



Ready or not, the big yellow school buses will soon be rolling through Amherst again. Students' first day of school is Tuesday, Sept. 1. Beginning with the 2026-27 school year, SAU 39 will operate under a new transportation contract with Student Transportation of America, with district officials expecting improved reliability and communication. (Photo: M. Warren.)

SAU 39 approves new bus contract

Reliability and accountability take priority

BY STACEY MORISON

After years of challenges related to bus service in the district, the SAU 39 Board has approved a new three-year contract with Student Transportation of America (STA) to provide bus service for the Amherst, Mont Vernon and Souhegan Cooperative school districts beginning with the 2026-27 school year.

The agreement, which includes an option to extend for two additional years, follows a competitive request for proposals process that drew bids from four local transportation companies.

Administrators evaluated proposals based on cost, service quality, operational capacity, technology, driver recruitment and retention, and customer service before recommending STA.

The district's previous five-year contract with Butler Bus Service called for 16 daily routes. However, due to an ongoing driver shortage, the company was operating only 12 routes by the end of the contract, resulting in combined routes, longer rides for students, and frequent delays in pickups and drop-offs. The district also experienced communication challenges when route changes or cancellations occurred, prompting administrators to seek stronger accountability measures in the new contract.

STA plans to operate 16 routes and will conduct a complete redesign of

the district's bus routes to develop the most efficient system. District officials expect some adjustments during the first several weeks of school as routes are refined.

The company also plans to establish a satellite office in Amherst to house buses and provide on-site dispatch support, allowing for more responsive service. Administrators cited STA's competitive pricing over the life of the contract, technology capabilities, driver recruitment program, and positive references from neighboring school districts, including Bedford and Hollis.

Amy Facey, the former business administrator for the district who was involved in the contract negotiations

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Community brings Happy home

Search for lost dog ends with safe return

BY HILLARIE MCCLURE

Happily ever after. That's how the McEntee family feels now that their German shepherd, Happy, is home safe and sound.

Many Amherst residents followed Happy's great escape on community Facebook pages or spotted lost-dog flyers posted around town. Happy was on the loose for three weeks before reuniting with his family on the evening of July 3 — just before the chaos of holiday fireworks.

Happy was adopted earlier this year by Amherst residents Sarah and Thomas McEntee and quickly became a be-

loved member of their family. On the evening of June 12, the McEntees let their dogs outside before bedtime, and Happy wandered into the woods. When they couldn't find him, Sarah contacted Granite State Dog Recovery (GSDR) that evening.

"Any time a dog is lost in this state, the very first thing you should do is call Granite State," Sarah said, explaining that she had long admired the organization's work recovering lost dogs. "They will help you create flyers, develop posts for social media and hit it hard. They helped us post about 400 flyers for Happy."

So far this year, GSDR has fielded an average of 500 phone calls per week and helped recover about 300 dogs. On the Fourth of July alone, 32 lost-dog reports were submitted in New Hampshire.

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Home at last. Happy is settling back into life with the McEntee family after an adventure that brought together neighbors, volunteers and Granite State Dog Recovery to help bring him home. (Courtesy photo.)

IN THIS ISSUE



School News

School librarian Susanna Hargreaves read a story to incoming kindergartners at Clark School on August 6. More school news, pp. 6-7. (Courtesy photo.)



Sports

Andrew Sousa, age 12, and the Jasper Valley Swim Team competed at the 61st annual Milford Rotary Club Swim Meet on July 25-26. More sports news, pp. 8-9. (Photo: Edward Goucher.)



Community

Bands like the Blue Rim Shades are part of Amherst's vibrant local music scene, bringing people together through music. More community news, pp. 10-11. (Courtesy photo.)



Library News

The Rondeau sisters celebrated the end of the Summer Reading Program with an ice cream social at the Amherst Town Library. More library news, p. 12. (Photo: S. Morison.)

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THE AMHERST BEAR, September 2026, Vol. 1, No. 8.
Published monthly. Periodical postage paid at Amherst, NH.

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Happy, continued from page 1

The social media post GSDR shared about Happy’s escape quickly went viral, and the McEntees jumped into action.

“Happy’s family did a fantastic job putting up posters, which was key to helping us track how he was moving,” said Holly Mokrzecki, founder of GSDR.

The community quickly rallied behind the McEntees, with residents from Amherst and surrounding towns reporting sightings that helped create a road map of Happy’s travels. He made it as far south as Nashua before turning back and settling in the area around Amherst Country Club.

After nearby homeowners reported seeing Happy rummaging through their trash for two consecutive nights, GSDR set up a feeding station and humane trap in their backyard, leading to his safe recovery. The McEntees couldn’t be more grateful.

“The community rallied, and I was shocked by their support,” Sarah said. “They were supporting us, and they were rooting for us. Some people put posters up themselves. Others took them down afterward. We live in an incredible community.”

Happy is now regaining his strength after his time in the wilderness. He has fully recovered from several ailments, including anemia caused by more than 100 ticks. While physically recovered, he remains a bit anxious and nervous after spending three weeks on the loose. Happy and his canine brother, Ace, are now outfitted with tracking devices that alert the family if either dog leaves the property.

Sarah’s biggest piece of advice?

“Don’t be afraid to be a pest!” she said, referring to how she contacted every veterinarian and dog rescue organization in the area.

“Sarah really spearheaded the effort to find Hap,” Thomas said, emphasizing how diligent she was with outreach and how she hit the roads at all hours based on reported sightings.

“You’re not a bad dog owner if your dog gets loose,” Sarah noted, “but it takes a village to bring them home.”

If your dog goes missing, contact the Amherst Police Department. Then, contact Granite State Dog Recovery at (855) 639-5678. GSDR is a Hooksett-based nonprofit organization that relies on community donations. More details can be found at granitestatedogrecovery.com.



Sarah and Thomas McEntee were all smiles with Ace (left, distracted by something more interesting than the camera) and Happy (right) after Happy returned home following a 21-day ordeal. Both dogs now wear tracking devices that alert the family if either leaves the property. (Courtesy photo.)

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Primary election information for Sept. 8

BY JEANNE LUDT
Amherst Supervisor of the Checklist

The state primary election will be held Tuesday, Sept. 8. Polls will be open from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. in the gym at Souhegan High School (412 Boston Post Road).

By law, June 2 was the final day to change party affiliation before the state primary. To choose between party ballots in the primary election, voters must be registered as undeclared. Voters registered as a Democrat or Republican may only vote on that party’s ballot.

The Amherst Supervisors of the Checklist will hold a session Tuesday, Sept. 1, from 6 to 7 p.m. in the town clerk’s office. No additions or corrections can be made after this session until Election Day.

New voters may register during town hall business hours until 10 days before the election or at the polls on Election Day. Those registering for the first time should bring documents proving age, identity, Amherst residency, and U.S. citizenship. A new law also requires documentation for any name change. More details at sos.nh.gov/elections/register-vote.

Voters who qualify to vote by absentee ballot (including those who are out of town or have a disability) can find information at sos.nh.gov/elections/absentee-ballots. Request and return ballots early to ensure they arrive in time to be counted.

Questions about voter registration or absentee ballots may be directed to the town clerk at 603-673-6041, ext. 208. Voter registration status can be checked at the town hall checklist or online at app.sos.nh.gov/viphome.

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DID YOU KNOW?

More New Hampshire voters are registered as undeclared than as either Democrat or Republican.

Bus, continued from page 1

in the fall of 2025, said the new contract includes expanded performance and termination provisions that provide the district with clearer remedies if service expectations are not met. The agreement establishes standards related to on-time performance, regular driver assignments, required equipment such as cameras, radios and cell phones, adherence to assigned routes and bus stops, and other operational requirements.

Superintendent Michael Berry said the district's goal is to provide safe, reliable, and efficient transportation for students and families.

"Our responsibility is to ensure every student arrives at school and returns home safely, reliably, and on time," said Berry. "Transportation is more than a bus ride; it's the first and last school experience of each day, and we are committed to working with STA to provide families with a service they can trust."

The contract took effect July 1 in preparation for the start of the 2026-27 school year.

Dinner on the Green, Old Home Day set for Sept. 11-12

BY JOHN BEMENT
Historical Society of Amherst



The Historical Society of Amherst will host two community events on the Village Green in September: its annual Dinner on the Green fundraiser and the return of Old Home Day.

Dinner on the Green will take place Friday, Sept. 11. Guests may purchase individual seats or reserve an entire table. Tables, chairs, and linens will be provided.

The event serves as the Historical Society's annual fundraiser, with proceeds supporting the maintenance of its two museums in town. Organizers typically welcome about 150 attendees, who are known for creating elaborate table decorations and sharing festive homemade meals under the overhead lights, installed for the special occasion.

Advance ticket purchases are required and are available at hsanh.org.

Old Home Day returns Saturday, Sept. 12, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Traditionally, Old Home Day celebrations encourage former residents to return to their hometowns while celebrating local history, culture, and community. Amherst's event is designed as a family-friendly celebration for residents of all ages.

The day will feature games on the Green hosted by Amherst Recreation, a lunchtime performance by the Amherst Town Band, and hamburgers and hot dogs for purchase from the Amherst Fire Rescue Association. Local civic and nonprofit organizations are also invited to participate and raise funds.

Attendees are invited to tour the historic Congregational Church and

join guided walking tours of Amherst's colonial village and Revolutionary-era cemeteries.

Additional information will be posted on the Historical Society of Amherst's Facebook page. Corporate sponsorships are welcome for both events. Please contact John Bement at johnbement2@gmail.com for more information.



Neighbors gathered for a meal during a past Dinner on the Green. This year's event will be held on Friday, Sept. 11. (Photo: M. Warren.)

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TOWN AND STATE GOVERNMENT

DPW encourages residents to be SepticSmart

BY CRAIG DURRETT
Amherst Department of Public Works

Amherst DPW is encouraging homeowners to become familiar with proper septic system care and maintenance during the EPA’s annual SepticSmart Week, Sept. 14-18. The nationwide initiative promotes simple steps residents can take to protect their septic systems, save money, and protect the environment.

Every home and business in Amherst relies on a septic system to treat wastewater from toilets, sinks, showers and appliances. A properly maintained septic system helps protect public health and prevents harmful bacteria and nutrients from reaching local waterways and groundwater.

When a septic system becomes overloaded or fails, untreated wastewater can back up into a home, damage the leach field, or flow into nearby lakes, ponds and streams. Regular maintenance can help avoid costly repairs – a typical septic system replacement can cost \$25,000 or more, while routine pumping generally costs \$350 to \$500 every three to five years.

Homeowners can help protect their systems by following these SepticSmart tips:

- **Think at the sink:** Keep fats, oils, grease, and food waste out of drains. Limit use of garbage disposals, which can increase the need for pumping.
- **Don’t strain your drain:** Use water efficiently and avoid overload-

- ing your system by spreading out water-intensive activities.
- **Keep it clean:** Use cleaning products in moderation and understand how they may affect your system.
- **Shield your field:** Protect your drain field by keeping vehicles, structures and excess water away from the area.
- **Protect it and inspect it:** Have your system inspected regularly to catch potential problems early.
- **Don’t overload the commode:** Only flush toilet paper. Many products labeled “flushable” can still clog septic systems.
- **Pump your tank:** Follow a regular pumping schedule to keep your system functioning properly.



(Image courtesy of the EPA.)
For more information about septic system care, visit epa.gov/septic/septicSMART or contact the Amherst Department of Public Works at 603-673-2317.

“During those 20 years, we had some good laughs and some sad days, but we always enjoyed working together for the citizens of Amherst.”
— Nancy Demers, Amherst town clerk, speaking on the retirement of her colleague, LaVern Fucci. (Full story, p. 5.)

Bringing community concerns to Concord

BY STEPHANIE GRUND
State Representative

Throughout the summer, state representatives have been hard at work meeting with community members, school representatives, town representatives, businesses, and nonprofits to understand what is working for them and what support they need. When the legislative session ends in June, the work begins on developing legislative requests for the following year.

Any bill requests developed during the summer can be submitted during two different time periods in the fall. There is one week in September when current representatives can submit legislative requests, and one week in November when all representatives, including newly elected members, can submit requests.

Legislative requests are submitted through the Office of Legislative Services (OLS), which is staffed by a team of attorneys who help draft legislation. OLS takes the requests submitted by representatives and turns them into Legislative Service Requests (LSRs), which reference

the appropriate sections of New Hampshire law, or RSAs. The LSRs are reviewed and edited by the representatives who submitted them. Once the edits are complete and the representatives have signed off, the requests are turned into bills, and other representatives can sign on as co-sponsors. These bills are eventually assigned to committees by the speaker of the House, where they begin the public hearing process in January.

Because of New Hampshire’s structure of representation, bills are often developed locally as requests from constituents. We encourage all constituents to reach out if they need support or have comments, questions or requests regarding legislation.

Please contact us by email:

- Stephanie Grund
Stephanie.grund@gc.nh.gov
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Daniel.veilleux@gc.nh.gov

Businesses, organizations invited to join APD Trunk or Treat

BY CAPT. JUSTIN GEROME
Amherst Police Department

One of our favorite events of the year is almost here!

The Amherst Police Department is excited to begin planning our fourth annual Trunk or Treat. This event has become a fun fall tradition, bringing together families, local businesses, and community organizations for an evening of costumes, candy, and community spirit.

While we haven’t finalized the exact date yet, organizers plan to hold the event at Souhegan High School on the second-to-last weekend in October. Once the date is confirmed, it will be announced on the Amherst Police Department’s Facebook page. We encourage everyone to follow our page and keep an eye out for updates as we get closer to the event.

The department is currently seeking local businesses, organizations, and community members to join the fun by decorating a trunk and handing out candy or other treats to the hundreds of local children who attend. The creativity and enthusiasm of our participants are what make Trunk or Treat such a special community tradition, and organizers would love to see even more decorated trunks this year.

Businesses and organizations interested in reserving a spot or learning more about participating should contact Capt. Justin Gerome at jgerome@amherstnh.gov.

We can’t wait to welcome everyone back for another great Trunk or Treat, and we hope to see you there this October!



Chief Anthony Ciampoli presented the Amherst Country Club with the award for Best Trunk at the 2025 Trunk or Treat event. (Courtesy photo.)

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TOWN AND STATE GOVERNMENT

Celebrating the retirement of LaVern Fucci

BY LINCOLN DALEY
Amherst Town Administrator

On July 17, LaVern Fucci retired from the Town of Amherst after exactly 20 years of service, finishing her career on the same date she began her tenure with the town.

Over those two decades, Fucci became one of the most familiar and welcoming faces at Amherst Town Hall, alongside Town Clerk Nancy Demers. Whether someone stopped in to register a vehicle, pick up a vital record, or simply figure out where to start with a town-related question, Fucci was often the person ready to help. She made people feel comfortable and always made sure they got what they needed.

Throughout her career, Fucci saw plenty of changes in municipal government, including new technology, updated state requirements, shifts in elections and motor vehicle processes, and a pandemic. No matter what changed behind the scenes, residents could always count on the same steady, dependable service from her.

While many people knew her from the counter, a lot of Fucci's most important work happened quietly in the background. She was a key part of preparing for Amherst's elections, making sure ballots, checklists, and all the details were ready to go. Her willingness to assist wherever needed helped ensure town elections were well prepared and well run.

Over the years, Fucci built strong relationships with her co-workers and was always ready to lend a hand. Her contribution to the town and the friendships she formed along the way will be remembered.

As Fucci begins her well-earned retirement, the town is deeply grateful for everything she's done over the past 20 years. The next deputy town clerk will certainly have big shoes to fill.

The Board of Selectmen, town, staff, and residents of Amherst thank Fucci for her 20 years of service, and wish her good health, happiness, and many enjoyable years ahead.



LaVern Fucci celebrated plenty of birthdays at Amherst Town Hall over the years. Now, she is celebrating a well-earned retirement. (Courtesy photo.)

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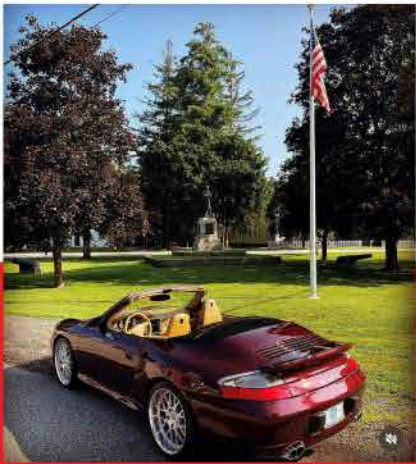
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SCHOOL NEWS

Families and schools team up for mindful technology use

BY ELISE FRANKLIN

Parents and school administrators from Clark-Wilkins and Mont Vernon Village schools gathered in the Wilkins library last spring for the first meeting of the Parenting in a Digital Age group. The group, which will continue meeting this school year, aims to help caregivers navigate children's safe and responsible access to and use of technology.

The conversations are organized and led by Peter Cipparone, assistant principal at Clark-Wilkins, and facilitated by Wilkins parents Kaitlyn Ajaka, Elise Franklin, and Amanda Gerby. The initiative is sponsored by Clark-Wilkins Elementary School and the Amherst and Mont Vernon PTAs.

According to Cipparone, the idea for the initiative grew out of a districtwide Mindful Technology Committee, where educators have begun exploring the role of technology in

students' learning and well-being. The group provides a supportive space for caregivers to exchange ideas, share experiences, and access resources while partnering with schools to promote mindful technology use.

This school year's sessions will address common caregiving questions about technology, including smartphones, social media platforms, online platforms such as YouTube and Roblox, and the ethical use of artificial intelligence. By working together, families and schools hope to equip children with the tools they need to become responsible digital citizens.

The first meeting of the new school year will be Sept. 15 at 6 p.m. in the Wilkins library. All caregivers are welcome. For updates on dates and times, check the Clark-Wilkins weekly newsletter or email Peter Cipparone at pcipparone@sau39.org.



Parents and caregivers gathered in the Wilkins School library this past spring as part of Parenting in a Digital Age, a district initiative focused on supporting families navigating technology use. (Photo courtesy of Andrew Spieler, FAIL/SAFE Media.)

Community invited to Claws for a Cause football game

BY ANNA PARISI AND ALAYNA EK
Members of Souhegan High School's Ethics Forum

Since 2022, students at Souhegan High School have participated in Claws for a Cause, the school's version of a homecoming celebration. The weeklong, schoolwide event gives students the opportunity to fundraise for a specific cause while celebrating what it means to be a Souhegan Saber. The week concludes with an invitation for the entire community to join the festivities at the Claws for a Cause football game.

This year's game is scheduled for Friday, Sept. 25, when the Souhegan Sabers will face Manchester High School West. The game typically attracts hundreds of people from across southern New Hampshire, filling the campus with activity. Sponsored tables, event merchandise, and a variety of concessions line the lit walkway leading to Calvetti Field.

Claws for a Cause events are organized by Souhegan's Ethics Forum, a student-run organization dedicated to inspiring new generations of leaders through service and conversation.

This year, students and community members have the opportunity



Snaggles the Saber, the mascot at Souhegan High School, was ready for the first Claws for a Cause football game back in 2022. (Courtesy photo.)

to support the Jimmy Fund and Doctors Without Borders. A portion of the proceeds from Claws for a Cause events and activities will be donated to these organizations, and attendees will also have the opportunity to make direct donations during the game.

Watching teachers get pied in the face and cheering from the stands are just a few of the fun traditions that accompany Claws for a Cause. More importantly, the week gives students and community members the opportunity to make a big impact through their support.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL LAUGHS

Why did the student eat his homework?
Because the teacher said it was a piece of cake!



New school year begins with opportunity, shared purpose

BY MICHAEL BERRY
Superintendent of Schools SAU 39

Each August, I reflect on why public education matters and the vital role our community plays. Before buses begin rolling, classrooms fill with students, and instruction is underway, there is an opportunity to pause and appreciate the responsibility our community has entrusted to SAU 39 and its schools.

As we begin the 2026–2027 school year, we have a responsibility that is both an incredible privilege and a profound obligation.

Throughout the summer, employees across SAU 39 worked diligently behind the scenes preparing for the re-

turn of our students. Classrooms were refreshed, curriculum strengthened, technology updated, and facilities improved. Their dedication reminds us that high-functioning educational organizations are built long before the first day of school.

This summer also marked meaningful progress in caring for one of our community's greatest investments: our schools. At Amherst Middle School and Wilkins Elementary School, important repairs and classroom renovations moved forward following the Amherst School Board's approval of facility improvements. While these projects address immediate needs, they also provide valuable insight as we thoughtfully consider the long-term future of our schools. Our goal is not simply to improve buildings, but

to create learning environments that will serve students for generations.

As superintendent, I believe my responsibility is to listen carefully, communicate honestly, and ensure our decisions are guided by evidence and a long-term vision. Communities do not always agree on every decision involving public education. Healthy dialogue reflects a community that cares. What matters most is that these conversations remain grounded in mutual respect and a shared commitment to doing what is best for children.

Our work is grounded in the SAU 39 Framework for Success, which reminds us that educating children extends beyond academics. We remain committed to high levels of student learning, caring for the whole child,

supporting exceptional educators, strengthening partnerships with families, and serving as responsible stewards of the public's investment. One area of student learning we remain focused on is encouraging gains in literacy and mathematics.

Strong schools are built through shared commitment. I see that commitment in our students, families, educators, volunteers, school boards, and community members who believe in the importance of public education.

As another school year begins, I am grateful for the trust you place in us. Together, I am confident we will make the 2026–2027 school year one defined by purpose, partnership, opportunity, and continued success for our students.

SCHOOL NEWS

Souhegan Class of 1996 marks 30 years

BY RACHEL BARKER SWEENEY

A little rain didn't dampen the spirits of Souhegan High School's Class of 1996 as classmates gathered beneath an open-air pavilion at Bear Brook State Park in Allenstown on July 18 to celebrate their 30th reunion with a potluck lunch.

It was one of at least four reunions the group has held since becoming the first Souhegan class to graduate after completing all four years at the school.

Former classmates shared food, stories, and plenty of laughter as they reflected on their time together and everything that has happened since. Many seemed to pick up right where they had left off.

Several classmates remembered the class as being made up of "really good kids" who respected one another.

"If the teachers were here, they would tell you that too," classmate Amy Wheeler said.

The Class of 1996 shares a particular sense of pride in its place in Souhegan's history. Classmates recalled first entering the school when the building was brand new, with fresh paint, unmarked walls, and a palpable sense of possibility.

That atmosphere stemmed from the fact that students from Amherst and Mont Vernon were entering not only a new building, but also a new educational model.

Souhegan was founded as a member of the Coalition of Essential Schools, which promoted student-driven learning, democratic principles, and mutual respect between students and teachers. There were no bells to signal class changes, teachers and administrators were called by their first names, and students were given autonomy during free periods with permission to leave campus. Students were encouraged to take an active role in their education, particularly through the Community Council, where students and administrators voted on school policies together. Many of those founding principles remain in place today.

Andrea Valitutto remembered Souhegan as encouraging "less rigid thinking" than the school she had previously attended in New Jersey. She recalled greater freedom and teachers who valued students' ideas and individuality.

"Let's do it again. Let's go back," she said while reminiscing with classmate Coreen Webb.

Alumni also recalled Souhegan's Senior Project, a yearlong, student-directed experience that culminated in a public presentation demonstrating in-depth knowledge of a subject of personal interest.

"You are learning so much, but you don't even realize it because it is so real-world," said Melissa Braun Lynch,



Members of Souhegan High School's Class of 1996 celebrated their 30th reunion at Bear Brook State Park in Allenstown on July 18. (Photo: R. Barker Sweeney.)

who completed an internship at St. Joseph Hospital as part of her project. She later became a labor and delivery nurse.

The reunion was coordinated by Katie Scollin Flowers, former student council clerk for the class. Flowers hoped that hearing about the class's enduring connection would encourage other classes to organize reunions of their own.

The reunion offered classmates a chance not simply to revisit the past, but to reflect on the people and experiences that helped shape their lives. Many shared a deep appreciation for Souhegan's hands-on learning, as well as for the teachers, staff, coaches, and mentors who helped establish the school during its earliest years.

"As the years pass and the world changes around us, it was so heartening to pause for an afternoon and reflect with gratitude on the people who poured their hearts into those first four years of Souhegan High School," said Flowers. "They weren't just building a school — they were building a community, and their investment in us continues to echo three decades later."

Souhegan Robotics Team seeks engineering mentors

BY BILL PRICE
Souhegan Robotics Team Mentor

The Souhegan High School Robotics Team has competed in the FIRST Robotics Competition for the past 32 years. Founded by inventor Dean Kamen, the FIRST Robotics Competition challenges teams of high school students to design, program, and build industrial-sized robots that compete in an action-packed game announced each January.

Unfortunately, Souhegan's robotics program may not be able to continue without additional engineering mentors. The team is seeking mechanical, electrical, and software engineers who are willing to share their knowledge and help guide students through the design and building process. Mentors do not need to be available every day or have prior robotics experience - they simply need a willingness to work with students and share their expertise.

The robotics season runs from October through the spring competition season, with the team typically meeting one evening each week before the January challenge is announced and additional meetings



(Image courtesy of Souhegan Robotics Team.)

as the robot design and build process progresses. The team currently includes 18 to 25 students and six mentors. Additional mentors would help distribute the workload and create a more manageable commitment for everyone involved.

By volunteering, you can make a meaningful difference in the future of Souhegan's robotics program. For more information, contact entropy1953@gmail.com.



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SPORTS

Amherst swim teams shine at 61st annual Rotary meet

BY AMHERST BEAR STAFF

Nearly 500 swimmers from New Hampshire and northern Massachusetts gathered at Keyes Memorial Park in Milford on July 25-26 for the 61st annual Milford Rotary Club Swim Meet, one of the region’s longest-running summer swimming competitions. The annual event is a community effort organized by the Milford Rotary Club in partnership with the Town of Milford, Milford Recreation, and the Milford Department of Public Works. Teams participate at no cost, with food, awards, and other event expenses covered by Milford Rotarians.

“A meet of this magnitude would not be possible without the wonderful volunteers,” noted Janet Langdell, longtime chair of the Rotary Swim Meet Committee. The event relies entirely on volunteers, many of whom return year after year to help create a memorable weekend for swimmers and families.

The meet became an official Granite State Swim Association-sanctioned event in the 1980s, when it expanded to include three divisions based on team size and structure. According to research conducted by the Milford Rotary Club, the event is the oldest con-

tinuously held Rotary-organized swim meet in the world. Fourteen teams competed this year, with Amherst’s Jasper Valley Swim and Tennis Club and Amherst Recreation’s Baboosic Lake Swim Team both turning in strong performances. Jasper Valley captured first place in Division Two, while Baboosic Lake finished third in Division One. The two Amherst programs provide young swimmers with opportunities to develop their skills and compete throughout the summer. Both welcome athletes ranging from beginners to experienced competitors, with

participants from elementary school through the teen years. Jasper Valley head coach Caroline Sousa said the team’s mission extends beyond teaching swimming techniques. “Big goals for each season are to introduce competitive swim to new and younger swimmers while teaching teamwork, goal setting, and discipline in a fun atmosphere,” Sousa said. The Baboosic Lake Swim Team is coached by Braelyn Wilson, who said the program emphasizes improvement while creating a positive team environment. Although the team does not

have access to the same facilities and equipment as some larger programs, coaches have found creative ways to adapt. “Each athlete comes in with a different background and with a different reason to be here,” Wilson said. “While many participate to become stronger swimmers, others join to stay active over the summer or for the swim team community built here at the lake.” For both Amherst teams, the Rotary meet marked a highlight of the summer season and an opportunity to celebrate months of hard work in the water.



Milford Rotary Club President Tom Young presented the team championship banners to the Jasper Valley Swim Team (left) and the Baboosic Lake Swim Team (right) at the 61st annual Milford Rotary Club Swim Meet. Congratulations to all the Amherst participants! (Photos courtesy of Caitlin Thompson and Jessica Bortolotto.)

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SPORTS

Amherst native joins professional baseball league

BY KRYSTAL MARTINEZ

For Beth Greenwood, playing professional baseball was a childhood dream. The 26-year-old grew up playing at Bean Field and the old Cemetery Fields, trying out for the town All-Stars team at age 10. Today, she is living that dream as a catcher for the Boston Hunters, who drafted her in November 2025 as part of the inaugural Women’s Professional Baseball League (WPBL) season.

Founded in October 2025, the WPBL announced Boston as one of its four inaugural teams, alongside New York, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. The league cited Boston’s loyal baseball fans as one reason for selecting the city.

“Being drafted by Boston was a happy coincidence,” said Greenwood. “I could have been drafted by any of the four teams, but I just so happened to get picked by the city I grew up an hour away from. It feels like a full-circle moment to be drafted by Boston and get to represent an area that was so impactful on my career.”

While attending Souhegan High School, Greenwood played for the boys junior varsity baseball team. Before graduating in 2018, she was part of the team during its 2016 state championship season. When she returns to town to visit friends and family, she still stops by Souhegan’s field to train.

Bill Dod, former athletic director and baseball coach at Souhegan, said Greenwood had “the highest passion level for the game of baseball.”

“Beth was a great teammate who always looked for team success before individual success,” he said. “She put in time and effort to improve every aspect

of the game. She was always there to do anything her teammates needed.”

Greenwood joined the USA Women’s National Baseball Team program in 2018 and was named to the USA Baseball National Development Roster’s Top 40 from 2018 through 2022. In 2023, she made the Top 20 and went on to win a silver medal at the 2024 Women’s Baseball World Cup.

Now, Greenwood feels privileged to be part of the inaugural Hunters team.

“For so long, we were all told that it’s not a possibility and would never happen,” she said. “It makes going through all of the hardships and challenges worth it to now say that I am playing professional baseball!”

The Hunters’ first season runs from Aug. 1 through the third week of September in Springfield, Illinois. The team practices or plays games six days a week, with Mondays off. Players also participate in weight training and mobility sessions several times a week, along with arm-care work.

During the WPBL season, Greenwood is also working as director of baseball development for Baseball For All, a national nonprofit that works to expand opportunities for girls and women to play, coach, and lead in baseball. She plans to begin a master’s in management program at Simmons University in the fall, where her concentration in the business of women’s sports is described as the first of its kind in the nation.

Greenwood hopes her career in the WPBL, combined with her management degree, will eventually lead to a role as a manager or general manager in professional baseball.



Amherst native Beth Greenwood is living her childhood dream as a catcher for the Boston Hunters. Earlier this summer, she threw out the first pitch at Fenway Park. (Courtesy photo.)



Greenwood, pictured in 2012, played baseball for Amherst Recreation as a youngster. (Courtesy photo.)

Speed runs in the family



Amherst’s Samantha Swanbon, 17, won the women’s division at the 49th annual Hugh Holt 5-Mile Road Race in Raymond on July 12, while her mother, Kristen Ewing, finished close behind in second place. The longtime New Hampshire road race will celebrate its 50th anniversary next year. Fellow Amherst residents Cathy and Mike Merra, owners of North Star Timing, managed the race’s timing and results. (Courtesy photo.)

BASEBALL HISTORY

The All-American Girls Professional Baseball League gave more than 600 women the opportunity to play professional baseball during its 12-season run from 1943 to 1954. The league inspired the 1992 film “A League of Their Own.”

Amherst 10U All-Stars deliver memorable season

BY AMHERST BEAR STAFF

The Amherst 10U All-Stars made a memorable postseason run this summer, becoming the first Amherst team in more than a decade to advance to the New Hampshire Cal Ripken State Tournament.

The team was selected following tryouts open to players age 10 and younger who participated in Amherst Recreation baseball during the spring season. Twenty-six players tried out,

with 12 earning spots on the All-Stars roster.

Amherst finished the summer season with an 8-10 record and advanced to the state tournament, where its run ended with a 9-3 quarterfinal loss to Keene on July 9.

Coaches Bryan Rankins, Chris Thellen and Steve Claire said they were proud of the team’s growth throughout the season and look forward to seeing what the players accomplish in the years ahead.



Teddy Schuyler celebrated a run against Hudson during the team’s summer season. (Courtesy photo.)



Congratulations to the 10U All-Stars on a great summer season! First row from left: Patrick Ruddell, James Clark, Ryan May, Parker Grant, Evan Goinsalvos, Charlie Claire. Middle row from left: Luke Rankins, Finn Bettencourt, John Ricci, Ben Blanchard, Drew Thellen, Teddy Schuyler. Back row from left: Coaches Chris Thellen, Bryan Rankins, Steve Claire. (Courtesy photo.)

COMMUNITY

State of the music: Amherst talent and the venues that support it

BY RACHEL BARKER SWEENEY

If you were to peek into your neighbor’s basement, garage, or barn, you just might find a guitar hanging on the wall or a drum set tucked in the corner. Amherst may not be known for an abundance of live music venues, but that does not mean there isn’t exciting talent – and great music – being made right here in town.

Some groups connect when they are young, only to find their way back to each other after life takes the reins for a while. Others meet later in life, building relationships through a shared creative language while learning what it means to play, perform, and create together.

“We’re invested in each other, and after almost 30 years of friendship, bringing this group back together was exactly what each of us was looking to add to

our lives,” said Rick Gauthier of Nothing Simple, which originally formed at Souhegan High School in 1999.

When musicians come together, their talents are often better when shared.

“There’s nothing quite like the thrill of playing live,” said Amherst musician Cameron Thomas of The Incidentals. “It creates an incredible atmosphere where people can dance, laugh, and let go of the stress of the week, and we feel that same energy right back from the crowd.”

Supporting local music means supporting creativity, local businesses, and opportunities to connect. At a time when it’s easy to stay home and watch a screen, many people still find joy in gathering at a local bar or restaurant, joining a small crowd, and applauding a live performance.



Keith Barker of the Blue Rim Shades

Amherst resident and avid live-music fan John Huseman said he enjoys the variety that the local music scene offers, from jazz and blues to classic rock covers and solo performers. For him, going out to hear live music also means supporting the bars, restaurants, and music venues that are integral to the community. Just as important, he said, is the chance to see friends, neighbors, and familiar faces gathered together, listening, dancing, and enjoying a night out.

In the end, Amherst’s local music scene is about the people who keep the music alive – the musicians who make it, the businesses that offer a place to perform, and the neighbors who show up to listen.

Venues: Where to go

Several establishments just a stone’s throw from Amherst offer live entertainment alongside great food, cold drinks, and good vibes.

- **The Brickhouse Restaurant & Brewery** on the Milford Oval hosts bands and solo acts several nights a week on the stage and rooftop deck.
- **Station 101** on the Milford Oval hosts its own lineup of craft brews and live performers, who often play in a cozy corner or on the outdoor patio.
- **Stonecutters Pub** on the Milford Oval overlooks the Souhegan River and welcomes musicians every Sunday evenings.
- **Riley’s Place** on Mont Vernon Street in Milford has become a destination for live music, with a full bar, food, professional sound and lighting, and a stage-front-and-center setup.
- **Big Bear Lodge** at the Andres Institute of Art on Route 13 in Brookline remains committed to showcasing local talent. Eric McIntyre, stage and booking manager, said, “At the end of the day, we never forget a core truth: even the biggest stadium acts in the world started out as a local band looking for a break.”



The Straight A’s

Just a few local bands with Amherst roots

Best Not Broken
Led by Amherst resident Eric Jackson, Best Not Broken grew from a group of high school and college friends performing covers into an original alternative pop rock band. They now perform across New England at festivals, breweries, clubs, and local venues including Hampton Beach Casino, Tuscan Village Pavilion, and The Peddler’s Daughter.

The Blue Rim Shades
With strong Amherst ties, The Blue Rim Shades blends blues, country, and rock through a mix of



The Incidentals

original songs and covers. Featuring the two father-daughter duos of Barry and Nicole Poitras of Bedford, and Amherst natives Keith Barker and Rachel Barker Sweeney, alongside Jonathan Andree and Tate Keegan, the band recently released its first album, *Small Town Big Noise*, and performs at Riley’s Place and The Wilton Legion.

The Incidentals
Formed after a chance performance dubbed the “Milford Incident,” The Incidentals features musicians from Amherst, Milford, Merrimack, and Mont Vernon. Their eclectic setlist ranges from Sinatra to the Ramones, with lively performances at venues throughout the region, including Riley’s Place and Stonecutters Pub in Milford, Stella Blu in Nashua, and The Range in Mason.

Nothing Simple
Originally formed in the late 1990s when band members Chris St. Lawrence, Marty Rowley, Jesse Andreasen, and Rick Gauthier were all students at Souhegan High School, Nothing Simple reunited after years apart to write and record original music in Amherst. The band is putting the finishing touches on two new albums and hopes to return to the local live music scene later this year.



Best Not Broken

The Straight A’s
The Straight A’s began when Amherst residents Aaron Burbee and Alecia Callahan met at a children’s playdate and started performing as a duo. After expanding into a full band, they became known for high-energy cover songs that keep audiences dancing at venues including The Brickhouse, The Nash Casino, and The Peddler’s Daughter.

All photos courtesy of the bands.

COMMUNITY

Amherst artisan brings Barbie to life

BY HILLARIE MCCLURE

Like many young girls of her time, Hazel Derienze learned to sew by making Barbie clothes as a child. Fast forward to this year, where she found herself attending her 34th National Barbie Doll Collectors Convention in Austin, Texas, in July. An Amherst resident, Derienze sews custom clothes for Barbie, Ken, and other popular dolls while also creating intricate food and accessories out of polymer clay and recycled materials.

It all started when Derienze’s niece experienced a house fire and all of her toys were destroyed. When Derienze bought her some new dolls, she was disappointed to find that the dolls’ clothes were extremely poor quality. Given her background in sewing, Derienze borrowed a Barbie doll and set about making high-quality, custom clothes.

“I had saved all of my patterns, but I only had boys,” Derienze said, seizing the opportunity to put her expertise to use.

Derienze was already part of the local craft fair circuit, where she brought some of her new doll clothes to sell. Word quickly spread, and demand eventually led her to leave her other crafts behind and focus solely on sewing. Her most popular Barbie pattern is a vintage two-piece shirt-and-skirt set.

At the National Barbie Doll Collectors convention, which is typically held around the Fourth of July, Derienze and other makers spend a week together each year selling their creations and discussing innovations in the industry. It’s there that serious Barbie collectors flock to Derienze, remembering her for the quality of her craftsmanship.

In 2012, Derienze expanded her offerings to include polymer clay food and accessories for the Barbie universe. The items quickly became a hit at the convention, and Derienze recalled being approached by a head Barbie designer interested in purchasing her colorful macarons.

The polymer clay foods and accessories pose an interesting challenge. Demand for these items is high because they allow serious collectors to completely transform the scenes and seasons of their displays. However, creating them requires constant innovation.

Derienze’s creativity is fueled in part by her commitment to reusing materials. Her husband, Bruce, helps invent components for her creations, including using leftover sawdust from a woodworking project as soil for custom Barbie planters.



Leftover sawdust fills this cork planter, while a biscuit tin was repurposed as a pizza tray in these elaborate creations. (Photo: H. McClure.)



Amherst resident Hazel Derienze displayed some of the custom doll outfits she creates by hand. (Photo: H. McClure.)

“We save and reuse everything,” Derienze said. “I look at things and say, ‘What can I make out of it?’ They know us well at the Still Good Shed!”

Pizza boxes, for example, are made from manila folders that Bruce prints and assembles, while a metal pizza pan is fashioned from the end of a biscuit container. When they can’t make something themselves, Derienze turns to Earth and Tree Dollhouses & Miniatures in Amherst.

The annual convention’s Fourth of July weekend timing hasn’t deterred Derienze from attending. With 850 vendor spaces and a “cutthroat” waiting list of more than 800 people, she isn’t willing to give up her spot.

“Everyone at my table brings gifts to share,” she said. “This year, I’m bringing little clay rubber ducks with cowboy hats since we’ll be in Austin. It’s a tradition.”

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Attorney Peter Moustakis is a longtime Amherst resident, a proud father, and an enthusiastic T-ball coach. Over the years, he has served the Amherst community as Town Moderator, Assistant Town Moderator, and Chair of the Ways and Means Committee.

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Marriage is an exciting milestone filled with new opportunities, shared goals, and plans for the future. While many newlyweds focus on buying a home, combining finances, or starting a family, estate planning is often overlooked.

A thoughtful estate plan helps ensure your wishes are honored and your loved ones are protected if the unexpected happens. For newly married couples in New Hampshire, key documents may include wills, durable powers of attorney, and advance healthcare directives. It is also important to review beneficiary designations on retirement accounts, life insurance policies, and other assets to confirm they reflect your current intentions.

Planning for your future together starts with a solid foundation, and estate planning is an important part of that process. At Sowerby & Moustakis Law PLLC, we help couples create estate plans tailored to your unique goals and circumstances. Estate planning is not just for those with significant assets. It is for anyone who wants to protect the people they love and make important decisions on their own terms.

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LIBRARY NEWS

Mont Vernon seeks proposals for former Daland Memorial Library

BY STEPHANIE VORE APPLE
Mont Vernon Advisory Committee

The town of Mont Vernon is seeking proposals for the future use, lease or purchase of the former Daland Memorial Library building.

Built in 1909, the library served the community for more than a century. The town is inviting proposals from businesses, nonprofits, developers, and other organizations for uses that preserve the building’s historic character while providing community benefit.

Potential uses may include civic, arts, educational, nonprofit, commercial, or mixed-use projects.

“The Daland Memorial Library has been an important part of Mont Vernon’s story for more than a century,” said Juli Harvey, chair of the Mont Vernon Advisory Committee. “This is a rare opportunity to reimagine a beloved landmark and create something that serves both today’s community and future generations. We encourage applicants to think boldly and creatively while respecting the building’s historic character.”

Proposals will be evaluated based on community benefit, financial feasibility, infrastructure needs, impact on



The former Daland Memorial Library closed earlier this year. (Photo courtesy of the Mont Vernon Advisory Committee.)

the surrounding area, and the applicant’s qualifications.

Applicants should address existing property challenges, including the lack of potable water, the location of the septic system, likely Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility improvements, and any additional infrastructure required for the proposed use.

Proposals are due Sept. 18. The advisory committee is expected to make a recommendation to the Selectboard on Nov. 2, with a final decision anticipated in late November.

Additional information and the complete request for proposals are available at montvernonnh.us. Contact townofmontvernon@montvernonnh.us with any questions.

Your next favorite read

BY AMY LAPOINTE
Amherst Town Library Director

HOLLOW BONES

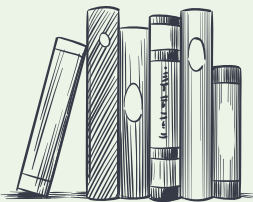
by Jodi Picoult
Already receiving rave reviews, Picoult’s latest alternates between past and present and explores grief, loss, guilt, and how far we’ll go to protect the ones we love.

THE WITCHES OF CAMBRIDGE

by Alice Hoffman
The start of a new series by Hoffman that will immerse you in New England history, magic, misogyny, and a secret society of witches at Radcliffe in the 1950s.

THE PIRATE QUEEN

by Ariel Lawhon
The latest novel from the author of “The Frozen River” is generating plenty of buzz. This sweeping historical adventure is inspired by a legendary Irish folk heroine.



MURDER AT THE GRAND ALPINE HOTEL

by Lucy Foley
Agatha Christie’s Miss Marple is back, this time penned by the author of “The Guest List.” High in the Swiss Alps, an actress, a politician, a society wife, and a doctor are characters in a locked room mystery.

THE VANISHING FAMILY: LOVE, FATE, AND THE QUEST TO END DEMENTIA

by Robert Kolker
This medical detective story is the enthralling tale of the fate of one family with a flawed genetic code, and the race to find a cure for dementia.

THE FRENCH ILLUSION

by John Grisham
This gripping page-turner has all the suspense you expect from a Grisham story, but this time in an espionage novel rather than a legal thriller. When a young couple is kidnapped on their Paris honeymoon, an international investigation ensues.



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COMMUNITY

The Trail Ahead

BY MATT LARSON



Well, it finally happened. Last month, after years with nary a peep of a bear on the trail, I finally ran into one. Literally. If we had gotten any closer to each other, we would have bonked heads.

You may be relieved to hear that this run-in didn't happen in New Hampshire, but in the South Carolina wilds of the Blue Ridge Mountains. I was hustling up Table Rock Mountain, head bent down looking for copper-head snakes in the rust-colored dirt, when out from behind a tree emerged a black bear. He'd been foraging along and somehow didn't hear me coming.

This being my first encounter, I had no body of experience to rely on for how to handle the situation. My instinct was to throw my hands up in the air and shout, "Whoa!" From what I later read on the internet, this was a pretty good course of action, but at that moment, when he stood on his hind legs and his head came level with mine, I wasn't so certain. The only thing I did know for sure was to stay calm and make myself as big as I could, so I kept my arms raised and backed away, ever-so-slowly.

Turns out, I didn't have much to worry about. My arrival had spooked him just as much as he spooked me, and in a cartoonish, caught-in-the-spotlight fashion, he walked over to the other side of the trail before scooting a few

yards down the valley. Keeping my eyes on him, I continued to slow-step my way backward until I could no longer see him.

Once I caught my breath, I realized the bear was a juvenile. Tall and lean, he had some good size to him but didn't look all that dangerous. If it had been a bigger bear, I probably would have turned around and called it a hike, but after a few minutes of clapping my hands and making my own grunting noises, I decided it was safe to continue.

Everything worked out. I found the bear again and watched him trudge farther down the mountain. I even shouted a few more times to make sure he got the idea, but he was totally unfazed by me at this point. He just kept moseying, munching along, not a single care in the world. I was glad to see he was happy and that he'd be long gone before anyone else came by. It was an amazing experience.

But maybe the most amazing thing of all was that just before seeing the bear, I crossed paths with a man trail-running down the mountain. He was wearing AirPods and was unaware I was there until we were a couple of feet apart. Only moments earlier, he had run by the bear and had NO IDEA. Unless he was a jerk who just didn't want to give me a heads-up, he completely missed it. Can you imagine? Running by a bear and not knowing it?

Makes you wonder: What else is he missing?



The rust-colored dirt on the Table Rock Trail. (Photo: M. Larson.)



The Amherst Bear in South Carolina! (Photo: M. Larson.)

KIDS' CORNER

Care to Share

BY WINONA LEIDINGER, age 14

My name is Winona Leidinger, and I recently bridged from a Cadette to a Senior in Girl Scout Troop 58250. As a Cadette, I worked toward my Silver Award by completing a Take Action project that benefits the community and creates a sustainable, long-term solution.

For my project, I created a share table called **Care to Share** at Amherst Middle School. A share table is a place where students and staff can leave unopened, packaged food that others are free to take. My intention was to help students focus on learning instead of being hungry. I also learned how much food waste was produced by schools on average every year and how that waste negatively affects the Earth.

I worked with Mrs. Gauthier and the AMS nutrition team to implement the project in the cafeteria. In March, I spoke to students during each grade-level lunch to explain how the share table works and encourage them to use it. The table was in operation for the remaining three months of the school year and will continue



Winona and her Care to Share cart at AMS. (Courtesy photo.)

to be supervised by the lunch staff this coming year.

To help make the project sustainable, I created a video that can be shown at future open houses and lunches. I also contacted other middle schools to learn about similar programs. Some already have share tables or share refrigerators, while others do not. To help spread the idea, I plan to create "how-to" flyers for schools interested in starting their own programs.

I hope that my Care to Share project will help the AMS community for many years to come.

My camping adventures

BY ZEKE ISAACS, age 8

Hi! My name is Zeke. I'm going to tell you about camping. I've been camping in Maine and at Greenfield State Park. In Maine, we did a Survivor challenge. If you haven't heard of it, it's a really cool show. I came in the final three, but I didn't win. We did a fire-making challenge, and I won that, which is how I came in the final three. We also did a pool challenge, and our team won that one. It was so fun!

At Greenfield State Park, there are three beaches. All the beaches are pretty nice. I caught a fish there with a net. It was my first one ever! It was big. There is a gift shop at the beach. The people who work at the gift shop are really nice. You can get floaties there. You are also able to get boat rentals. I went kayaking there. I was looking for the grandfather turtle, but I couldn't find him.



Zeke worked on building a fire during a camping trip this summer. (Courtesy photo.)

But I did find an old boat that was sunk into the ground. I also saw a baby turtle. It was cute and really small. My friend and I went paddleboarding really, really far. We also made s'mores over a fire and told spooky stories at night.

You should go camping because it is so fun! I love camping. I guarantee if you go, you will have fun.

ALL AROUND TOWN

Town Calendar

TUES 9/1: First day of school for SAU 39.

TUES 9/1, 6-7PM: Amherst Supervisors of the Checklist will be in session at the town hall. See p. 2 for more details.

MON 9/7: Labor Day. No school for SAU 39; town offices and buildings closed.

TUES 9/8, 6AM-8PM: State primary election at Souhegan High School. No school for SAU 39. Questers Nipmugs will be selling suncatchers in the lobby. See p.2 for more details.

TUES 9/8, 5-8PM: Pickleball Tournament at Sky Meadow Country Club (6 Mountain Laurels Drive, Nashua) to benefit local chapter of Habitat for Humanity. Details at habitatnham.org/pickleball.

THUR 9/10, 9:30-11AM: Open House for the Friends of the Amherst Library. Join us at the Amherst Library for some light refreshments and learn how the Friends support our local library. All are welcome.

THUR 9/10, 10:30AM: The Amherst Garden Club welcomes Jean Stefanik to present “Orchids All Around Us.” Meeting will take place at the Messiah Lutheran Church in Amherst. All are welcome.

THUR 9/10, 4:30-6PM: Amherst PTA Ice Cream Social at the Wilkins School playground. All Clark-Wilkins families are invited to attend.

FRI 9/11, 5:30PM: Dinner on the Green to benefit the Historical Society of Amherst. Advance ticket purchase required. See p. 3 or visit hsanh.org for more details.

SAT 9/12, 10AM-3PM: Old Home Day on the Green. Residents are invited to join walking tours of historic Village; games hosted by Amherst Recreation; Amherst Town Band performs at 11 a.m. More details on p. 3.

SUN 9/13, 8-11AM: 58th Annual Pancake Breakfast hosted by the Milford Rotary Club. Donations accepted at the door; kids eat free. At the Souhegan Valley Boys and Girls Club (56 Mont Vernon St., Milford). Details at milfordrotaryclub.org.

SUN 9/13, 9AM: 6th Annual Poker Ride to benefit Second Chance Ranch Dog Rescue. Travel to each stop, pick up a poker card, and compete for the best and worst poker hand. More details at secondchanceranchrescue.com/events.

SUN 9/13, 3PM: Healthy Kids Running Series kickoff at Buck Meadow. For kids 2-14, this 5-week racing series introduces kids to running in a fun, supportive environment. Pre-registration is encouraged. Contact amherstnh@healthykidsrs.org for more info.

TUES 9/15, 6PM: Parenting in a Digital Age at Wilkins School. Open to parents of students K-8. More details on p. 6.

WED 9/16, 4:30-6PM: Open House for the Friends of the Amherst Library. Join us at the Amherst Library for some light refreshments and learn about how the Friends support our local library. All are welcome.

THUR 9/17, 7-8PM: Join Rivka Schwartz at the Amherst Library for a presentation on Pickling: The Traditional, Easy, Probiotic Method. Learn to make fermented vegetables, including dill pickles. An Amherst Garden Club Side Shoots event. Registration required at amherstlibrary.org.

FRI 9/18, 11AM-12PM: The Silver Shield - Resilience for Seniors. This workshop focuses on helping seniors navigate big transitions, like retirement or health changes, with confidence. At Buck Meadow. Registration required at amherstnh.recdesk.com.

SAT 9/19, 9AM-3PM: Amherst Lions Club 15th Annual Car and Truck Show at Walmart. Free admission. Cool cars, trophies, vendors, food, 50/50 raffle. More details at e-clubhouse.org/sites/amherstnh.

SUN 9/20, 9AM: Operation Delta Dog Run to Rescue 5K at Mine Falls (7 Stadium Drive, Nashua). Help rescue dogs become life-changing service companions for veterans. Find the event at runsignup.com.

SUN 9/20, 2-3:30PM: Amherst Land Trust Guided Walk of Post Road Forest. More details at amherstlandtrust.org/events.

TUES 9/22, 2-3PM: Free digital literacy workshop for older adults at YMCA (24 Stadium Drive, Nashua). Topic is Windows & Mac: Working Smarter, Not Harder. Register at unitedwaynashua.org/digital-literacy/.

WED 9/23, 11:30AM-2PM: Boomers & Beyond Baboosic Lake BBQ and boat ride. Free event open to all Amherst senior citizens. At Baboosic Beach. Register at amherstnh.recdesk.com.

FRI 9/25, 7PM: Homecoming football game at Souhegan High School, in conjunction with Claws for a Cause fundraiser. More details on p. 6.

SAT 9/26, 8AM-12PM: Household Hazardous Waste Collection at 25 Crown Street, Nashua. More details at nashuapc.org/hhw.

MON 9/28, 3-4PM: ATL Reads Book Discussion at the Amherst Library. Join us for a discussion of “Blackbird House” by Alice Hoffman. Registration required at amherstlibrary.org.

TUES 9/29, 6:30-7:30PM: ATL Reads Book Discussion at the Amherst Library. Join us for a discussion of “Blackbird House” by Alice Hoffman. Registration required at amherstlibrary.org.

Edward Jones

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Joe Kenny (top) and
Brenner Webb

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Make a friend at the Newcomers Club

BY SUSANNA HARGREAVES

For more than 50 years, the Amherst Area Newcomers Club has helped local women build friendships and lasting memories. The nonprofit social group serves women in the Souhegan Valley area and welcomes both newcomers and longtime residents.

Today, the club continues to grow and evolve, offering a variety of organized activities including walking, hiking, biking, breakfast outings, crafts, cooking groups, book clubs, Bunco games, game nights, golf, and more.

The Amherst Area Newcomers Club is led by Sharon Corr as this year’s president, with Sarah Baker serving as vice president. According to club member Noel Bryant, the club has grown to over 100 members.

“Meeting people at all stages of life can be difficult, and we look to make it a little easier to find like-minded women in our area,” Bryant said. “Our goal is to help connect, build friendships, and integrate our members into the community.”

Reflecting on her own positive experience, Bryant added, “I didn’t know a soul when we moved here four years ago. Now I have many wonderful friends.”

To join or learn more about upcoming events, contact svalleywomensclub@gmail.com or visit NHNewcomers.com.



Founded in 1970, the Amherst Area Newcomers Club offers a wide range of social, educational, and community-focused activities to women in the Souhegan Valley. (Courtesy photo.)

July Amherst Home Sales

Town Transaction Report Provided by The Corr Group



Office: 603.213.8257
20A Northwest Blvd #155
Nashua NH 03063

Address	Beds	Baths	Sq Ft	List Price	Sale Price	Sale Date
35 Greenwood Road	2	3	1,196	\$749,900	\$749,900	7/1/26
59 Broadway	2	2	1,002	\$579,900	\$600,000	7/1/26
1 Tarleton Lane	2	2	1,766	\$700,000	\$700,000	7/2/26
5 Captain Danforth	3	3	1,750	\$669,900	\$688,425	7/2/26
10 Eaton Road	4	4	2,491	\$749,900	\$740,000	7/7/26
28 Spring Road	4	3	1,266	\$650,000	\$571,000	7/9/26
1 Danbury Circle	4	3	2,234	\$689,000	\$705,000	7/10/26
19 Winterberry Drive	4	3	2,972	\$725,000	\$700,000	7/13/26
22 Deerwood Drive	4	3	2,756	\$625,000	\$640,000	7/16/26
1 Cricket Hill Drive	3	3	1,820	\$669,000	\$700,000	7/17/26
166 Amherst Street	3	3	2,550	\$1,499,000	\$1,000,000	7/22/26
6 Standish Way	2	2	1,690	\$399,900	\$428,000	7/23/26
6 Milford Street	3	2	1,400	\$300,000	\$325,000	7/27/26
9 Cub Circle	2	2	1,080	\$369,000	\$369,000	7/28/26
37 The Flume	4	5	4,453	\$1,175,000	\$1,200,000	7/28/26
9 Pavillion Road	3	4	2,075	\$675,000	\$680,000	7/30/26

Note: Square footage is above grade.
Average days on market: 15

REAL ESTATE WATCH

The New Hampshire Association of Realtors reported that the median sales price for a single-family home reached a record \$580,000 in July, up 5.5% from July 2025.

Wondering if Your House is Ready to Sell?

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- Not many homes for sale
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- Have put it off for too long already
- Closer to family
- **What’s Your Reason?**

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Find your flow: Amherst yoga studios

BY MOLLY CUMMINGS

Yoga is a practice that connects the mind and body through movement, breathing, and meditation. For many people, it provides a chance to slow down, reduce stress, and improve overall well-being. Whether you're looking to try your first class or deepen an existing practice, Amherst offers several yoga studios, each with its own teaching style and approach to helping students find balance both on and off the mat.

Simple Soul Yoga
76 Route 101A
simplesoulyoga.com

Simple Soul Yoga offers a wide range of classes, including private instruction, outdoor yoga, Kripalu yoga,

family yoga, chair yoga, yoga for pelvic floor health, and customized programs for businesses and schools. Owner Michelle Wilson Folan has practiced yoga for more than 20 years and says teaching came naturally as her own practice developed. Her goal is to help students find peace and vitality while tailoring each class to meet their individual needs through a combination of intuition and experience.

Amherst Yoga Studio
2 Limbo Lane
amherstyogastudio.com

"We're not built the same, we don't move the same; therefore, yoga poses need to be adapted," said Amherst Yoga Studio owner Kathy MacKinnon,



Taylor Aselin led a morning class at Sanctum Natura, the yoga studio at Natura Realms. (Courtesy photo.)

who takes a personalized approach to her instruction. MacKinnon hopes students leave class feeling empowered while caring for both their physical and mental well-being.

Natura Realms
114 Route 101A
naturarealms.com/workshops-1

Natura Realms, a local holistic wellness shop, offers yoga classes taught by Taylor Aselin. Aselin primarily teaches Vinyasa yoga, leading classes on Saturday and Sunday mornings. She views yoga as more than exercise, describing it as a way to reconnect the mind and body. Her classes encourage students

to become more aware of their bodies while enjoying the practice.

The Attentive Practice
76 Route 101A
theattentivepractice.com

The Attentive Practice, owned by Peter Viscarola, is one of Amherst's newer yoga studios. Viscarola currently offers gentle hatha and Kripalu yoga classes and hopes newcomers discover their own reasons for practicing yoga, whether to relax, reduce stress, or improve their overall well-being.

His advice for new students is simple: "Practice your yoga, not someone else's. Yoga should never hurt."



Yoga mats await participants at The Attentive Practice, one of several yoga studios serving the Amherst community. (Courtesy photo.)

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