

Sanbornton welcomes the holidays at Christmas Social



When Santa arrived at Sanbornton Town Hall last Saturday afternoon, five-year-old John Shea rushed over to offer a cookie he decorated especially for him during the Christmas Social last weekend.

BY DONNA RHODES
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SANBORNTON — Sanbornton was “rockin’ to the jinglin’ beat” of the “Jingle Bell Rock” and other memorable tunes from the Moulton Band when families gathered for a Christmas Social at the old Town Hall, an event sponsored each year by the Sanbornton Recreation Department.

Moulton’s Band, based in Sanbornton, is renowned as being the oldest continuous band in New Hampshire, dating back to 1889. The group entertained the gathering with a host of Christmas music while boys and girls decorated Christmas cookies and worked with some of Santa’s volunteers to make Christmas decorations to take home.

“I really like (this year’s

Christmas Social), especially decorating the cookies,” said nine-year-old Philip. “It really brings out the Christmas spirit.”

His friend Nolen agreed, but joked that eating all the cookies he decorated was definitely a highlight in his day.

At the craft table, everyone was hard at work making fun holiday ornaments and wreaths from foam shapes and decorations. Little two-and-a-half-year-old Emmylou was pleased to present her mother with her newly crafted snowman wreath. She then looked around for the arrival of Santa Claus, as she was eager to tell him her holiday wishes.

“I want babies and some buddies (stuffed animals) for Christmas,” she said.

As children worked on

SEE SOCIAL, PAGE A11

Tilton Senior Center offers a full slate of programming

BY DONNA RHODES
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TILTON — Since its grand opening in May, the Tilton Senior Center has become a thriving part of the Winnisquam community, serving seniors from Tilton, Northfield, Sanbornton and the surrounding towns with its wide variety of services and programs.

Belknap/Merrimack Community Action Program was contracted to run programs at the facility this past summer, and hired Tilton resident Sarah Merrigan Paratore to lead their local day-to-day operations.

Paratore comes to the center after working for several years with the Main Street Program in Tilton where she organized many community events. She has also been in-

volved in project management and public relations throughout her career and said her new position at the Senior Center is a “dream job.”

“This combines everything I have been doing in the past, and while it is still a learning curve for me in some ways, CAP has been very supportive. It’s been great to work with them and other senior center managers in the area,” Paratore said. “The people who come here just make this a wonderful place to be every day.”

While the kitchen is not yet licensed commercially for daily meal provisions, CAP has been able to transport meals to the center each Tuesday since the beginning of November, and hopes to broaden that schedule once the final components of the

center’s commercial kitchen are in place.

“The food is really good, and the luncheons are growing every week. We can’t wait to offer them more often,” said Paratore.

The center is more than low cost luncheons, though. On a weekly basis, there are a number of programs and social activities that take place.

From Mystery Hikes, incorporating wildlife education with a nice low impact walk, to the fun of letterboxing and geocaching, there is plenty to do for the active senior.

Paratore said there is also much more that everyone could benefit from.

“A Matter of Balance” is one of the recent weekly programs that emphasizes strategies for fall manage-

ment. It is designed to address concerns of older citizens about falls and how seniors can increase daily activity levels, while not jeopardizing safety.

“We have a lot of programs focused on health and wellness. This one was developed through (Boston University) and it was really beneficial to a lot of our seniors,” Paratore said.

Other regular offerings are a foot care clinic with blood pressure screenings through the Franklin Visiting Nurse Association (by appointment), and, for a little fun and socialization, on Wednesday evenings there is an acoustical “Country Pickin’/Practice Party” session where seniors can come enjoy the music or bring an instrument and join in.

SEE SENIOR, PAGE A11



Linda Frawley, chairman of the Belmont Heritage Commission, presented Joe and Susan Rhodes with the 2012 award for “Renovation Excellence,” recognizing the couple for restoration work on their 1870’s home on Dearborn Street in Belmont Village.

Belmont residents honored for preserving community’s heritage

BY DONNA RHODES
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BELMONT — The Heritage Commission of Belmont handed out their second annual Community Heritage Awards prior to the start of the weekly selectmen’s meeting on Monday evening, honoring residents, businesses and civic organizations who have contributed to the preservation of the town’s historic past.

Commission chair Linda Frawley congratulated Belknap County Youth services, represented by Brian Loanes of Belmont, for the work done by his agency to assist at-risk youth in the area as the organization was presented the award for Community Volunteer Excellence.

“Implemented in 2001, youth from the program have performed 1,900 hours of community service in over 250 locations,” she said.

Among those locations were the Province Road Meeting House, Penstock Park and the Belmont Mill, as well as assisting in Deck the Village, the Bandstand Centennial and other community events.

Carigan Clock Company received this year’s honors for Village Business Storefront, which was accepted by owner Denis Carigan, and Joe and Susan Rhodes were the recipients of the Renovation Excellence award for 2012.

“We certainly didn’t ex-

pect this, and were a bit surprised because we had much more we still want to do on the outside of the house,” said Susan Rhodes.

For 30 years, the couple has been making improvements to the circa 1870 cape and barn on Dearborn Street. They have rewired the home, replaced sills, expanded rooms, rebuilt the kitchen, stenciled walls and added features like a Russian fireplace and recently, a new stone fireplace on the refurbished back porch.

“It’s nice to be acknowledged for all the work we’ve done,” said Joe Rhodes.

Lastly, Peter Harris of Automahn represented a group of businesses who stepped up to the plate to help preserve an old penstock from the original Belmont Mill, which was unearthed in the downtown waterline project this fall. Harris, Rusty Drew of Rusty’s Towing and recov-

SEE BELMONT, PAGE A11

Winnisquam Ag Center students weave holiday magic

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TILTON — Students of the Winnisquam Ag Center are once again weaving their magic as they create beautiful holiday greenery for homes and businesses throughout the Lakes Region.

Each year, the Ag Science class gathers brush and greenery to assemble wreaths, kissing balls and candle centerpieces, which they then sell to raise money for the center and future projects.

Janet Rosequist heads the class, and said this year’s students are “naturals” at creating the holiday decorations and have been even more productive than the hardworking teams in the past.

Typically, the group offers their own pointsettias for sale but this year a problem occurred, through no fault of the students, leaving them with a stunted crop.

“The panels on the greenhouse are 21 years old, and have gotten scratched over time, so our light quality isn’t sufficient to raise the pointsettias,” Rosequist said.



Students of the Winnisquam Ag Center, have been busy creating holiday decorations to sell to the public, including kissing balls, wreaths, and candle centerpieces. Members of the Ag Science class are Sonya Beaulieu and Jessy Bouzant of Belmont High, Alexis Colpack, Collin Kuchinsky, Devin Basha and Trevor Cammett of Franklin High and Anna Brown of Inter-Lakes High School.

“We’ll have to see what we can do about that for the future.”

Despite that one set back, the class is enjoying themselves as they gather clusters of balsam, pine and other evergreens donated by Fox Farm in Sanbornton, which are then wired to frames for wreaths or inserted into the kissing balls.

Anna Brown comes to the Ag Center from Inter-Lakes

High School, and said she prefers making the candle centerpieces but, no matter what her task on any day of the week, she is just happy to be a part of the team.

“I like coming here, getting involved and working together with everyone,” she said. “This is my second year, and it’s really fun to meet new faces.”

Trevor Cammett from Franklin comes from a fam-

ily of tree farm owners and said he really likes working with his hands as part of his school day.

“This is awesome. Making wreaths makes me happy and fires me up for the holidays,” Cammett said.

Bundling greens to add to her wreath, Sonya Beaulieu of Belmont agreed. She said it is a sticky job, but never bor-

SEE WINNISQUAM, PAGE A11

INDEX

Volume 5 • Number 49
20 Pages in 2 Section

Editorial Page.....	A4
North Country Notebook.....	A5
Schools.....	A7
Business.....	A8-9
Obituaries.....	A6

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SOCIAL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

their crafts, they and their parents, grandparents and local seniors enjoyed free hot chocolate, punch, brownies and holiday cookies, which were supplied once again this year by the Girl Scouts of Troop 10639.

When Santa finally snuck in through the back door of the Town Hall, the children were delighted and lined up swiftly for their chance to meet with him.

As he got settled in his seat of honor beside the Christmas tree, five-year-old Jon Shea was not only among the first to greet Santa, but he offered him one of the cookies he had decorated earlier in the day.

Besides telling Santa their Christmas wishes, children were also treated to a reading of the story, "The Year of the Perfect Christmas Tree," by Gloria Huston, by library director Cab Vinton. Pianist Mary Ruth Scott then brought everyone together to sing classic Christmas car-



The Moulton Band delighted everyone with their holiday music at the Town of Sanbornton's Christmas Social last Sunday afternoon.

ols. "I'm loving this. It's another wonderful event here in Sanbornton from Julie Lonergan and the Recreation Department," said Doug Sargent. "It brings everyone together, friends and neighbors, and it's just a wonderful gathering that keeps getting better every year."

Lonergan said she was grateful to have families come out for the holiday celebration and especially wanted to thank all who helped make the day such a memorable event.

"None of this would be possible without all the volunteers," Lonergan said. She expressed her grati-

tude to Santa, Cab Vinton, Donna Ledgard, Dolly Elliott, John Kelly, and the Stock family who all donated their time and talents to the day.

"Most of all, I would like to thank the entire community for coming out today," Lonergan said. "This was really good, and we look forward to doing it again."



Donna Rhodes

Seven-year-old Milee, all dressed up for the season, enjoyed decorating cookies, just one of several activities at the Sanbornton Christmas Social held in the historic Town Hall last Sunday.

SENIOR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

Other scheduled activities are personal Internet instruction, knitting and crocheting gatherings, craft groups, card playing groups, and sewing and quilting.

Future programs and groups at the Tilton Senior Center are wide open to all ideas and suggestions. Para-

tores said. Under consideration at this time are photography and art groups, and she said anyone with skills or hobbies they would like to share in weekly sessions are welcome to call her with their ideas.

"We held a couple of classes in Gentle Yoga and Tai Chi. I would love to hear from people who are interested in this type of exercise classes for

seniors, too," said Paratore.

Visitors to the center serve the community as well. Currently many of the women have been "knitting up a storm" to help the Tilton Northfield Sanbornton Christmas Fund meet the cold weather needs of local children. They are also collecting canned goods, warm clothing and other donations for the fund, which may be

dropped off whenever the center is open.

The center is also a resource for information about support systems available for seniors through CAP, such as fuel assistance, Senior Companions and other helpful programs.

Holiday meals will be served on Dec. 11 and 18, with a suggested donation of \$2 per person for those over the age of 60, \$6 for those younger who would like to join them. Paratore said it is requested

that people call ahead by the Thursday prior to the Tuesday luncheons to place a reservation.

"The luncheons are growing every week, and the food is really good. Everyone has enjoyed them," said Paratore.

The meals are provided by CAP, and low sodium and diabetic meals are available upon request when making a reservation.

On Dec. 12 at 1 p.m., there will be a Holiday Meet and Greet when all local seniors

are invited to stop by the center to enjoy eggnog and cookies and say hello to old friends and new.

"The Tilton Senior Center is open through CAP from 8:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and volunteers of the center's executive committee run programs from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. on Fridays. For more information on the center, please contact Paratore at 527-8291

WINNISQUAM

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

ing and the finished product makes it all worthwhile.

Kissing balls have a challenge all their own, and Devin Basha of Franklin High School said the key is to keep the round shape as greens are inserted into the framework for the ball.

While some may consider the task of making hundreds of holiday decorations an art, Alexis Colpack, who also comes to the center from FHS, said she sees it all

as a business.

"We make all of it as our product, and there is a cut-off time to get it all done, just like a normal business would have. I like that aspect of it," she said.

Premium wreaths are 20-22 inches when complete, and sell for \$15 but for those who prefer a larger wreath, special orders are also accepted. The beautiful two-candle center pieces also sell for \$15 and the fragrant kissing balls are \$20 each.

The orders are pouring in but there is still time to get

one of their handmade creations before Christmas arrives. Order forms are available on the Winnisquam Regional High School web site and should be sent in at least four days in advance of one of the two remaining pickup dates, which are Dec. 14 and 21. The forms, with specific information on how to place an order, may be faxed to or dropped off at the Ag Center office, which is located beside the main building of the high school. The final day to place an order will be Monday, Dec. 17.

BELMONT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

ery, Frank Blaney of Blaney Auto Crushing, and Tom Sleeper of Sleeper Welding all took part in the recovery and removal of the penstock to preserve it for the future. "These gentlemen did

this with only 72 hours notice," Frawley said. "Peter opened his rolodex, got in touch with them all and offered (storage) space and transportation for it."

The historic pipe was once used to bring water to the woolen mill in the center of the village. The com-

mission is now looking for ways to use and display the penstock once the village revitalization project is complete.

The Heritage Commission welcomes suggestions for future awards on an ongoing basis at Belmonthistory@gmail.com.

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