote for the investigation is expected soon.

After discussion, the Town Council agreed to have Mulholland work directly with the Library Trustees as the investigation proceeds, with the goal of managing the process efficiently and transparently.

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# Town Council Backs Both Fire Department Staffing Warrant Articles

ALEX MALM  
LONDONDERRY TIMES

The Londonderry Town Council voted unanimously last weekend to recommend two warrant articles aimed at strengthening the Fire Department's staffing and administrative capacity. The 5-0 vote followed a public hearing in which Town Manager Shaun Mulholland and Acting Fire Chief Phil LeBlanc outlined the department's growing operational demands and the strain placed on existing personnel.

Mulholland told the Council that despite being one of the largest fire departments in New

Hampshire, Londonderry's Fire Department currently operates with no dedicated administrative support, forcing commandlevel staff to perform clerical and logistical tasks that take time away from managing emergency operations.

Warrant Article Seeks Executive Assistant for Fire Department

The first warrant article proposes funding a Fire Department Executive Assistant at a total cost of \$143,303, with an estimated tax rate impact of \$0.019 in FY27.

"You're looking at the administrative assistant," Acting Fire Chief Phil LeBlanc said, emphasizing

that the position is not a luxury but a necessity.

Mulholland explained that the department is currently paying commandlevel employees to perform administrative work that should be handled by support staff.

"I think it's appropriate that we hire the right staff for the right size of the workforce to be able to do that work," Mulholland said.

He noted that LeBlanc, as Acting Chief, spends four hours per week processing payroll using an outdated system - time that should be spent overseeing operations, personnel, and emergency readiness.

Mulholland also pointed out that when members of the public

visit the station, telecommunications staff must leave their posts to greet them at the counter, creating unnecessary disruptions in emergency communications.

LeBlanc said that as Deputy Chief, and now Acting Chief, he has been handling most of the administrative workload himself, on top of his operational responsibilities.

By adding an executive assistant, he said, the department could finally address long-delayed priorities such as updating policies and procedures, improving internal systems, and pursuing grant funding - tasks he currently has little time to complete.

Second Article Proposes FullTime Fire Training Officer

The second warrant article seeks to add a fulltime fire training officer, with two cost scenarios presented during the hearing:

- \$143,303 with a tax rate impact of \$0.019, and

- \$173,226 with a tax rate impact of \$0.023, depending on final classification and benefits.

LeBlanc stressed that the training officer is one of the most critical positions the department needs, especially given the department's relatively young workforce.

"They already have a dangerous job, and with a young force, they don't all know how dangerous the job can be," LeBlanc said. "We want to create a better training program."

Currently, a Battalion Chief oversees training, but that officer also performs shift work and is responsible for commanding emergencies in town. The dual role, LeBlanc said, is unus-

tainable.

During the meeting, he noted that the department was juggling two active calls simultaneously, illustrating how difficult it is for command staff to balance emergency response with training responsibilities.

A dedicated training officer, he said, would not only improve firefighter readiness and safety but would also be available to assist on calls when needed.

Council Unanimous in Support

After hearing the presentations, the Town Council voted 5-0 to recommend both warrant articles, signaling strong support for the department's staffing needs.

The articles will now move to the Deliberative Session, where residents will have the opportunity to discuss, amend, and ultimately decide whether to approve the positions for the March ballot.

## OBITUARY

### J. Porter Starratt



J. Porter Starratt, 92, of Nashua, NH, and formerly of Londonderry and Windham, NH, passed away peacefully on Monday, Jan. 12, 2026, in Nashua. He was born on Nov. 29, 1933, in Needham, MA.

Porter was the beloved son of the late Ernest W. Starratt and Thelma (Porter) Starratt. He was also predeceased by his sister, Barbara Graham, and his brother, Ernest Starratt.

A proud graduate of Boston English High School, Porter went on to earn his degree from Boston College as a member of the Class of 1961. Prior to his college years, he honorably served in the United States Army, a commitment he carried with pride throughout his life. In 2011, he was especially honored to receive his Golden Eagle from Boston College, a recognition that meant a great deal to him.

Porter enjoyed a long and successful career as a purchasing manager, working in both Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Known for his strong work ethic and integrity, he was respected by colleagues and friends alike.

For 62 years, Porter was the devoted husband of Mary (Burke) Starratt. Together they built a loving family that was the greatest source of pride and joy in his life. He was a cherished father to Sue McClarty; Amy Nelson and her husband, Bob Nelson; and Jeffrey Starratt and his wife, Millie. He was a proud and loving grandfather to Michael McClarty; Brittany Farrar; Cory Nelson; and Olivia, Nolan, and Jack Starratt. He was also a devoted great-grandfather to Kingston, Cassius, and Kai Farrar.

Porter found joy in life's simple pleasures. He loved playing golf anywhere he could, especially at his favorite course, The International in Bolton. A lifelong lover of a good crossword puzzle, he rarely missed the chance to challenge his mind. He greatly enjoyed sea cruises, listening to Irish music, and, above all, spending time with his family.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Monday, Jan. 19, at St. Mark's Church, 1 South Rd., Londonderry, NH. All are asked to meet directly at the church. Burial will take place in the spring at Pillsbury Cemetery in Londonderry.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Wounded Warrior Project, P.O. Box 758516, Topeka, KS 66675, or online at [www.woundedwarriorproject.org](http://www.woundedwarriorproject.org), or to a charity of choice.

Courtesy of Dumont-Sullivan Funeral Homes & Cremation Service located at 50 Ferry St., Hudson.

## OBITUARY

### Paul George Sabbag



Paul George Sabbag, 74, of Londonderry, NH, died Sunday, Jan. 18, 2026, in Catholic Medical Center, Manchester, NH. He was born on May 3, 1951 in Brookline, MA, a son of George and Mary (Garozza) Sabbag.

He is survived by his loving wife, Suzanne (Hines) Sabbag of Londonderry; son, Derek Sabbag and wife Rebecca of Londonderry; daughter, Jade Sabbag and significant other Chris DeMattia of Londonderry; two brothers, Russell Sabbag and wife Angela of Georgetown, MA, Joseph Sabbag and wife Francine of FL; as well as several nieces, nephews and extended family members.

Calling hours were held on Thursday, Jan. 22, in the Peabody Funeral Homes & Crematorium, 290 Mammoth Rd., Londonderry. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to The Great Dog Rescue of New England at <https://gdrne.com>.

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# Editorial

## A Community Without a Newspaper Loses Its Voice

In a time when information moves faster than ever, it has never been harder for residents to know what is true, what is rumor, and what actually affects their daily lives. That's why local newspapers remain essential. Not nostalgic, not optional - essential.

Every week, we sit through the meetings most people don't have the time or patience to attend. We read the budgets, the contracts, the warrant articles, and the legislative language that would make most people's eyes glaze over. We do this because someone has to. Someone has to translate government into plain English so residents can understand what's happening in their own backyard.

And right now, there is a lot happening.

In Concord, lawmakers have passed and proposed a series of bills that directly affect every town in NH - including Hudson and Londonderry. While many are framed as solutions to statewide challenges like housing, infrastructure, and public safety, they often override local authority. Zoning laws are being rewritten at the state level, including changes to minimum lot sizes, parking requirements, accessory dwelling rules, and development standards - often with little regard for the character or capacity of individual communities. Other bills shift responsibilities to towns without funding, such as new reporting mandates, enforcement duties, and administrative burdens tied to health insurance, education, and public records. These changes may be well-intentioned, but they leave local officials scrambling to implement policies they didn't create,

with resources they don't have.

Whether you support these changes or oppose them, the point is this: they matter, and residents deserve to understand them. A single sentence buried in a bill can reshape a neighborhood. A mandate from Concord can shift costs onto local taxpayers. A zoning change can alter traffic, density, and property values for decades.

This is exactly why local journalism exists.

A strong community needs a strong newspaper - one that's willing to read the fine print, ask the uncomfortable questions, and explain what legislation actually means for the people who live here. Social media won't do that. Rumors won't do that. National news certainly won't do that. Only a local newspaper has the mission, the proximity, and the accountability to tell the full story.

But a newspaper is also a local business. We rely on advertising to keep reporting free and accessible. When local businesses advertise, they aren't just promoting themselves - they're funding the watchdog work that keeps residents informed and investing in the civic health of the town.

And we rely on you, too. Your letters, your photos, your story tips - they shape the paper every week.

If you want a town where decisions are transparent and residents stay informed, then you need a local newspaper. And we're committed to being that newspaper for you.

A strong community doesn't happen by accident. It happens when people stay informed - and when they have a trusted source to help them do it.

# Letters

## Agencies Signed With ICE

To the editor,

Did you know that the following agencies have signed agreements with ICE, allowing their police to act as ICE agents? They include the NH State Police, four county sheriff's offices (Belknap, Grafton, Hillsborough, and Rockingham), and eight local police departments (Auburn, Candia, Carroll, Colebrook, Gorham, Ossipee, Pittsburg, and Troy).

Google the compensation for signing. It is better for you to read it with your own eyes, and you will see they have sold their souls for money. And is this what we would want in Londonderry? Especially now that we know they have been issuing administrative warrants to enter people's homes. This is against the law. A judge must issue a warrant based on cause to enter a person's home.

Please, Londonderry officials - don't sign with ICE.

Sincerely,  
Jane Cooper  
Londonderry

fully understand their disability because theirs isn't something I live with every day.

Where I'm going with this is that disability doesn't discriminate, it affects everyone no matter your age, race, politics, religion, etc. It just takes one wrong moment in your life for it to be forever changed.

After my injury while I was in and out of the hospital for multiple surgeries, a friend who was disabled at an earlier age told me "No one knows what you're going through unless it happens to them". He couldn't have been any more right with that comment.

So as we go through life be careful and keep in mind, if you suffer a life changing injury you just might get a visit from me while you're in rehab. I will talk with you, about you and your ability to do things as we can talk about me and mine. We have reached a common ground where nothing else matters except for getting better, living a meaningful life, social engagement, and the activities and assistance the organization I work for offers.

At the end of the day we all end up in the same place, so let's enjoy each other's company, celebrate life and leave a positive mark behind for the younger generations to embrace and thrive on.

If you can at least have the ability to see someone as you would like to be seen, you could try listening a little better and understand more.

"Your own soul is

nourished when you are kind; it is destroyed when you are cruel." Proverbs 11:17

Alan Roy  
Londonderry

## World Democracies Under Threat

To the editor,

This letter is based on Alan Dowd's article in the July 2025 issue of the American Legion Magazine. He stated, "a world without American leadership is a world out of order - and a world out of order is a threat to American interests". We must maintain our leadership role.

Communist China, Russia and North Korea pose threats to the U.S. and democracies around the world. Their Communist ideologies promote authoritarian rule by decree without any of the freedoms encompassed by democratic governments, especially freedom of speech, freedom of the press and freedom of assembly. They do not tolerate dissent, they investigate and prosecute their rivals and foes, and they rule by force and use their secret police and militaries to control their populations. They desire to impose their will by force in the world, e.g. Russia in Ukraine, China in the South China Sea, and North Korean vs. South Korea; and they are expanding their militaries. China now has more naval vessels than the United States.

European countries, Japan and Australia can provide some deterrence, but the United

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## Through Their Eyes

To the editor,

The disability of ability is something you can't see unless you experience what someone else is living through. I do a few hours a week working with disabled people. People who have been injured for years and newly injured people, and as a disabled person I know what some are experiencing. And there are some who I don't



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# Town Council Moves Forward With Town Clerk Benefits Warrant Article

ALEX MALM  
LONDONDERRY TIMES

The Town Council voted 3-2 to move forward a warrant article that would provide the elected Town Clerk with the same benefits offered to fulltime town employees. The article will now go before voters at the Deliberative Session. Councilor Dan Bouchard wanted to amend the article to have the cost on it. Councilor's Deb Paul and Dan voted against advancing the article with out a cost to it.

The proposed warrant article reads: "To see if the Town

will vote to begin providing benefits equivalent to those of a full-time employee to the elected Town Clerk position. Upon passing this article, the elected position of Town Clerk will be eligible for applicable benefits equal to a full-time Town employee starting July 1, 2026."

Town Manager Shaun Mulholland told the Council that Londonderry is the 9th largest community in NH, and the Town Clerk's responsibilities have grown significantly with the town's size. He said the position functions as a full-time job, regardless of how it is

currently classified.

Mulholland explained that, according to guidance from the NH Municipal Association, there are only two legal ways to provide benefits to an elected official:

1. Through a warrant article, approved annually by voters, or

2. By including the benefits directly in the operating budget, clearly identified for voters.

Mulholland said he reviewed benefit structures in other NH communities, including towns smaller than Londonderry, and found that only a few do not offer fulltime benefits to their

Town Clerk. Based on that review, he recommended the Council move the article forward.

Mulholland also referenced a 2014 warrant article that designated the Town Clerk as a part-time position. That article was part of a broader restructuring that eliminated the elected Tax Collector position and changed the Town Clerk to parttime .

Former Town Manager Kevin Smith, who served during that period, spoke during public comment to provide additional background. He said that prior to 2014, Londonderry had a full-

time Town Clerk with salary and benefits for many years.

Smith explained that when the Town Clerk resigned in 2013, the Town attempted to consolidate duties by having the Finance Director serve as both Finance Director and Town Clerk. At the time, the belief was that the Town Clerk role could be handled internally with a "figurehead clerk," while staff performed most of the day-today work.

"State law says you have to elect a clerk - you can't appoint one," Smith said. "I frankly think it should be changed to

allow the appointment of a clerk."

He added that the dualrole structure did not meet the needs of a growing community, and the Town eventually recognized that the Clerk's office required a dedicated, fulltime presence.

Smith told the Council he believes offering benefits is necessary to attract and retain qualified candidates in the future and voiced his support for the warrant article.

The warrant article will be debated and may be amended at the Deliberative Session, before appearing on the March ballot.

# NHDES's Emergency Drought Assistance Program Helps Residents

The NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) announces it will reopen a program to help low-income homeowners experiencing water supply issues resulting from the ongoing drought.

Nearly 250 residents have reported drywells causing insufficient drinking water in their homes. In response to these reports, the Drinking Water and Groundwater

Advisory Commission voted in November to approve a \$1,500,000 grant from the Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund (DWGTF) to re-establish the Emergency Drought Assistance Program (EDAP).

Following the driest summer on record, all of NH has been experiencing drought since August 2025. Neither short- or long-term precipitation outlooks indicate drou-

ght relief in the coming months.

Drilling a new bedrock well can be costly, creating a barrier for low-income households to access clean and safe drinking water when wells are dry. Depending on household income and size, EDAP will cover up to 100% of the total costs to mitigate drought impacts and provide reliable drinking water. Eligible costs

under the program include rehabilitation or replacement of a residential well that is dry from drought, or if feasible, the cost to connect the home to a nearby existing community water system.

To qualify applicants

must provide income information, and verification by a licensed NH well driller or pump installer that the well has experienced irreversible water supply issues due to drought. More information can be found on the EDAP website

www.dwgtf.des.nh.gov. Private well-owners are encouraged to self-screen eligibility using the income limits provided in the application.

For more information, email edap@des.nh.gov or call Marysa Boire at (603) 271-1355.

## Letters

Continued from page 4

States is the only country capable of deterring China and Russia. We are the guardian of democracy in the world

and have to continue to provide the leadership to prevent Communist expansionism and the possibility of WWII.

Venezuela and Cuba must be carefully monitored for their disrupt-

ive activities and thwarted from conducting any expansionism. Iran must also be deterred from its aggressiveness in the Middle East.

Donald Moskowitz  
Londonderry



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# Two Meeting House Warrant Articles Advance to Deliberative Session

ALEX MALM  
LONDONDERRY TIMES

Two warrant articles concerning the Reverend Morrison Meeting House have advanced to the Deliberative Session.

One article asks voters whether they will approve a bond of up to \$3,381,000 “for the purpose of renovating the Town-owned Reverend Morrison Meeting House.”

In a memo, Town Manager Shaun Mulholland explained that “ReArch Construction provided cost estimates for the renovation of the building on Dec. 15, 2025, at the request of the Town Manager.”

“The estimated cost

of the renovations, if work began in June of 2026, is \$3,380,551,” he wrote. “The renovation would result in the building being compliant with building and energy codes. The work would also result in the building being ADA compliant on the first floor only, and a fire suppression system would be installed to meet life safety code requirements. The second floor would not be ADA accessible and would not be completely renovated.”

The second article is a citizen petition warrant article that asks: “To see if the Town will vote to establish a Reverend Morrison Meeting

House/Lions Hall Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of reopening and/or maintaining the building and surrounding facilities as a community public event/multi-use center.”

The article proposes \$950,000 in funding, with half coming from taxes and half from the unassigned fund balance.

Former Town Councilor John Farrell, representing the Londonderry Historical Society, which submitted the petition article, said there were misunderstandings about the two proposals and emphasized that they are fundamen-

tally different.

Farrell explained that the bond article is intended to open the building, while the petition article would create a capital reserve fund. He said the Historical Society’s goal is to save the building, noting that reopening it could be a multiyear process.

Farrell warned that if the bond doesn’t pass, the building may not survive. He noted that the bond requires a 60% majority to pass, while the citizen petition article only needs a simple majority.

Resident Ann Chiampa said her priority is to see the building re-

opened. She also suggested exploring grant opportunities, such as those offered by the NH Preservation Alliance, to help reduce costs.

A concern raised was whether the building’s original character could be preserved. Kevin Magee of ReArch Construction said they intend to keep it “as original as possible within the code.”

Town Council Vice Chair Shawn Faber noted that the future of the building has been discussed for years, including through a dedicated committee.

“We still didn’t have an answer,” he said.

Faber added that the

Council felt compelled to act before the building deteriorates further and worked to keep the renovation cost as low as possible while still making it usable.

Councilor Dan Bouchard emphasized that the bond amount represents the maximum they can borrow and that the final cost could be lower if grants or donations are secured.

The Council voted 2-2-1 on whether to recommend the bond article, while the Budget Committee voted 0-5-2. On the citizen petition article, the Council voted 1-3-1, and the Budget Committee voted 0-7.

# Progress Reported on Plan for Greater Residential Composting

PAUL CONYERS  
LONDONDERRY TIMES

The January meeting of the Utilities Committee had several updates from its solid waste subcommittee, including progress on a more comprehensive composting plan for the town.

“We’re pursuing a threetiered strategy to encourage composting,” outlined subcommittee chair John Mahon. “Joy Muller, who’s not here tonight, is researching

home composting equipment. We have some agreement from the Town Manager to help us fund that from one of his budget lines, to at least subsidize that, and allow folks who want to do home composting to purchase equipment at a reduced rate.”

For residents interested in composting but lacking the space or time for home equipment, the subcommittee is also exploring expanded drop-off sites and residential compost pickup options.

“Renewal Compost does residential compost pickup,” said Mahon. “The program is pretty easy. There’s a \$10 start-up fee, and after that I believe it’s \$21 per month for twice permonth pickups. He gives you a bucket with a lid you put out on the curb once every two weeks, and in the spring, he’ll give you a nice big bag of compost for your gardens.”

The town’s goal in expanding composting is to reduce the amount of material going into local landfills.

Cable and Internet subcommittee chair John Ferreira also reported that “upgrades” to related infrastructure are expected to continue throughout Londonderry.

“I have asked, but have not been told what those ‘upgrades’ consist

of,” said Ferreira, who has continued testing Internet connectivity and speed following issues with Xfinity in some neighborhoods. “I need to try to call the district manager again to see if they’ll help us here.”

He cited that issues related to the town’s expanded water system remained a higher priority. As outreach continued to be a challenge, committee member Mike Speltz suggested involving interested students at Londonderry High School.

“I think it’s vitally important that the young people are included in the discussion about these critical issues,” said Speltz.

Other members of the Utilities Committee expressed support.

“I like getting stu-

dents involved,” said Chair Martha Smith.

Members discussed the possibility of creating a student liaison type role, allowing interested students to participate in a limited capacity. There were, however, restrictions preventing

students from fully joining the committee.

“I don’t think they necessarily have to be a member of the committee. I just want them to be involved, and I want them to take the information home to their parents,” said Speltz.

## OBITUARY

### Patricia “Pat” J. Bannister



Patricia “Pat” J. Bannister, 80, of Londonderry, NH, passed away Tuesday Jan. 13, 2026 in the Elliot Hospital, Manchester, NH with her family by her side. She was born on July 9, 1945 in Arlington, MA, a daughter of the late Peter and Constance (Cagiano) Schultz, and had been a resident of Londonderry for over 50 years, formerly living in MA.

She is survived by three sons, Mark Bannister of Londonderry, Cory Bannister of Derry, and William Bannister of MA; one daughter, Faith Higgins Bannister of Derry; many loving grandchildren; and her brother, Greg Schultz of CA. She was predeceased by her husband, George Bannister in 2022, son, George Bannister in 2021 and her brother, Pete Schultz.

Patricia was an active member of her community throughout her adult life, having been a faithful member of Saint Jude’s Parish in Londonderry for many years. There, she was involved in the Women’s Guild and Quilter’s group, communities she held dear to her. Patricia was a talented quilter and cook, and her family will cherish the beautiful quilts and delicious recipes she has left for them. Patricia was always quick to lend a helping hand, make a meal, or support those around her in whatever way they needed. She will be remembered by those close to her as a generous, loving woman who always sought to care for others.

A calling hours were held on Monday, Jan. 19 in the Peabody Funeral Homes and Crematorium. A funeral service followed in the funeral home. A graveside service was held on Wednesday, Jan. 21 in the chapel of the NH State Veterans Cemetery, 110 Daniel Webster Hwy., Boscawen, NH.

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# Strong Community Support Extends Trial Food Pantry at Leach Library

PAUL CONYERS  
LONDONDERRY TIMES

The Leach Library Board of Trustees received an anonymous donation of five \$30 Market Basket gift cards at its January meeting, intended to support the library's recently launched food pantry.

"It's five \$30 Market Basket gift cards, totaling \$150. They were specifically to be used for the food pantry," explained outgoing Library Director Erin Matlin. "I will ask the Board how they would like us to use them. Would they like us to purchase items to restock the pantry?"

Board Treasurer Jan

McLaughlin suggested reserving the cards for items that are harder to keep on hand.

"One suggestion would be to hold them aside and provide them to people who express a need for additional protein or something they can't get here," she said.

However, trustees noted the challenge of determining who should receive "specialized" purchases without creating the appearance of favoritism.

"I'm sure there are some very needy people out there," said Trustee Chair Liz Thomas. "The question is, how do we find those people? Who

deserves it more than someone else? At this point, if there are items in our pantry that are low - like vegetables or canned meat - we might be better off using the cards to restock those, and people can take what they need."

The Board ultimately agreed to use the gift cards as needed to support the pantry.

Matlin praised the pantry's success since its launch two months ago.

"We have a very generous community that's been donating. It's well stocked," she said. "I trust my staff to be aware and do the right

thing."

Originally, the pantry was scheduled to run only through January, but Matlin recommended keeping it open due to steady use and strong community support.

"I think the food pantry is doing exactly what I hoped it would do," she said. "It's a place where people can come and take what they need at convenient hours. I think it would benefit the Board to continue it until an issue arises or until it's no longer needed. Some people count on coming here regularly."

Breakfast items have been especially popular.

"If it's not a burden to the library or the staff, it works," Thomas added.

After brief discussion, the Board voted to continue the food pantry indefinitely, "until an issue arises."

The pantry wasn't the only successful initiative this season. The library's Holiday Gift Sale, which ran from Oct. 27 to Jan. 5, raised \$2,783.50 - just shy of its \$3,000 goal.

"This is our second year doing it," Matlin said. "We pick out the best of the best from patron donations - puzzles, books, DVDs - and sell them individually or in bundles. Last year we

raised \$1,997, so we did really well this year. I want to thank our staff member Kelly, who did an amazing job keeping everything stocked."

Trustees praised the sale, noting they purchased items themselves for family and classroom use.

"I think it's a great success, and I hope it continues after I leave," Matlin said. "Our patrons really value it."

The next regular meeting of the Leach Library Board of Trustees is set for Wednesday, Feb. 4, at 7 p.m. in the Leach Library Meeting Room.

# School Board Recommends Various Warrant Articles

ALEX MALM  
LONDONDERRY TIMES

The School Board voted unanimously during its recent public hearing to recommend several warrant articles that will appear on the March ballot. The articles focus on long-term planning and financial stability, with an emphasis on maintaining district facilities, upgrading technology, and ensuring the district has the equipment and vehicles it needs in the coming years.

Board members noted that many of the capital reserve funds were created specifically to avoid large, unpredictable spikes in the tax rate by allowing the district to save gradually for major expenses. Several of the articles also rely on the yearend fund bal-

ance rather than new taxation, a point highlighted during the hearing.

Article 8 - Buildings and Grounds Capital Reserve Fund, which asks voters to approve placing \$670,000 into the District-Wide Buildings and Grounds Capital Reserve Fund, established in 2021. The fund supports a wide range of needs, including maintenance, construction, renovations, improvements, and professional services related to all district buildings, fields, and infrastructure.

The article specifies that up to \$150,000 of the total would come from the June 30, 2026 fund balance, with the remaining amount raised through taxation. The estimated tax rate impact is eight cents.

District officials em-

phasized that the fund helps address aging facilities and ensures the district can respond quickly to unexpected building needs without relying on emergency appropriations.

Article 9 - District Technology Network Infrastructure Capital Reserve Fund

The Board also recommended Article 9, which would add \$125,000 to the Technology Network Infrastructure Capital Reserve Fund. Created in 2019, the fund supports the district's network backbone - including routers, wiring, switches, access points, wireless upgrades, and other hardware or software essential to maintaining reliable connectivity.

The estimated tax rate impact is two cents.

Administrators noted that technology demands continue to grow each year, and the fund allows the district to replace aging equipment and keep pace with security and performance requirements.

Article 10 - Equipment Capital Reserve Fund

Article 10 proposes transferring up to \$100,000 into the Equipment Capital Reserve Fund, established in 2013. The fund covers ongoing purchases of classroom furniture, technology, maintenance tools, and other minor equipment

used throughout the district.

The full amount would come from the June 30, 2026 fund balance, meaning no tax impact for voters.

Board members said the fund helps the district avoid deferring small but necessary purchases that keep classrooms and facilities functioning smoothly.

Article 11 - Vehicle and Machinery Capital Reserve Fund

The final recommended article, Article 11, asks voters to approve placing up to \$37,350 into the Vehicle and

Machinery Capital Reserve Fund, created in 2020. The fund supports the purchase of district vehicles and machinery, such as maintenance trucks, plows, and grounds equipment.

As with Article 10, the entire amount would come from the June 30, 2026 fund balance, resulting in no tax impact.

The Board noted that maintaining a reliable fleet is essential for daily operations, especially during winter months when snow removal and grounds maintenance are critical.



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# Elwood Ochards

**continued from page 1**  
 1910, when a young Wayland H. Elwood, just 12 years old, took responsibility for the family farm. Over the decades, he expanded the orchards and built a reputation for quality produce and warm hospitality. Wayland worked the land for nearly a century before passing away in 2012 at age 96, leaving the operation to his sons, Wayne and Wayland Jr., who

continued the business and added the popular corn maze that became a regional attraction. For 115 years, the orchard stood as a symbol of Londonderry's agricultural heritage, drawing visitors from across New England.

While the orchard itself has not been publicly listed as sold, the Elwood family did sell a portion of their land in 2022. The Town of Lon-

donderry purchased 54 acres off Nashua Road - property the family had owned since 1949- for \$1.5 million. That parcel was acquired for conservation, agriculture, and recreation purposes and remains protected open space. As of now, no public land records indicate that the main orchard property on Elwood Road has changed hands, and the family has not announced a buyer or future plans for the site.

The future of the orchard property remains uncertain, but several possibilities exist based on zoning and town precedent. Londonderry has a strong history of preserving farmland, and a conservation purchase is one potential outcome, which would protect the land as open space or agricultural use. Another possibility is that a new owner could continue farming operations, as the prop-

erty is already equipped for orchards, picky-ourown activities, and seasonal events. Residential development is also possible, depending on zoning and soil conditions, though the town has historically resisted converting prime agricultural land into dense housing. The land could also support a mix of agricultural and recreational uses, such as trails, community gardens, or educational programs.

For now, the community is left with memories of fall afternoons spent wandering the maze, picking apples, and watching the seasons change across the orchard's rolling fields. The closing of Elwood Orchards marks the end of an era in Londonderry, but the legacy of the Elwood family - and the joy their farm brought to generations - will remain part of the town's story long after the last apple has been picked.

# School Budget

**continued from page 1**  
 over year increase:

- Health benefits: up \$2,366,781
- Salaries: up \$1,125,014
- Pupil services: up \$145,255

He noted that the district continues to respond to declining enrollment by adjusting staffing through retirements and natural attrition.

"We look for cost-saving opportunities without sacrificing too great-

ly what we offer to our students and the community," Black said. "We time personnel changes to our program around known retirements and known natural attrition with staff."

Heading into the hearing, the district had already reduced personnel costs by \$558,000 compared to last year's approved budget.

Students Advocate for Library Assistants

One of the most notable moments of the

hearing came when several students spoke in support of restoring funding for library assistants, which had been slated for removal. The cost to reinstate the positions is \$21,655.

After hearing the testimony, the School Board voted unanimously to add the funding back into the budget.

FullDay Kindergarten Could Lower Costs Further

Black also noted that if voters approve the fullday kindergarten

warrant article, the district would consolidate from four buildings to three for grades K-5. That consolidation would reduce both the proposed operating budget and the Default Budget even further, though those savings are not yet reflected in the current figures.

Budget Heads to Voters With Full Support

Both the School Board and the Budget Committee voted unanimously to recommend the proposed operating budget warrant article, sending it to the Deliberative Session with strong institutional backing.

SIDEBAR: What Is a Default Budget?

New Hampshire towns and school districts operate under SB2, which means voters approve

budgets at the ballot box rather than at traditional town meetings. Because of that system, every proposed budget must have a Default Budget calculated alongside it.

How the Default Budget Works

- The Default Budget is not a new budget.
- It is based on the current year's budget, adjusted only for:

- Contractual obligations (salaries, benefits, multiyear agreements)
- Debt payments
- Legally mandated increases
- Reductions for one-time expenses

No new programs or positions can be added to the Default Budget.

When the Default Budget Takes Effect

If voters reject the proposed operating

budget in March, the Default Budget automatically becomes the budget for the next fiscal year.

Why the Default Budget Matters

- It gives voters a baseline option.
- It prevents the district from being left without a budget.
- It can sometimes be higher than the proposed budget, depending on contractual increases and onetime reductions.

In Londonderry This Year

- Proposed Operating Budget: \$94,960,409
- Default Budget: \$95,234,013

• Result: The proposed budget is lower than the default - a rare situation that often strengthens the case for voter approval.



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# LONDONDERRY SPORTS

## LHS Boys' Basketball Get Dramatic Win Over the Owls

CHRIS PAUL  
LONDONDERRY TIMES

The Londonderry High School Boys' Basketball team finished out their week with a dramatic final seconds victory over the Timberlane Owls.

The close 55-53 win over Timberlane came with five-seconds left on the clock, in Londonderry on Friday night and might be just what the Lancers need to get the wins rolling in the second half of the season.

The team has been struggling to score points and Friday night was no exception, but the team did what it needed down the stretch, outscoring their opponent 19-14 in the fourth quarter for the

victory.

The team's last second hero was junior guard Ben Sakellar, who hit a three-pointer with five seconds left on the clock, to help deliver Timberlane its tenth loss of the season.

The game started very flat for the home squad and they trailed their visitors 10-5 after the first period.

The second quarter saw a spike for both teams in baskets made, but LHS was still out-shot 15-22 to follow the Owls 32-20 at halftime.

Coming out of the break, the Lancers were able to really turn the tide, by holding Timberlane to seven-points and scoring 16, bring the scoring gap to just three-

points.

The final quarter had fans on the edge of their seats, as the lead by the visitors dwindled and LHS tied the game 45-45 with four minutes left.

The Lancers kept the game within reach throughout the final minute, where they trailed by one-point, 52-53 at the 22-second mark.

Sakellar's three-pointer from the corner gave his team the two-point lead and the celebration of their fifth win of the season.

Sakellar had the team high in scoring with 19-points, getting two outside the arc and eight baskets, three at the foul line.

Senior forward Evan

Vago had nine-points, with three, three-pointers.

Jayden Ncala finished with eight on four baskets and Casey Marsh had seven.

Earlier in the week, on Tuesday, Jan. 20, the Lancers fell to the Grizzlies in Goffstown by ten, 41-51.

Vago had 11-points to lead the Lancers, Marsh had nine and Sakellar finished with eight.

The Lancers were scheduled to play two home games this week. On Tuesday they took on the 3-7 Manchester Little Green and on Friday night they will play host to the Pinkerton Academy Astros (8-2), the first half of a double header, starting at 5 p.m.



Ben Sakellar goes up for two in the win over Timberlane Friday night. Photo by Chris Paul

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# Lancer Gymnastics Dominate at Home, Sets Sights on Postseason

CHRIS PAUL  
LONDONDERRY TIMES

The Londonderry High School gymnastics team continues to prove they are the team to beat as the regular season winds down.

Following a dominant showing on Jan. 12 and another victory this past Thursday, Jan. 22, the Lancers have solidified their standing at the top of the leaderboard heading into the final stretch.

Londonderry hosted a four-team meet at Spectrum Gymnastics

this past Thursday, Jan. 22, welcoming Campbell, Timberlane, Nashua North, and independents from Alvirne and Nashua South.

The Lancers secured a convincing first-place finish with a team score of 131.25, comfortably ahead of runner-up Campbell (120.6).

Cailee Anderson led the way for Londonderry, claiming second place in the All-Around with a score of 35.1. Anderson was a force across all rotations, winning the Vault with a 9.3,

taking second on the Bars (8.4), and third on the Beam (8.7). Team-mate Alex Pena secured fourth in the All-Around (32.75), highlighted by a stellar second-place finish on the Floor with a 9.1.

The Lancers also saw critical contributions from Hannah Linscott, who took second on the Beam (8.8), and Gabby Nadeau, who tied for third on the Floor (8.7). Other key contributors including Annabelle Hicks, Morgan Ayotte, Kat Strong, and

Mia Bicchieri provided the depth needed to outpace the field.

The Jan. 22 victory followed an even more explosive performance earlier in the month. On Jan. 12, the Lancers put up a season-high team score of 135.9 to defeat Campbell (119.7) and Alvirne.

During that meet, Alex Pena was the stand-out on the Floor, taking first place with a 9.350, while Cailee Anderson secured second in the All-Around (35.350). Hannah Linscott also



Hannah Linscott placed in the top five on both the Bars and the Floor. Courtesy photo

showcased her consistency, placing in the top five on both the Bars and the Floor.

Team Results (Jan. 22 Meet): Londonderry 131.25; Campbell 120.6; Timberlane 118.3 and Nashua North 88.1.

With the regular season nearly complete, the focus shifts to a night of celebration and the ultimate quest for a state title.

Londonderry, Campbell, and Alvirne will all celebrate their graduating athletes during a combined Senior Night at Londonderry High School on Monday, Feb. 2, at 7 p.m.

State Meet: The road leads to the State Championship on February 14th, where the Lancers look to translate their regular-season dominance into hardware.

# Girls' Basketball Blast Grizzlies

CHRIS PAUL  
LONDONDERRY TIMES

The only contest for the Londonderry High School Girls' Basketball team last week had them traveling to Goffstown High School where they delivered another one-sided loss to a Division I opponent.

The Lancers took on the 2-5 Lady Grizzlies Tuesday night, Jan. 20, and held that team to single-digit scoring in all four quarters of the game for a 64-19 victory.

This was the Lancers

second consecutive 45-point win, after coming off another lopsided win four days earlier, in Hudson, where they disposed of Alvirne Broncos 50-5 for their sixth victory of the year.

In Goffstown, Londonderry held the grizzlies to just eight-points in the first half, five in the first quarter and three in the second.

The Lancers led 19-5 after one and opened up a 36-8 lead heading into the locker room at the half.

Once again, the LHS

starters saw limited playing time in the second half, but they outscored their host 28-11 in the final two periods.

Senior forward Sammie Sullivan had the team high in scoring with 18-points.

Junior Gemma Murray came away with 15-points, including three, three-pointers.

Freshman Mia Bucco also had three from outside the src and finished with nine-points.

Senior Brooke Eacrett and freshman Lexi VanAvery both had seven-points in the victory.

Londonderry will face a much different

opponent on Wednesday night, Jan. 28, when they take on the very difficult team from Concord Christian Academy.

The Kings have not lost a game this season and will be coming into Londonderry with a 10-0 record and averaging 67-points per game.

Two nights later, the Lancers will be at home against the Pinkerton Academy Astros. This will be the second game of a double-header with the LHS boys playing at 5 p.m. The Astros started the week at 6-5 and the Lancers are sitting at 7-1, with the team's only loss coming from the Bedford Bulldogs.

## OBITUARY

### George R. Perkins



George R. Perkins, 89, of Londonderry, NH, formerly of Dedham, MA and Goodyear, AZ, passed away Sunday Jan. 18, 2026, at All American Assisted Living of Londonderry, after a brief illness. George was born April 14, 1936, in Stoughton, MA and was a son of the late

Elvon and Natalie (Leathers) Perkins, he was raised and educated in Stoughton, lived most of his life in Dedham. He received an associate degree in Electrical Engineering. George and his wife Sandra retired to Goodyear, AZ and he relocated to Londonderry to be near his daughter.

George served his country in the U.S. Army and later worked as an Electrical Engineer and was employed first with Raytheon Corporation and later for GTE Sylvania in Needham, MA. He enjoyed gardening, making puzzles and loved to watch birds. George enjoyed watching NASCAR racing and was also an avid fan of the NE Sports teams.

Members of the family include his daughter Annette and son-in-law Edward McInnis of Chester, NH, six grandchildren, Julie (Jeff) Trombly, of Derry, NH, Jessica McInnis of Derry, NH, Joseph (Ashley) McInnis of Plymouth, MA, Wayne (Marcella) DeCoste of San Francisco, CA, David (Talia) DeCoste of Goffstown, NH, and Nicole (Dom) McKnight of Buckeye, AZ, 10 great grandchildren, as well as several nieces, nephews and extended family. George was predeceased by his beloved wife of 58 years Sandra Lee (Stergion) Perkins in April of 2025, and cherished daughter Linda Lee DeCoste of Goodyear, AZ in February of 2025. He was also predeceased by his three siblings, Richard Perkins, Robert Perkins and Gloria Perkins-Kennedy.

Following cremation, an hour of visitation was held on Saturday, Jan. 24, in the Peabody Funeral Homes and Crematorium with a Catholic Prayer service and Military Honors. Memorial contributions may be made to St. Jude Children's Hospital 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105. To send a condolence, please visit [www.peabody-funeralhome.com](http://www.peabody-funeralhome.com).

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# Lancer Grapplers Sweep Week with Dominant Home Stand

CHRIS PAUL  
LONDONDERRY TIMES

The Londonderry High School wrestling team enjoyed a perfect week on their home mats, following up a convincing dual-meet victory over Spaulding on Wednesday night with a clean sweep of the Londonderry Super Quad on Saturday.

The Lancers' pursuit of pins and technical superiority secured four team wins in just four days, cementing their status as a force to be reckoned with in the region.

The Lancers week began Wednesday with a 48-24 victory over the Spaulding Red Raiders where they showcased their technical versatility, scoring points through various methods beyond the standard fall.

Caleb Holden (157 lbs) was untouchable, securing a 15-0 Technical Fall (TF), while Caleb Tannler (150 lbs) earned a gritty 9-0 Major Decision.

In the lighter weights, Anthony Cipolletta

ground out a 7-3 decision at 106 lbs to set the tone. Pins from Lennox DeLeon (113), Cam Roussell (120), Colin Egan (144), Sawyer Chaffee (165), and Moqsid Rahmani (175) provided the necessary cushion to pull away from the Red Raiders.

## Super Quad Sweep (Jan. 24)

The Lancers returned to the gym Saturday for a grueling triple-header, emerging unscathed with victories over Hollis-Brookline, Nashua South, and Nashua North.

## Londonderry 45, Hollis-Brookline 35

In the most competitive matchup of the day, the Lancers fended off a spirited Hollis-Brookline squad. Anthony Cipolletta and Gabriel Perez came up huge with late-round pins, while Colin Egan showcased his speed with a 15-0 Technical Fall in just 2:30. Cam Roussell provided critical bonus points with a 13-5 Major Decision at 120 lbs.

## Londonderry 60,

## Nashua South 23

The Lancers' "Lightweight Trio" of Cipolletta, DeLeon, and Roussell dismantled the Panthers, recording three consecutive pins to open the scoring. Gabriel Perez (132) and Colin Egan (144) added back-to-back falls in under 75 seconds each, effectively ending the contest before the heavyweights even took the circle.

## Londonderry 60, Nashua North 24

Closing the day against the Titans, the Lancers were nearly clinical.

Jorge Ribota provided the quickest pin of the afternoon at 190 lbs, needing only 18 seconds to secure the fall. Moqsid Rahmani (175) and Anthony Cipolletta (106) also ended their matches in the first minute, proving that the Lancers' conditioning remained peak even in their third match of the day.

Several Lancers went undefeated across the four-match stretch,

demonstrating remarkable consistency: Anthony Cipolletta (106): 4-0 (3 Pins, 1 Dec); Cam

Roussell (120): 4-0 (3 Pins, 1 MD); Gabriel Perez (132): 4-0 (3 Pins, 1 Forfeit); Colin Egan

(144): 4-0 (3 Pins, 1 TF); and Moqsid Rahmani (175): 4-0 (3 Pins, 1 Forfeit).

# Londonderry Hockey Skate to Two Home Victories

CHRIS PAUL  
LONDONDERRY TIMES

The Londonderry High School Hockey team had some scoring success last week, out-shooting their opponents 12-2 to give them two more victories heading into the final eight games of the season.

The Lancers week started at home, in Hooksett, on Wednesday night, at the Delta Dental Arena, where they put forth some solid scoring and out-dued the Manchester Central-West-Memorial by a score of 5-2, for the team's third win of the season.

Senior Taran Bower had one goal while senior Brendan Fitzgerald and junior Luca Verani both put in two.

Londonderry assisted were taken by junior Gaven Sweeney, sophomore Austin Callahan and Verani. Nicholas Bishop and Fitzgerald assisted Verani in both of his goals during the victory.

The goals kept coming three days later, in another home game, where they shutout the visiting Portsmouth-Newmarket-Sandown squad 7-0.

Verani added three

more goals to his season total, junior Mike Bell had two, and Bishop and Callahan both had one each.

Assists went to Verani, Fitzgerald (2), Bell, Bower, Karoul (2), Lazzaro, Bishop, junior Ethan Leon, Callahan and Mason Nadeau.

The Lancer will host two more teams this week and hope to continue their scoring trend.

On Wednesday they were scheduled to play Bow (2-8-1) and on Saturday, Jan. 31, they will take on the Exeter Blue Hawks (3-6) at 7:40 p.m.

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# A Fine Monster You Are! Performs at Ovation Theatre

Following the success of last year's *The Mousetrap*, Ovation Theatre Company is kicking off their 2026 year with another thrilling play, *A Fine Monster You Are!*, performed in the intimate

setting at Ovation Studios. Sweet old Emily Holbrook is interviewing sweet young Suzette Larson for a job as secretary companion. She quietly explains that her ancient family mansion

has only one window and that window is barred; that there is to be a seance that night; and that in back of the parlor drapes is a century old stone wall with a heavy oaken door littered with every known

kind of lock, all because there might be a misshapen creature of elemental horror sealed behind it! What happens to Suzette, to her semi-stalwart boyfriend, her former college roommate, the old housekeeper, the creepy doctor, and the utterly incredible medium who likes to work fast but likes overtime even better is beyond description. The lunacy extends to a mind-boggling climax that delights audiences of all ages.

*A Fine Monster You Are!* is being presented at Ovation Studios, where the audience will be right in the room with all of the characters and possibly a monster! Director Adrianna Bridge is excited to bring this play to life. "This one has a little touch of everything I love. It's got mystery and humor; it's got those moments of 'Oh, my goodness!' and some that just make your sides split laughing," Bridge notes that audience members "should expect the unexpected. Just when you think you have a grasp on what is happening, there's going to be another twist. The show is going to keep the audience guessing the entire way through." Krystal Timinski plays sweet, old Emily Holbrook, but notes "her family has some secrets." Timinski describes the play as funny and surprising.



Joseph Smith smiles as he describes his character, Jonathan Starbuck as "a silver fox, with a medical degree and lot to offer - and I'll just leave it at that."

Alexandria Hodson is enjoying the challenge of playing Suzette's friend Flax, with her insatiable appetite. "Everyone has that one friend who's a little peckish, can always go for a treat, but Flax takes that to the extreme and that's her downfall; that's how she gets wrapped into everything. She's here for the ride, but I'm not sure she's paying attention to everything going on."

*A Fine Monster You Are!* features a talented cast of adults from all over southern New Hampshire. This production is led by Director

Adrianna Bridge, Stage Manager Shannon Krumlauf and Production Assistant Rodney Jenkins. The cast includes Jacquelyn Blouin, Joseph Smith and Krystal Timinski of Londonderry; Brianne Watson and Arielle Margot Welch of Derry, Alexandria Hodson of Bedford and Nick Ford of Concord.

*A Fine Monster You Are!* will be presented over two weekends, on Friday and Saturday, February 6 and 7, as well as Friday and Saturday, February 13 and 14, with all shows at 7:00 pm, at Ovation Studios (61 Harvey Road, Londonderry, NH). Tickets are \$20 through January 31 and \$25 beginning January 29 and are on sale at [ovationtc.com](http://ovationtc.com).





## Green Team

"Green Minds, Creative Hearts, Better World"

### Annual FREE Speaker Series

# Growing a Pollinator Garden

## Thursday, February 12th

## 6:30 pm at the Londonderry YMCA

Planting patches of flowers, wildflowers, grasses, shrubs, and flowering trees, especially with native plants, can encourage and support natural pollinators and enhance backyard landscapes. Recommendations will be presented on creating a pollinator habitat in your yard.

GreenTeam603@gmail.com

to register or ask questions

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# AROUND TOWN

**Around Town Policy:** This section is meant to be used to announce free events to the communities. If your group is receiving money for what they are publicizing, there will be a charge of \$40/week per paper. All Around Town/Calendar Items will be held to 100 words maximum. All free announcements in the Around Town/Calendar section can run a maximum of three weeks. Deadline for submissions is Monday at 5 p.m. Please send items to [londonderrytimes@nutpub.net](mailto:londonderrytimes@nutpub.net).

## Free Gardening for Pollinators Session

The Green Team of Londonderry will host its second free monthly gardening lecture on February 12, and this month's topic is Gardening for Pollinators. Attendees will learn how planting patches of flowers, wildflowers, grasses, shrubs, and flowering trees - especially native varieties - can create healthy, attractive pollinator habitats. The session will offer practical recommendations for designing a pollinator friendly yard that benefits both wildlife and the beauty of your landscape. The presentation will be led by Jane Raymond, a UNH Cooperative Extension Master Gardener. The class will take

place at the Londonderry YMCA at 6:30 p.m. on Feb. 12. Registration is encouraged and can be completed by emailing [GreenTeam603@gmail.com](mailto:GreenTeam603@gmail.com). These sessions are open to all residents and are a great opportunity to learn, connect, and grow your gardening skills.

## Candidate Meet + Greet

Any candidates who will be on the March 10 ballot will be at a "Candidate Meet + Greet" event! Hosted it at the Leach Library on Saturday, Feb. 14 from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. A great opportunity to meet voters in person and discuss your approach to Londonderry issues. If you would like to attend this event as a candidate,

please contact me at [patrick@elazem.com](mailto:patrick@elazem.com).

## Republicans Meeting

The Londonderry Republicans monthly business meeting is Thursday, Feb. 5 from 7 - 8:30 p.m., at Londonderry Baptist Church, 368 Mammoth Rd. All Londonderry Republicans are welcome! More info: email [lrc@londyreps.com](mailto:lrc@londyreps.com).

## Voter Information

The Supervisors of the Voter Checklist will meet to correct the checklist and register voters at the Town Clerk's Office on: Feb. 28, from 10 - 11 a.m. To register to vote, one must provide: Proof of Londonderry residency; Proof of citizenship (passport, birth certificate, nat-

uralization papers); Proof of age; and Photo ID. Applicants for registration must provide proof of age, identity, citizenship and domicile. Qualified applicants who do not possess proof of domicile or who do not bring proof with them may register if they sign an affidavit attesting to their qualifications. Applicants without sufficient proofs will be unable to register to vote at that time.

## Public Engagement Events

Residents of Londonderry are encouraged to participate in a series of upcoming public engagement events designed to foster community input and transparency in local governance. A public input session will be held on the revised Code of Ethics on Tuesday, Jan. 20, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. in the Moose Hill Council Chambers. The Utilities Committee will host a Water Town Hall Session on Wednesday, Jan. 28 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. in the LHS Café. A public input session on the Town Strategic Plan will take place on Saturday, Jan. 31 from 10 a.m. -

noon in the Moose Hill Council Chambers. The Town Council Candidates Forum, facilitated by Heather McGrail of the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 10 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. in the Moose Hill Council Chambers. Questions will be gathered in advance. All candidates for Town Council are encouraged to participate. Current Council members who are not running are welcome to attend, though their presence is not central to the event. These sessions offer residents a chance to ask questions, share feedback, and engage directly with town officials and candidates. All are welcome to attend.

## Sunday Family Camp

ETZ Hayim Synagogue Sunday Family Camp will be Sunday, Feb. 8, from 10 a.m. - Noon for ages 4-6. February's class will focus on Purim in preparation for the holiday in March. Children will learn about the Purim story (using an age-appropriate text) and how to celebrate this fun holiday. RSVP to [sarahjohnplater@aol.com](mailto:sarahjohnplater@aol.com)

by Feb. 6 to ensure we have enough materials.

## Tu B'shevat Seder

ETZ Hayim Synagogue will hold a Tu B'shevat Seder Family Program on Sunday, Feb. 1, at 10 a.m. Decorate pots and plant parsley for Passover and have a "fruit" seder. All are welcome to participate in this free event! Join to celebrate the Jewish New Year of the Trees.

## Patriots Watch

Each Sunday afternoon come to the American Legion Post 27 to watch the Patriots play and eat some great free food cooked by our members! (Feel free to bring something to be cooked.)

## Family Pizza Shabbat

ETZ Hayim Synagogue will hold Family Pizza Shabbat on Friday, Feb. 6, at 5:30 p.m. A free pizza dinner will be followed by an intergenerational service for everyone. There will be kids' activities while adults enjoy a sermon with Rabbi Jonathan Biatch. Bring a nosh for the potluck oneg. Come to share in the mitzvah of

Continued on page 14

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# Londonderry Police Log

Selections taken from the daily Londonderry Police Logs

## Monday, Jan. 19

**12:34 a.m.** Four-officers respond to a Disturbance at the Alltown store on Hampton Drive.

**8:41 a.m.** Three-officers conduct a Welfare Check at the Alltown store on Hampton Drive.

**10:52 a.m.** Larceny/Forgery/Fraud investigated at Crossroads Animal Hospital on Nashua Road.

**11 a.m.** Medical Emergency investigated at Manchester Boston Regional Airport.

**1:57 p.m.** Larceny/Forgery/Fraud investigated on High Range Road.

## Tuesday, Jan. 20

**1:49 p.m.** Unlawful Activities reported on Windy Pond Road.

**2:28 p.m.** Juvenile Offenses investigated at Matthew Thornton Elementary School.

**4:33 p.m.** Services Rendered for a Medical Emergency at Manchester Boston Regional Airport.

## Wednesday, Jan. 21

**2:27 a.m.** Three-officers conduct a Welfare Check on Mammoth Road.

**10:14 a.m.** Three-officers investigate a Missing Person reported on Litchfield Road.

**12:21 p.m.** Medical Emergency at Manchester Boston Regional Airport.

**12:50 p.m.** Services rendered for a Welfare Check on Torey Place.

**2:29 p.m.** Peace restored by three officers during a Domestic Disturbance

on Mammoth Road.

## Thursday, Jan. 22

**2:59 a.m.** Welfare Check investigated on Morrison Drive.

**6:49 a.m.** Welfare Check investigated on Sanborn Road.

**9:24 a.m.** Warrant served and arrest made on at Merrimack County Dept. of Corrections.

Teofil Bortos, 46, of New York, charged with: Credit Card Fraud - \$1,001 to \$1,500 (two priors); Theft By Unauthorized Taking - over \$1,501; Credit Card Fraud - \$0-\$1,000; Theft By Unauthorized Taking - \$0-\$1,000; and five counts of Identity Fraud; Posing as Another.

**11:47 a.m.** Welfare Check

conducted on Mammoth Road at Griffin Road.

**11:52 a.m.** Pedestrian Check conducted on Mammoth Road, at Merlin Place.

**11:52 a.m.** Welfare Check conducted on Fieldstone Drive.

**12:51 p.m.** Warrant served and arrest made by four officers at the Haverhill Police Department. Seifeldin Elsheikh, 27, of Londonderry, charged with: two counts of Domestic Violence (Simple Assault, Bodily Injury or Physical Contact); and Domestic Violence - Obstructing Report of a Crime/Injury.

**12:52 p.m.** Warrant served and arrest made on Severance Drive. Scott Ruscio, 50, of Londonderry, charged with: Reckless Conduct - Deadly Weapon; and Conduct After an Accident.

**5:27 p.m.** Services rendered for Identity Theft

reported at the Macgregor Cut apartments on Stonehenge Road.

## Friday, Jan. 23

**2:38 p.m.** Medical Emergency at Manchester Boston Regional Airport transported to a hospital.

**4:29 p.m.** Seven officers assist the Hudson Police Department with an arrest on Nashua Road at the Hudson town line. Catherine Burns, 52, of Nashua, charged with: Driving Under the Influence - Impairment; and Transporting Alcohol or Marijuana.

**5:58 p.m.** Services rendered Juvenile Offenses on Mammoth Road.

**6:07 p.m.** Peace restored by three officers after a Domestic Disturbance on South Road.

**8:56 p.m.** Suspicious Activity reported at Hanaford Food & Drug on

Hampton Drive.

## Saturday, Jan. 24

**1:16 a.m.** Motor vehicle check on Michels Way at Market Basket results in an arrest made by four officers. Karyn Makela, 41, of Hudson, charged on Bench Warrants.

**3:31 a.m.** Suspicious Activity on Fieldstone Drive investigated by three officers.

**10:57 a.m.** Involuntary Emergency Admission conducted on Stokes Road.

**9:49 p.m.** Welfare Check conducted at the McDonalds on Nashua Road.

## Sunday, Jan. 25

**6:36 p.m.** Assisted the Londonderry Fire Department at All American Assisted Living on Button Drive.

**11:35 p.m.** Welfare Check conducted on Charleston Avenue.

# High-Speed Pursuit Goes Through Town, I-93 Ends in Arrest

A Massachusetts man was taken into custody late Saturday night after leading New Hampshire State Police on a high-speed pursuit along Interstate 93 that began in Windham and ended in Salem when the suspect's vehicle ran out of gas.

According to State

Police, the incident began on Jan. 24, 2026, just before 11:30 p.m., when Trooper Alex Guilbeault of Troop B observed a white 2025 BMW X2 traveling northbound on I-93 at a high rate of speed. When the trooper attempted to initiate a traffic stop, the driver accelerated,

prompting a pursuit.

The driver exited the highway at Exit 4 in Londonderry, then re-entered the interstate heading southbound, continuing to flee at high speeds. While traveling south, the driver exited at Exit 3 and Exit 2, crossing intersections each time before using

the on-ramps to return to I-93.

The pursuit came to an end near mile marker 1.8 on I-93 southbound in Salem when the BMW ran out of fuel. Troopers took the driver and two passengers into custody without further incident.

The driver was identified as Rafy Villa, 25, of

Lawrence, MA. Villa faces multiple charges, including felony reckless conduct with a deadly weapon, misdemeanor disobeying an officer, and several violation-level offenses, among them driving after suspension.

Villa was released on personal recognizance

bail and is scheduled to appear in Salem District Court on Feb. 19, 2026. State Police also seized the BMW pending further investigation. The two passengers were released without charges.

Members of the Salem Police Department assisted troopers at the scene.

## Around Town

Continued from page 13

L'Dor V'Dor, transmitting Jewish heritage and values across generations. RSVP by Feb. 5 to office@etzhayim.org.

### LEEP

Are you considering preschool for your child? If your child turned 3 by Sept. 1 and is a Londonderry resident, consider enrolling your child in the Londonderry Early Education Program (LEEP) preschool program. Programs for three-year old preschoolers meet from 8:25 - 10:55 a.m., either 2 or 4 days per week and the program for prekindergarten

students meet from noon - 2:30 p.m., either 3 or 4 days per week. Applications are available online on the Moose Hill School website. LEEP Handbook will be available online on the Moose Hill School website if you'd like additional information on the program. For more information, contact Denise Fosmire at 437-5855 ext. 7223 Please email Denise Fosmire at dfosmire@londonderry.org or Kim Speers at kspeers@londonderry.org.

### Drop-In Tech Help

On Thursday mornings from 10 a.m. to noon, the Leach Library reference staff is available to provide one-on-one assistance in technology-related needs.

No appointment is necessary.

### Memorial Bricks

American Legion Post 27 is offering community members the opportunity to create a lasting tribute with personalized bricks that will be installed in the Post's backyard this spring. Each brick allows up to three lines of text with 15 characters per line, making it a meaningful way to honor a veteran, loved one, organization, or group. First brick is \$140 each additional brick after is \$100. Photos of the pavilion, bricks, and the new backyard layout, along with the order form, are attached. For more information, email salpo-

st27@gmail.com.

### Free PFOA Water Test By NHDES

You can request a water sampling here: Southern NH PFOA Investigation Private Well-Testing Request Form Survey (surveymonkey.com) Questions contact Amy Rousseau | PFAS Response Administrator - MtBE Remediation Bureau at NH Department of Environmental Services Email: Amy.Rousseau@des.nh.gov, Phone: 603.271.8801

### Clean Water Survey

Clean water is more than a resource; it's the lifeline of our community. Your voice holds the power to shape a healthier water future for you

and for generations to come. Survey at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/VOWNOV2024](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VOWNOV2024). As an added bonus, when you complete the survey, you'll have the chance to enter to win one of 25 fixed-mount or handheld water-saving showerheads, making your contribution to clean water even more rewarding.

### Overeaters Anonymous

Is food a problem for you? Do you eat when you are not hungry? Is your

weight affecting the way you live your life? Overeaters Anonymous, no dues, no fees, no weigh-ins no diets. Meetings are on Tuesday's from 9 - 10 a.m., at St. Elizabeth Seton Church 190 Meetinghouse Rd., Bedford, use the rear doors for access to the meeting room in the church basement. Contact Pat At 603-289-8476 Or Jane At 603-674-6540 With Any Questions (Not Affiliated With Any Private Or Public Organization)

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