



CONCORD  MONITOR

2025

REPORT TO READERS

The Monitor's annual update to the community – what we've done and how we're preparing for our future



TO OUR READERS

A LOOK BACK, A LOOK AHEAD

By **STEVE LEONE**
Publisher

We assemble this report each December to keep our readers informed on who we are, what we've been up to and what's around the corner. It has a secondary benefit, too. It reminds us at the Monitor how many local news stories we've covered in the past 12 months and how many initiatives we've launched.

It's safe to say that we've seen more change internally than in any year in the past couple of decades. Most of the people are the same, but the technology we use was rebuilt from the ground up. This past summer, we implemented a host of upgrades that will make our journalism stronger, our products faster and our business more capable of meeting the needs of our readers. Below is a quick run-down of what was new in 2025.

Additions in 2025

Our website: So, what has changed? We have a faster website with a new design that gives our reporters and editors access to a collection of digital tools that look great either on your computer or phone. We can do a whole lot more with photos, graphics and videos. We've made it easier for our readers to pass along news tips or share perspectives through letters. We can also build out new features on the fly. One example was our Concord Votes page that gave readers a dedicated place to find all Concord election coverage ahead of voting day. If you prefer to listen to our articles rather than read them, we have you covered. All you need to do is hit the play button atop each story.

Our app: Readers can download the Concord Monitor app on either their iPhone, Android phone or tablet. You can also see a version of it on concordmonitor.com (click E-Edition in the top-right corner). Our app does many things. It allows readers to follow our coverage as soon as it's posted. You can adjust the font size or the background color. You can also save articles for later and set certain categories as favorites. You can also use the app to read the e-paper, which is a digital replica of the newspaper. This is an enormously popular feature. Many digital readers still love the look and feel of the daily newspaper, and this product gives them all the benefits that come with the daily paper without the need to fetch it from the driveway in the morning.

Other new products: We've introduced curated newsletters that allow our editors and reporters to add new context



ON THE COVER

Clockwise from top: (All photos by Geoff Forester). Pembroke players storm the court after they won the D-II Boys Basketball Championship in March; Lauren Silvestri digs into her strawberry rhubarb ice cream at Richardson's Ice Cream stand in Boscawen; Krystine Flythe is a volunteer in Dunbarton; Deborah Eckland (left) gets a hug from Helping Hands staff member Fran Raudonis after the service for her brother, Glenn Chrzan, at the New Hampshire Veteran Cemetery in Boscawen; Cady Hickman and Cameron Green walk down the path in front of the State House after getting married during Market Days; John Kanu, 3, at the Naturalization ceremony at the Federal Courthouse; Floyd Severance still fits in his World War II uniform from 83 years ago.

to our collection of articles. We've heard from many readers who love that they feel like they are now getting the news from the voice of a reporter or editor. They appreciate the background and the personalized feeling it evokes. We've also launched a new podcast that we tell you all about on Page 9 of this report.

Ahead in 2026

We plan to hear from as many readers as possible in the coming year. We're doing this in two major ways. First, we'll have a lot more in-person events where we can hear from you directly. (Stay tuned for details). Second, we're building new

tools that will help us better understand which stories are most valued by our readers. The more we listen, the better we can be at meeting your needs and interests.

Newspaper of the Year

The Monitor was again named the best newspaper of its size in New England. We've won the honor three straight years. The Monitor was also honored for its reporting on the critical Rundlett Middle School vote. You can read more on that on Page 6. These awards are a reflection of a talented and ambitious staff that's made possible by continued support from our subscribers and advertisers. We truly feel that our communities are healthier when they include an independent press, and you help us fulfill that mission.

Use of AI

It's hard to overstate how big an impact artificial intelligence will have on the world around us. In some cases, it will make us all infinitely more capable. In other ways, it has the potential to erode some of our society's bedrock principles.

Here at the Monitor, we are starting to incorporate AI into our daily processes, but only with human oversight at every step. That means we're using AI to do things like transcribe interviews, gather information from meetings we could not attend, dig through documents and make our stories easier to find in Google searches. We are not using AI to write stories, and we are not using it to create images.

The Monitor has an AI policy at the bottom of our website. Nothing is more important to us than building and maintaining the trust of our reporting. We continue to hold all our journalism to the same editorial standards of accuracy, fairness and accountability.

You'll still see his photos

When many of our readers think of the Monitor, the face that comes to mind is Geoff Forester, our longtime photo editor and New Hampshire Photographer of the Year.

Geoff, who started with the Monitor in the 1980s, left for the Boston Globe before returning in 2014. Many of the Monitor's most memorable photos over the past decade have come from Geoff's very capable eye. This fall, he moved into a part-time freelancer position. These days, he's still shooting assignments every week for the Monitor, so you'll still see "Photo by Geoff Forester" through all our publications.

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CONCORD MONITOR

The Concord Monitor started in 1864 and has published daily since. The Monitor is owned by Newspapers of New England, a family-run company that includes the Valley News (West Lebanon, N.H.), the Monadnock Ledger-Transcript (Peterborough, N.H.), the Daily Hampshire Gazette (Northampton, Mass.), the Recorder (Greenfield, Mass.) and the Athol Daily News (Athol, Mass.)



**Steve Leone,
Publisher**

Steve joined the Monitor as editor in 2014 and became publisher in 2020. He's responsible for all departments at the Monitor.

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Visit concordmonitor.com/Opinion and select "Submit Letter to the Editor"

CORRECTIONS POLICY:

Our goal is to always provide accurate information. If we learn that information we published is factually inaccurate we will publicly correct the mistake as soon as possible. In print, corrections and clarifications run on either Page 2 or Page 3. They are also added as an Editor's Note either above or below a previously published online article. To report inaccuracies, please email news@cmonitor.com.

CONNECT WITH US WHO TO CONTACT

Those on this page can best be reached by email. Their addresses include their first initial followed by their last name @cmonitor.com.

NEWSROOM



**Jonathan Van Fleet,
Executive Editor**

Jonathan works directly with staff and is in charge of all elements of the newsroom.



**Rebeca Pereira,
News Editor**

Rebeca works with reporters, writes newsletters, covers agriculture and hosts our podcast.



**Rachel Wachman,
Community Editor**

Rachel leads our community efforts and features, and reports on the Suncook Valley.



**Emilia Wisniewski,
Engagement Editor**

Emilia leads opinion and engagement. She covers Henniker, Warner and Franklin.



**David Brooks,
Reporter,
Columnist**

David has been writing about environment, science and general news since the 1980s.



**Hannah Sampadian,
Design Editor**

Hannah leads the team of editors who design newspapers across our family-owned company.



**Sruthi Gopalakrishnan,
Reporter**

Sruthi covers environment, mental health and news in Bow, Hopkinton and Dunbarton.



**Jeremy Margolis,
Reporter**

Jeremy is our lead education reporter. He covers courts and towns north of Concord.



**Charlotte Matherly,
Reporter**

Charlotte is a Report For America corps member. Her beat is the NH State House.



**Catherine McLaughlin,
Reporter**

Catherine covers all things Concord, with a focus on government and planning.



**Alexander Rapp,
Sports Reporter**

Alex covers local sports, recreational sports, local news and hosts our podcast.



**Geoff Forester
Photographer**

Geoff, our longtime photo editor, is now working as a part-time freelance photographer.

ADVERTISING



**Sean McKenna,
Digital VP**

Sean leads all revenue operations at the Monitor.



**Steve Pare,
Ad director**

Steve leads the ad team and works with customers on a range of products.



**Joelle Ciras,
Operations manager**

Joelle works with members of the ad staff to deliver results and maintain quality.



**Deb Spaulding,
Sales**

Deb is responsible for classified sales, recruitment advertising and legal notices.



**Tim Brennan,
Sales**

Tim leads efforts for businesses in the downtown Concord area.



**Justin Graybill,
Sales**

Justin works closely with businesses in Concord, Bow and beyond.



**Erin Greenlaw,
Sales**

Erin covers the Lakes Region, areas of Concord and greater Manchester.

OUR CIRCULATION LEADERSHIP

Carol Dubuque is the Monitor's Circulation Director and leads all operations for home delivery and in-store newspaper sales.



GEOFF FORESTER / Monitor file

Ricky Tewksbury gathered shopping carts during his shift working at Shaw's in March. Tewksbury greeted customers from the Shaw's parking lot on Fort Eddy Road for the last 39 years before the store closed down.

Finding stories in plain sight

Ricky Tewksbury loved his job. For nearly 40 years, he gladly gathered carts from the parking lot in front of Shaw's supermarket on Fort Eddy Road.

When word came down that the store was closing, Tewksbury, at age 69, decided to retire. He experienced a brain injury at birth that led to a developmental disability. His parents refused to raise him differently.

His years at Shaw's, where he diligently carried out his duties while warmly welcoming customers, made

him a familiar face in the community.

"I like to be there and I like to know the people," he said.

His story was one of several dozen the Monitor published on the front page of the paper as part of our Hometown Heroes series.

He's one of the everyday people in our community who brightens the days of others and asks for nothing in return. They are right there for all of us to see, but it's nice to stop and recognize them.

His family called and asked us if

we were interested in writing about Ricky. Rachel Wachman got right to work.

The response to the story printed in April was heartening. Not only was it one of the most read articles on concordmonitor.com, it generated lots of appreciation on Facebook.

"You've always been such a great worker and so friendly to everyone," one reader wrote. "I will miss seeing you and saying hello at Shaw's as will many other customers. You deserve a happy and healthy retirement."

Looking inside EFAs

As lawmakers debated expanding New Hampshire's school choice program by making education freedom accounts available to any family, regardless of income, Jeremy Margolis sought to analyze the program to give readers the information to make up their own minds.

His reporting became a five-part series of stories called Inside EFAs.

He relied heavily on the documents to uncover that nearly 90% of the money spent on tuition goes to religiously-affiliated schools, which has spurred a corresponding enrollment boom. The analysis also found that families spent more than half a million dollars during the 2022-23 school year on activities that are typically considered extracurricular, including \$46,000 at area ski mountains, \$35,000 at martial arts schools, and \$16,000 at equestrian facilities.

The EFA program was ultimately opened to all families in the state, which nearly doubled participation and spending.

Keep your eyes out for more on this issue in 2026.

Leave those phones alone

When you want to know what people think about an issue, it's best to ask those who are directly affected.

That's what Jeremy Margolis did when he reported on the proposed bell-to-bell cell phone ban in New Hampshire schools.

He organized panels of students, parents, teachers and administrators to report on their unique perspectives. Once the school year started, he followed up with them to see if their hopes or fears had materialized.

Despite all the hand-wringing and concern about how schools would implement such a monumental change in such a short amount of time, the program is widely viewed positively in schools. It has shown signs of helping students regain focus and boost achievement.

Going beyond covering meetings

Jennifer Ouellette went to the Bow Select Board with a heartfelt request.

She wanted the town to relax its police enforcement of the curfew at the Evans Cemetery, where her two sons, Gavin and Nicholas, are buried.

She wanted the freedom to visit them, whether it was dark or not, to talk and say "goodnight."

Reporter Sruthi Gopalakrishnan

was at the meeting to cover the pressing issues on the agenda, like any of our reporters.

Sruthi called Ouellette the next day and asked if she wanted to talk. They met at the cemetery where Ouellette goes each day to sit by the headstone that marks the grave of her boys.

Ouellette wasn't alone in her frustration.

The Hyslop family often feels emotionally compelled to visit the cemetery outside of the town's dusk-to-dawn curfew.

"Grief has no time schedule," said Bill Hyslop. "When it hits you, it hits you like a hammer."

The community rallied in support.

The town worked out a solution to allow families to request a waiver to visit their loved ones after hours.



Jason 'Jay' Clapp loads a bale of hay from his flatbed truck to the family 1928 Ford Model A truck to feed his cows on the family farm on Clinton Street.

GEOFF FORESTER / Monitor file

He's still geeking out after 10 years

Science columnist David Brooks, known affectionately as the Granite Geek, celebrated his tenth year at the Monitor this year. On the day of his anniversary, he arrived at the office to find he'd left his laptop at home — a comedic inconvenience the universe must have reserved for the paper's wittiest writer.

In 2025, Brooks lasered his focus on AI and Bitcoin, sang praises for renewable energy solutions and dispelled many myths, in particular the scuttle that the Monitor had moved from our building near Sewalls Falls (we did move our office, but only up one floor).

He introduced readers to the most unusual college in New England, the Center for Cartoon Studies, and more than one innovative solution: balcony solar, municipal textile recycling, genetically modified American chestnut trees and the idea of eating invasive species.

No question was small enough to investigate. How come the Merrimack River didn't run out of water, given how little it rained in the summer? And when a reader wondered about a plaque atop Mt. Kearsarge, he climbed the peak to scope out its condition.

Always the tech-lover, he also began covering his columns in a new medium, weekly vertical videos for the Monitor's growing number of social media followers.

No one can stop the Granite Geek.

Future-proofing farms and the local food system

Concord Monitor news editor Rebeca Pereira wrote consistently about New Hampshire's small farms — imperiled by climate change, stalled federal grants and financial headwinds — and how they're still sustaining the local food system with ingenuity and persistence.

In marking their 100th anniversaries this year, Clapp and Morrill farms demonstrated that the key to longevity involves embracing change. The challenge of preserving the farm

business led some, like the owners of Lewis Farm, to pursue agritourism, even when faced with resistance from neighbors and city leaders. In May, the New Hampshire Food Alliance released a roadmap for strengthening the state's farms and food producers, offering numerous recommendations for solving the problems of today and tomorrow, like housing and farming's competing land use needs.

Not every attempt to move toward innovation succeeded. Farmers who

believed they could rely on USDA grants to support their renewable energy goals expressed their betrayal when the federal government froze those funds.

The future of farming depends, too, on a rising generation of young people. At the Hopkinton State Fair, 4-H participants shared with Pereira the joys and sorrows of raising livestock for slaughter. "If you grow attached to one, it can put a hole in your heart for a while," one said.

A path for healing, awareness

The last run Anna O'Reilly logged on the popular running app Strava started on Kearsarge Avenue in Hopkinton, where more than 400 of her friends, family and community members began the same four-mile loop honoring her in August. It was part of the Monitor's ongoing coverage that helps erode the stigma surrounding mental health challenges.

O'Reilly was a cross-country star during her time at Hopkinton High School. She took her own life in early July.

Sports reporter Alexander Rapp

wrote about the benefit run, which raised \$12,000 for suicide prevention through the Connor's Climb Foundation. Anna's coach remembered her as a talented athlete with an infectious spirit, and her best friend remembered how deeply she valued friendship.

The day of the run, as hundreds of participants lined up in their lilac shirts, Anna's parents said they hoped the community's show of solidarity would be balm for their grief. They came together not only to help but to collectively "heal."



File

Participants ran to show their support for mental health awareness.

Housing shortage in region

Across the Capital Region, pitched disputes over housing and development prompted questions about local control and the lengths to which municipalities should be expected to go in order to alleviate the state's constrained housing supply.

Over the summer, zoning board members in Warner shot down a three-story, 34-unit workforce housing project. Meanwhile, a series of housing bills passed in the State House this year indicate lawmakers' increasing willingness to strong-arm towns into development-friendly zoning reforms and to override locals' concerns about preserving a town's "character."

Reporters Charlotte Matherly and Catherine McLaughlin questioned whether these laws would make a difference. They visited the site of the first accessory dwelling unit to be built in Concord to learn more.

Coverage about building housing gave way to stories about losing it. In November, Matherly profiled Dana Colburn, a man separated from all his belongings following his eviction in Antrim. A judge granted Colburn an extension to reclaim his things later that month.

Remembering those with nowhere to go

Dying outside alone became a tragic reality for many people living in Concord without permanent housing.

As the local newspaper, the Monitor tried to tell the stories of these individuals by talking to their loved ones and revealing in some cases, how they were so close to finding a place to live.

In a series of stories called simply "Remembered," Catherine McLaughlin introduced readers to the people who often have no obituary in the paper.

They often led troubled, complicated lives, including run-ins with police and criminal convictions. But their loss is felt immensely by those who knew and loved them. To friends, family and neighbors, these individuals were mentors, artists, protectors and companions.



CATHERINE McLAUGHLIN / Monitor file

Longtime math teacher Amy Golden speaks in favor of a new Concord middle school.

Middle ground for new school

After years of debate, contentious meetings, charter amendments and changes of plans, the decision was finally made to build a new middle school in Concord right next to the old one, and then demolish the existing building.

The \$155 million cost still felt like a steep price for residents, even those who supported building a new school.

"We're not a Bedford or a Londonderry or some other affluent community," resident Pat DeAngelis said. "We're a predominantly middle and lower-middle-class city. Please try to keep that in mind."

One of the biggest advocacy

groups turned out to be teachers. They came out to the school board meetings wearing Blue Dukes T-shirts and implored the school district to move forward with some plan.

Sixth-grade math teacher Amy Golden, who has taught at Rundlett for 25 years, led community tours of the building to give the public a glimpse at the conditions inside.

"Some things can't be patched up," she told school board members the night they approved the project.

Perhaps as an olive branch to the community, this school can be designed and engineered to last more than 65 years before it's bulldozed to

make way for something newer and shinier. Hopefully, they'll use less concrete and a little more wood, stone and steel that can be better maintained over time.

Cambridge-based design firm HMFH is being paid \$13 million for its work on the project. It shouldn't be an outlandish request to ask them for a New England structure that can last for more than a century. We invite them to build a piece of history in Concord.

The school district is already taking nominations to name of the new building. The Monitor will be there every step of the way.

We dove deep on local election coverage

The Monitor's extensive coverage of Concord's municipal election, culminating in our voter guide, Concord Votes, empowered residents to make informed judgments about the candidates and questions on the ballot this year.

We made the project free to anyone who visited concordmonitor.com.

The project, spearheaded by city reporter Catherine McLaughlin and State House reporter Charlotte Matherly, with additional help from many members of our staff, pro-

duced a lengthy list of candidate profiles, explainers and other stories. Candidates faced one another in two moderated panels, one series of sit-downs with ward-specific candidates recorded at Concord TV's studios and made available to voters online and another in-person forum featuring candidates for city-wide offices.

Incumbents won the day in Concord. Yet, on-the-ground reporting and nuanced analysis of the election results showed a lessening resistance to young candidates and newcomers. Many voters, even those

who affirmed their belief in incumbent candidates, clamored for change. Affordability was the word of the day. Jenny Boesch, a teacher at the Derryfield School who lives in Ward 5, for instance, worried that with so many capital expenditures, "we may be over-committing ourselves."

Democracy figured into our reporting, too, as new voter registration laws went into effect, causing several voters to be turned away at the polls in Concord and across New Hampshire.



Morgan McInerney looks over the mail that still comes to her burned-out apartment in Franklin that was their home until a fire displaced them earlier this month. Franklin firefighters saved her dog, Boston and her son, Blake was able to rescue their two cats and get out safely.

GEOFF FORESTER / Monitor file

Losing everything in an instant

Few things can deliver such instant devastation to a family as a fire.

After flames rendered multiple homes uninhabitable this fall, Rachel Wachman spoke to individuals who were trying to rebuild their lives amid the ashes.

From pots and pans, stuffed animals, clothing, furniture, and everyday knick-knacks, they struggle to find ways to replace the objects that once made up

their lives.

“I probably should have been more grateful for the things that we did have before the fire,” said 19-year-old Blake McInerney of Franklin. “But there’s definitely things to be grateful for. Like myself, I’m grateful for my family and my animals, and that’s kind of really all that I need, because after that, you can see how quickly everything can be taken away.”

Since then, the Monitor has reported on multiple other fires, some of them fatal.

We strive to tell readers what happened as soon as we can, but also convey what is lost.

This month, Emilia Wisniewski sat with the family of Ron Fowler as they sifted through a box of photos after he died in a fire in Boscawen.

“He was very kind, willing to help anybody,” his daughter Chrystal Fowler-Griffith said.



JAY HEATH

Firefighters battle a blaze in Dunbarton.

Flames through the camera lens

Jay Heath, an emergency dispatcher for 37 years from Penacook, is a familiar face at area fires.

“It’s my labor of love, something I’ve done my whole life,” Heath said.

Most of the fire photos readers see in the Monitor with flames billowing out of buildings are taken by Heath, who sends in his work for us to publish.

He’s not there to capture tragedy and devastation as much as he is to document the people doing their jobs.

“Anybody can take a picture of a burning building. I want to show the firefighters,” Heath said. “I’m documenting the guys doing the work. These guys risk their lives every day.”

As a former call firefighter in Pembroke, Heath has his own turnout gear with his name on it so the firefighters know who he is and what he’s doing.

“I’ve been doing this so long, I get access to most of the scenes,” Heath said.

He got interested in photography at a young age and got better by taking classes. As a teenager, he joined the fire explorers and then the fighting academy.

It made perfect sense to fuse his two passions, firefighting and photography.

Training is vital

Multiple Monitor reporters attended professional development seminars in 2025, including the New England First Amendment Institute in Boston and the Ravitch Fiscal Reporting Workshop in New York.

Reporter Charlotte Matherly was accepted into a data reporting fellowship in partnership with the Investigative Editing Corps, which is the same organization that helped us produce our Seized and Sold series in 2024.

Matherly will focus on the growth of tax exempt properties across NH and how that affects local tax burdens.

Looking beyond their Statehouse votes

Whether lawmakers vote their conscience or the way their party wants them to can be a vexing decision.

What happens behind the scenes when they break ranks is less obvious. Charlotte Matherly explored the political consequences for both Republicans and Democrats when their votes upset party powerbrokers.

Peterborough Democrat Jonah Wheeler supported legislation that would allow the separation of bathrooms by biological sex instead of gender, which was opposed by his party.

The ensuing punishments can take various forms, some more extreme than others. Sometimes it’s a re-

assignment, like in Wheeler’s case, while others lose their spot on their committee altogether without getting a new placement. A slap on the wrist can come in subtler forms, like moving someone’s seating assignment in the House chamber.

Republicans who spoke to the Monitor pointed to a strong-arm culture emanating from the higher-ups, which includes several representatives who were ousted from their committee assignments.

This type of reporting can get lost amid the name-calling and high-stakes nature of national politics, but it’s the type of insightful examination the Monitor strives to deliver to its readers as it covers the news of the day from the New Hampshire Statehouse.

Partnerships bring readers more news

So, what exactly is a Community Partnership? At the Monitor, these are locally focused businesses, foundations and organizations that appreciate and understand the civic and societal role of local news. They sign up for one-year commitments that align some of our content with their values. Their support, in turn, makes our newsroom more capable of producing the type of work that sets us apart.

Their logo will appear alongside ar-

ticles in the Concord Monitor in print and on our e-edition, and we recognize them on our website. But they have no influence over the stories we choose to write.

In short, they're partners because they recognize that our corner of the world is better when we have a locally owned and run independent newsroom.

By nature, these partnerships are not meant to last forever. New part-

ners come and go every year. We'd like to thank both Ledyard Bank, which helped us launch Hometown Heroes at the height of the pandemic, and Dartmouth Health, which helped us launch our Athletes of the Week. Both of those features will need new Community Partners to move forward.

If you're interested in hearing about how to become a Community Partner, contact publisher Steve Leone at sleone@cmonitor.com.

Below, you'll see three new partnerships we developed in 2025.

Everyday Wellness

Every other week, we publish an article that's meant to give readers tips, ideas and inspiration for a healthier life. Sometimes, we'll focus on the types of exercise that are perfect for the season. Other times, we may take a look at programs that help ease stress or ones that offer guidance on lifestyle. Our goal with these articles is to give you a better sense of the options and connections you have in your own back yard.

Arts Ahead

The arts and entertainment scenes are a key part of our local economy and, frankly, what makes this such a great place to live. Each Wednesday, we bring you some suggestions on what's on tap in the weekend ahead.

Athlete of the Week

We love covering games and telling you how the local teams performed. But we also relish the opportunity to introduce you to some of the local athletes who put so much time and effort into their craft. Once a week, we name a local Athlete of the Week. Sometimes this comes as a nomination or suggestion. Other times, our staff picks the athlete based on a recent performance. The weekly feature is more than a story. It's a Q&A that gives you insight into the person as much as the player. Plus, we illustrate the feature with a baseball-style trading card.

Our 2025 community partners

WHO THEY ARE AND HOW IT WORKS

The Monitor has several community partners that help directly support coverage on specific issues, from education to politics. These partnerships help us sustain our award-winning coverage. This list below details who is supporting what type of coverage. In all cases, our community partners do not influence what the Monitor covers or how we cover it. The Monitor maintains editorial control in all circumstances.

EDUCATION



Monitor education beat covers the classroom to the state house and everything in between with the support of the Barr Foundation.

WELLNESS



Concord Hospital is our community sponsor for our twice-monthly article on wellness in the Capital Region. The goal is this partnership is to highlight opportunities that help foster health and wellness.

BECOME A PARTNER

Find out how to become a Community Partner. Contact publisher Steve Leone at sleone@cmonitor.com

ARTS AHEAD

The weekly column from Monitor staff offers tips for what to do and try in the coming days. Mark your calendars.



MERRIMACK COUNTY SAVINGS BANK

LOCAL SPORTS

During the high school seasons, we bring you daily game summaries from across the region.



STATEHOUSE REPORTING

Coverage of the top issues coming out of the statehouse in Concord and impacting all corners of New Hampshire.



HOMETOWN HEROES

A weekly story about someone in our communities that has gone above and beyond. You make a nomination and Monitor editors select the recipients.



TOP ATHLETES

A weekly recognition of local Athletes of the Week, picked by Monitor sports



HAVE AN IDEA

Send story tips and suggestions to concordmonitor.com/submit-a-news-tip



Monitor file

Business leaders gathered at the Bank of NH Stage in the fall for a celebration of the Cappies.

Celebrating local businesses

This year, we marked 15 years of the Cappies, the Concord Insider's annual Best Of competition, which recognizes our readers' picks for the best local businesses across a range of categories, from automotive and shopping to food and weddings.

The Cappies is always a big event for our readers and for us. It's their chance to vote on which businesses and which services they turn to when the buying season comes, the dinner bell rings or when crisis hits.

To honor that milestone, we threw a party – well, maybe more of a business networking event, but it sure felt festive. In September, we invited individual winners across our 12 categories to an event at the Bank of New Hampshire stage. We served up food from Constantly Pizza and got to connect more deeply with the companies and the people that make the Capital Region such a great place to live and do business.

We also published two special edi-

tions of the Insider: One to honor all the winners across all categories, and another that focused on key businesses that emerged in each of the 12 categories. We called that Top Cap, and it's a feature we're likely to continue in 2026.

If you're a business in the Capital Region, and you'd like to hear more about the Cappies and how to better promote your business, contact advertising director Steve Pare at spare@cmonitor.com.

Global voices

Concord Monitor editor Jonathan Van Fleet and staff meet several times a year with international visitors to the state through the World Affairs Council of New Hampshire to discuss American journalism, access to records and freedom of speech.

In a typical year, the Council will host nearly 250 visitors from more than 100 countries, and many of them visit the Monitor offices.

The discussions are informal but continue to be meaningful exchanges about freedom of the press, government power, and the media landscape around the world.

A new generation

We hear all the time from readers who grew up with the Monitor on the kitchen table. Eventually, they too became dedicated readers as adults.

As the media landscape has changed, we recognize that we're not found on as many kitchen tables these days. That means younger readers don't necessarily grow up knowing who their local news source is – or even why local news matters. We're setting out to make better connections with our younger communities by meeting with them, hearing their stories and understanding their needs. We describe some of that work on Page 11. But in addition to that the group of students who come regularly to our office, we also visit classrooms across the region. Our reporting staff has held listening sessions at Concord High, NHTI and St. Paul's School. There's more in come in 2026.

Listen up! Find our podcast

The Monitor Weekly is, as you may have guessed, exactly what it sounds like – no pun intended!

Each week, the podcast's hosts, Rebeca Pereira and Alexander Rapp, recruit reporters from our newsroom to discuss one of their recent stories and the reporting process behind that headline. They offer behind-the-scenes, on-the-ground insights into what they consider to be some of the biggest stories in the capital region, from cold cases to local elections.

The Monitor believes in the power of audio to tell compelling human stories, the bedrock of our journalism. Our approach to local news is people-centered and narrative-based. The podcast leads with community members' voices and stories, and the hosts take an interest in the minutiae and personal histories that make them three-dimensional. Embarking on an audio reporting project felt like a natural extension of the work the Monitor was already doing.

It also presented an opportunity to reach a broader audience and for our existing audience to gain more access to our newsroom. We hope the podcast will provide younger news consumers with a meaningful doorway into their own communities, spurring an interest in civic engagement and staying informed.

Our established readers know that, apart from our personalized newsletters and the individual flair of each reporter's writing, there aren't many opportunities to glean who we are as people or to understand our reporting procedures.

Tell us what you think. Send comments to news@cmonitor.com.



Monitor file

Alexander Rapp hosts the Monitor Weekly podcast with Rebeca Pereira.

REPORT TO READERS

A state-wide partnership that keeps growing

In the days after we all learned about COVID-19 (in those days it was referred to as the coronavirus), a group of New Hampshire news organizations set out to do what seemed like an impossible task. We decided to work together.

The Granite State News Collaborative now includes 17 members, including all of our family-owned news group's New Hampshire properties – the Monitor, the Ledger-Transcript in Peterborough and the Valley News in the Upper Valley along the

Vermont border.

Our mission then was clear. We wanted to inform readers from all parts of the state about what was happening as New Hampshire residents, businesses and communities responded to an ever-changing and complex situation we did not fully understand. That new spirit of collaboration didn't vanish once the public health threat subsided. In some ways, it grew stronger, and now New Hampshire stands as a model for many states that look to

us as an example of what can happen when people and institutions decide to work together.

What started out as strictly shared reporting has evolved into something much deeper as we explore ways to bring more information to more people in our state. We've been working to better train New Hampshire's reporters on technology and investigative journalism. We're looking hard at how to staff more community meetings, where many local issues first surface.

We're working together on community fundraising and we're planning to hold local events where we can come out and meet readers and prospective readers. You can learn more about how we're working with the Collaborative on a year-end fundraising campaign on Page 16. The money raised will go straight to the Monitor, or any local partner news organization you value. In the end, however you choose to donate, it will help New Hampshire journalists report more news.



Monitor file

The Concord Multicultural Festival on the Heights is an annual showcase of community, culture and cuisine.

Supporting our communities

Each year, the Monitor works to help support community organizations and events, often times by helping them get the word out to our readers through articles, special sections and advertising campaigns. Among those who we've helped over the past year are the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk, the Multicultural Festival, the New Hampshire Book Festival, Market Days and more. If you have an event that you'd like us to consider for sponsorship, contact Steve Pare at spare@cmmonitor.com.



The second annual New Hampshire Book Festival brought together authors and readers in a celebration of literature. Among the events was a book-themed children's parade.

Monitor file

Tell us what you think: We're listening

Among our efforts in partnering with the Granite State News Collaborative is a new statewide reader survey we launched in December. We'll carry this survey well into the new year. It takes just a couple minutes and it'll help us better understand what you value most.

**TAKE THE SURVEY:
IT'S QUICK (WE PROMISE!)**



2025 donation

Each year, the Newspapers of New England Foundation makes a donation to a local non-profit.

This year, we're giving \$4,500 to the Granite State News Collaborative, which will use the funds to help teach media literacy and civics to high school students across the state.

A COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Our reader board

What is the Monitor Reader Advisory Board?

It's an initiative to bring readers and community-minded individuals together to talk about local news. We're entering our fifth year and ready to welcome a new group into the newsroom.

What do board members do?

Discussion and an exchange of ideas are at the heart of this program. We rely on our board members to give their input on changes and improvements for the reader advisory board and the newspaper and our web site as a whole.

One of the biggest commitments we ask of reader advisory board members is to read the Monitor regularly and tell us what they think. We rely on our board members to share what's going on in their neighborhood or community, to offer guidance on who we should talk to, and to let us know what themes they're seeing, and what questions we could answer. We're committed to including voices from our community in everything we do at the Monitor, and the reader advisory board is a great opportunity for us to connect and learn.

Plus, they get to talk to other journalists in our newsroom and members of our advertising sales team. And everyone's favorite is the tour of the press in Penacook.

Who can join the board?

There's an open call for applications in the fall and our editors and publisher pick the new cohort, with input from members of the existing board. This is for people who are active in the community, have a passion for local news, and want to learn more about the work that goes into the Monitor. We also want members who live, work or go to school in a town or city in the Monitor's coverage area.

This sounds fun. Can I apply for 2026?

We've just selected the incoming board, but keep an eye out for our next call for applications in the fall. You do not need to re-apply if you have filled out the application for the board before. All previous entries have been saved and we do our best to include applicants from previous years.

Hear directly from members of our 2025 board

The 2025 board included Howard A. Roever (Concord), Glen Kerkian (Warner), Carson Hansford (Penacook), Stephen Elgert (Bow), Norman Kinsler (Concord), Paul Doscher (Weare), Jonathan Hopkins (Concord), Theresa Barger (Webster), Nancy Fraher (Chichester), Erin Stewart (Concord), Judith Kumin (Hopkinton), Shelly Hoik (Hopkinton), Rebecca Crosby Hutchinson (Deerfield).

"My desire to serve on the Monitor Reader Advisory Board (RAB) was fueled by fears that fundamental truths are being actively eroded by those politically anointed to protect them. And, most alarmingly, that a generation of young adults were largely indifferent to the consequences. Spending the last year on the RAB has offered some relief from this angst, as I have found my in-



Members of our student advisory group include, in front kneeling: **Serena Goodwin (Merrimack Valley) and Austin Vanacore (Concord)**. From left to right standing: **Isabella Reed (Hopkinton), Stefan West (Concord), Sinjir Zerveskes (Hopkinton), Faith Dudley (Concord Christian), Nausicaa Chu (St. Paul's), Grace Guang (St. Paul's), Grant Lebar (St. Paul's), Annabelle Mattie (Merrimack Valley), Zadie Taylor (Concord), Grace Bright (Concord Christian), Oliver Dickinson (Merrimack Valley) and Evan Wescott (Merrimack Valley)**.

Monitor

Introducing our student board

This fall, Education Reporter Jeremy Margolis and Community Editor Rachel Wachman launched the Monitor's inaugural High School Student Advisory Board. Modeled after our traditional Reader Advisory Board, this group not only aims to bring the Monitor to younger readers and get their feedback but also to promote media literacy and a familiarity with traditional print news. The board consists of 14 students, primarily juniors and seniors, from five schools and eight towns in our coverage area.

One participant, Grace Guang of St. Paul's School in Concord, said that the first session of the

board back in October was an overwhelmingly positive experience. "Overall, the meeting opened my eyes to the wonderfully expansive world of journalism and made me more aware of how I personally approach news headlines," said Guang.

For Merrimack Valley senior Serena Goodwin, the Board provides an opportunity to further her passion for journalism. "The Board allows members to participate in thoughtful discussions about various topics such as gathering information, sourcing, developing articles and headlines, all of which has truly helped me expand my under-

standing of what goes into journalism," Goodwin said. "Not only do I have the privilege to get mentorship from staff reporters, I also get to hear my fellow peer perspectives. As someone who wants to continue this passion of mine into college and hopefully a career, I am very grateful for this opportunity and hope future students interested in print news and journalism will get to experience this."

This year's Student Advisory Board will run through the month of May. The Monitor hopes to continue this work in future years, with the feedback of the current student participants.

teractions with the editorial team to be reassuring. Their collective grasp of the issues and commitment to reporting honest facts no matter how controversial revealed how seriously they take their mandate. Full participation from senior leadership including the editor and publisher reinforced the impression they coveted real citizen feedback. The monthly sessions are typically lively, and participatory, offering a voice to a variety of viewpoints."

Glen Kerkian, Warner

"I have thoroughly enjoyed my year as a mem-

ber of The Concord Monitor's Reader Advisory Board. Our family comes from a long line of newspaper readers and being apart of this board has helped me realize even more, the challenges in publishing a local paper. I have met a variety of people who maybe don't look at things quite the way I do (The article on the Hannah Dustin was an interesting topic of discussion) but has forced me to rethink. In a business that has had to reinvent its way of doing business, I feel the Monitor strives to be a paper that meets the needs of the local community.

Nancy Fraher, Chichester

DELIVERING THE NEWS

TO YOUR HOME AND SCREEN

Newsrooms often call their paper *The Daily Miracle* for good reason. Overlapping processes happen simultaneously throughout the day that involve a lot of people. We print the Monitor Monday through Saturday, minus New Year's Day, Memorial Day, July 4, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas. And we publish online 365 days a year. Someone is always doing something to get the news to readers. It may be a reporter running out to an event far past deadline, an editor reading an article alongside their Saturday morning coffee, a press-worker solving computer and mechanical malfunctions as deadline approaches or a delivery driver trying to juggle the complexities of a snow-covered route. We don't claim to be perfect, but we do strive to do things a little bit better than we did the day before. We thought it would be helpful if we gave you this painfully simplistic view of our story flow – from the reporter's notepad to your computer screen, smartphone or front door.

NEWS GATHERING

Reporters, photographers and editors work together to determine stories and report the news you read online and in the paper. Here, news editor Rebeca Pereira interviews candidates during campaign season.



EDITING THE NEWS

Editors post the stories online throughout the day. Along the way, they also build the newspaper that will eventually reach thousands of homes and write and publish newsletters that reach tens of thousands more.

START THE ENGINES

The Monitor is done being printed around 6 p.m. But there is plenty left to do. Our 30-plus delivery drivers start arriving around 9:30 p.m. to pick up almost 30,000 papers for their routes. They'll be delivering the Monitor, but they'll also be delivering up to a dozen other publications, like the Boston Globe and the New York Times. In all, our drivers average about 100 miles each night across mostly rural roads. Our goal is to have all papers delivered by 6:30 to 7 a.m. As you can imagine, that's a tough haul, and many things can go wrong along the way – sick kids, flat tires, icy roads just to name a few. If your paper arrives each morning, you have your driver to thank. If we've been more spotty than we should, please let us know and we'll work hard to fix the problem. Recently, some of our more rural routes have transitioned to mail delivery.

START THE PRESSES

This is where the heavy lifting starts, literally. The Monitor closed its printing press at 1 Monitor Drive in 2019 at the same time that it launched a new and even bigger printing operation in Penacook. Inside that site, you'll find two printing presses that churn out paper after paper for Newspapers of New England's New Hampshire news operations, including the Monitor, the Valley News in West Lebanon and the Monadnock Ledger-Transcript in Peterborough. Plus, they'll print many other publications throughout the day. Inside, you'll see stacks of newsprint rolls. Each roll has 7 miles worth of newsprint and weighs one ton.



OUR REACH

HOW WE HELP BUSINESSES

We often get the same reaction when talk to new advertisers. "We didn't know you do all that." We've been publishing newspapers in Concord since 1864, so we understand why some may think only of newspapers when they hear our name. Newspapers continue to be a big piece of what we do, but we offer many other options, from digital to magazines, as we build our audience. We suggest local advertisers look at it the same way. You need to reach your customer. Some buy the newspaper. Some read our site. We can connect you with both. Some may not read the paper or the website, but we reach those homes as well. Contact us, and we'll help you explore the ways you can expand your business.

Advertising contact information is on Page 3. You can also fill out a form at concordmonitor.com to learn more. Click "Advertising" at the top of the page.



GEOFF FORESTER / For the Monitor

Shoppers peek into the window at Cobblestone during the recent downtown Midnight Merriment event.

Deep Local History and Understanding

We have been publishing newspapers in Concord since 1864, giving us a long-standing understanding of the local market and audience. Our sales team works locally and believes in forging strong partnerships with their customers. They listen to your needs and formulate the best plan for your marketing needs, you don't always get this with an out of market company.

Multichannel Reach (Digital and Print)

We offer diverse options for advertising, including newspapers, digital platforms, and magazines, to build a wide audience. You can connect with customers who buy the newspaper and those who read our site.

High Print Readership

The daily Monitor prints about 5,100 copies each day, reaching over 12,000 local readers. Those ads are also seen by our popular and growing group of e-paper readers. (Learn more about the e-paper on Page 14).

10 Reasons to advertise through the Concord Monitor

Extensive Non-Subscriber Home Penetration

We deliver 36,000 Monitor Extras to homes in and around Concord, reaching nearly every home in the greater Concord area.

Significant Digital Audience

Our 12-month average for pageviews is approximately 800,000 per month on concordmonitor.com and our app, primarily from local readers. We also have more than 20,000 local readers who like us on Facebook, providing another channel for your advertisement to reach our

dedicated readers.

Effective Conversion Rate

According to a market survey, 43.4% of local participants had made a purchase or sought out more information on a local product/service advertised in the local newspaper and website in the last 30 days. This is four times higher than local TV or local radio.

Direct Email Connection via Newsletters

You can connect directly with our readers through their email inboxes

via newsletters, proprietary emails and targeted emails.

Advanced Programmatic Ads

We can reach your ideal customer across a vast network (websites, games, apps, streaming devices, email) based on factors like where they shop, online behavior, and defined socio-economic, demographic, and geographic areas.

Targeted Streaming TV Options (CTV/ZTV)

We offer the ability to reach customers who have "cut the cord" through our streaming TV platforms.

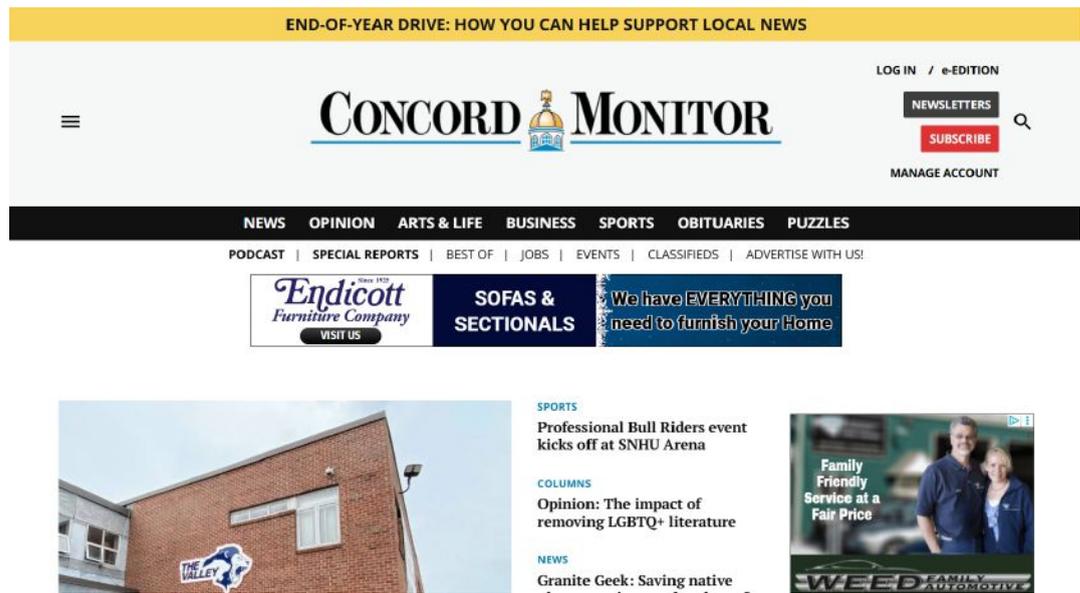
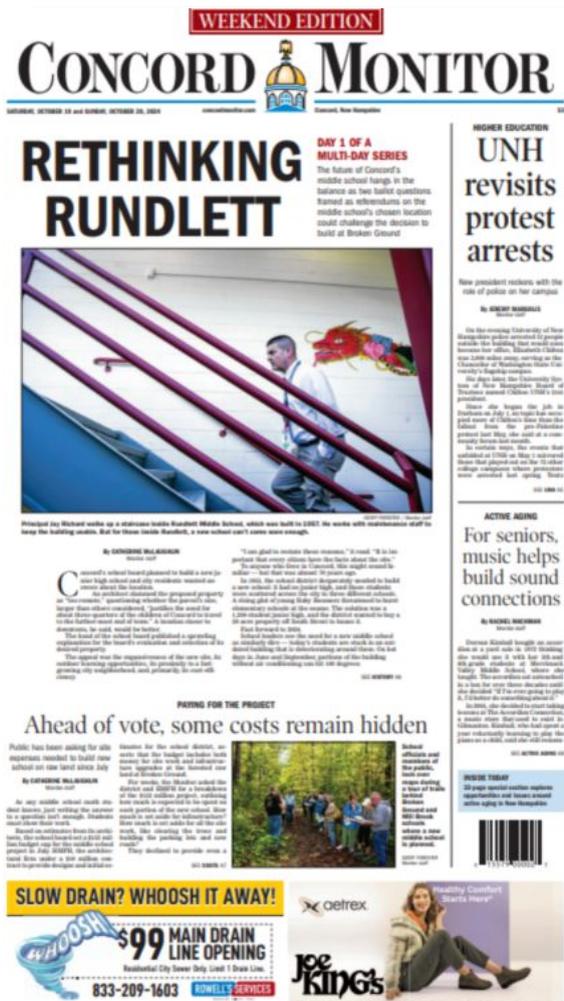
Your support stays local

We're a family owned company that values the role a news organization plays in its community. When you advertise through us, your support is reinvested in our local newsroom, making us more capable and your community more informed.

OUR PRODUCTS

READ ALL ABOUT IT

We print a lot of newspapers at our facility in Penacook (read more about it on Page 12). But a local news organization like ours does so much more. We produce a weekly alt magazine, seasonal special sections, a weekly “Extra” edition, a monthly publication called My Concord, a quarterly glossy lifestyle magazine and a whole lot more. Online, we publish all day on concordmonitor.com, and we reach our audience through Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, and with our new podcast. More than ever, we’re connecting with readers through digital newsletters. In short, we reach readers across central New Hampshire and the state in a variety of ways. Here’s a look at our products.



concordmonitor.com

Here, you can get all the local news you’d normally get in the paper. If you’re a print subscriber, you automatically have access to our website. Or, you can get a digital-only subscription. (We love all our subscribers equally!) In most cases, you’ll see the news first on our website. That’s because we want to send our news to our paying customers as soon as we feel it is ready to publish. As you can imagine, we can do that far more quickly on our site than we can with print and delivery. Our reporters and editors work hard each day to bring you news as it happens. So check our website a few times a day on desktop or mobile – you’ll be certain to find something new about the world around you.

NEWSLETTERS

We get that websites can sometimes be harder to navigate than a print newspaper. It can be a lot to stay on top of. Our newsletters help organize information by topic and deliver stories straight to your email inbox, so you can get all your news at once. We have a daily Headline Alerts newsletter, plus newsletters for science, education, politics, the city of Concord and more. Among our most popular offerings is our breaking news email, which puts you on an alert list when major events happen. You get full control of which email lists you want to be included on. It’s easy to sign up at concordmonitor.com. Click “Newsletters” at the top of the page.



THE DAILY PAPER

We print six days a week and we deliver across the region. Concord and the surrounding communities are where most of our readers live. The Monitor is \$2 Monday through Friday on the newsstands and \$3 on the weekend. Of course, you get a much better rate with a print subscription, which also gives you full digital access.

WHERE PRINT MEETS DIGITAL

THE E-EDITION

This is a digital replica of the newspaper and it’s available to all print and digital-only subscribers. So, why would someone want to read a newspaper on the website or an app? Well, it actually has a lot of advantages. Here are some of the reasons readers turn to the e-edition:

- They like their news to be organized in a newspaper format, but they don’t necessarily want to get the paper sent to their home each morning.
- Unlike the website, when you never feel like you’re done with the news for the day, you can read the edition on your iPad, desktop or phone and put it away until tomorrow.
- You have access to archive editions.
- Want to print out a puzzle and do it on paper. That’s easy – just use the clipping tool and highlight what you’d like to print.
- Plus, there are other great features like audio playback, email notifications based on your desired search term and an ability to adjust the type to the size that works best for you.

OUR PRODUCTS



AROUND CONCORD

Our quarterly lifestyle magazine gets delivered to about 5,000 homes and offices across central New Hampshire. You can purchase a subscription to get it delivered directly to your home for \$30 annually. To do that, contact advertising director Steve Pare at spare@cmonitor.com.

THE EXTRA

Once a week, the Monitor sends out the 'Extra,' a free publication that includes stories from the Monitor, advertisements and help wanted ads. We reach more than 36,000 homes in central New Hampshire, including all of Concord.



THE INSIDER

Once a week, we publish the Concord Insider, which can be found in the Monitor on Thursdays and for free at pickup locations across the city. The Insider tells you about the big events coming in the next week, and it's a place where you can connect on what's happening in and around the city.



HOW TO SUBSCRIBE

COME TO OUR WEBSITE

The easiest way to subscribe to the Monitor is to visit concordmonitor.com, and click "Subscribe" at the top of the page. Pick all-access, which includes print, or digital only.

OTHER OPTIONS

Contact customer service at (603) 224-4287 or at customerservice@cmonitor.com.

A GIFT SUBSCRIPTION

■ Many of our loyal subscribers like to buy the paper for their loved ones, especially around the holidays. If you want to do that, just follow the same process detailed above. Learn more on [Page 16](#).

Support local journalism



Subscribe to the Concord Monitor, recently named the best paper of its size in New England.

MY CONCORD

Once a month, the 'Extra' includes My Concord, a publication that features events information, ads and community photos.



SPECIAL SECTIONS

Each year, we produce many special publications that are inserted into the Monitor. These include the Bridal Guide, Active Aging, the Harvest Guide, the Holiday Gift Guide and the summer travel Staycation magazine.



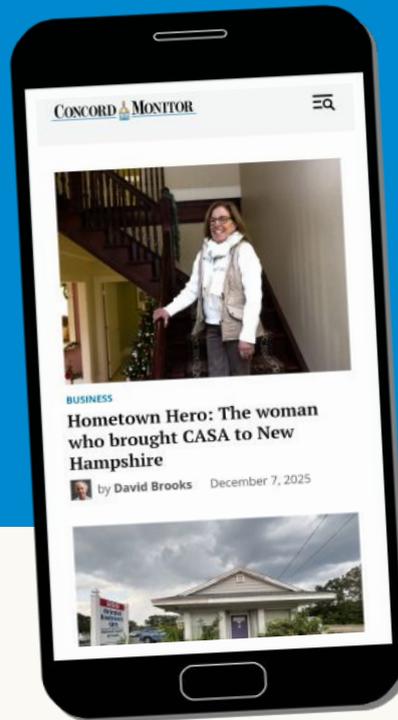
FOLLOW US



FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

You'll find some of our content on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, and any other new social platforms that allow us to better connect with our readers. Of course, this all takes work on our part, so we do the best we can to choose which platforms can connect with the most people. It's pretty easy to find us, but if you're struggling, we have a link at the bottom of each of our articles and at the bottom of our homepage.

THE MANY WAYS OF SUPPORT



Named best newspaper of its size in New England 3 straight years

A GIFT DONATION

Do you have someone in your life that you think would benefit from a print or digital gift subscription? Subscribing is easy. Just visit concordmonitor.com, and follow the “Subscribe” link at the top of the page.

A YEAR-END DONATION

Consider a gift to local news



Many of the big decisions that impact your pocketbook, your family and your community are made in planning committees, school board meetings, and State House hearing rooms across New Hampshire. Far too often, those decisions are made in front of empty rooms save for a lone local news reporter.

National and cable news are not going to cover these decisions. You won't know about them without local news reporters.

In New Hampshire, we are proud that many local news outlets are working closely together to keep that infrastructure strong. The local news partners in the Granite State News Collaborative have set aside generations of deeply ingrained competition to focus on the shared belief that our communities are stronger when

we work together.

Last year, we introduced the New Hampshire Community News Fund. It is a way for you to make a donation to strengthen local journalism in your back yard and across the state.

Through the Community News Fund, you can donate to the Concord Monitor, other participating media outlets, the Granite State News Collaborative, or a combination. Your donation will directly support news operations and strengthen the connections local news fosters in our communities. **Last year's donations helped us provide more statehouse reporting through our partnership with Report for America. This year, we'll bring print subscriptions to some of the residents at Merrimack County Nursing Home.**

Thank you. We appreciate your generous support.

HOW TO GIVE

Online: Use the QR code to the left or visit concordmonitor.com and click on the yellow bar at the top of the homepage.

Check: Send a check to: PO Box 87, Keene, NH, 03431.

■ Make it payable to Granite State News Collaborative and make sure to include “Concord Monitor” is the memo line.