



CONCORD CAP buses get a boost

The final spending plan resolved questions over city support for nonprofits

By CATHERINE MCLAUGHLIN
Concord Monitor

At one point in its budget deliberations, the Concord City Council seemed on the verge of deflating the funding it grants the free bus system in town.

In the final spending plan, it instead delivered a windfall, upping the amount of city funding to the service by 50%. The extra cash – a little less than \$90,000 from the city's economic development reserve – came with a warning that this boost did not mean a recurring increase in local funding.

The bus routes, both the three fixed courses that circulate throughout town and on-demand services for seniors and people with disabilities, are run by an arm of the Community Action Program of Belknap and Merrimack Counties.

Most of the program's roughly \$1.6 million annual budget comes from federal

SEE BUS A2

LOUDON Police prepare for heavy bike traffic

By CHARLOTTE MATHERLY
Concord Monitor

The Loudon Police Department will be all hands on deck this week, with increased safety patrols to accommodate for Laconia Motorcycle Week.

Demo rides, where fans can try out different motorcycle on a course running from New Hampshire Motor Speedway and through Loudon, will take place throughout the week.

Chief Dana Flanders said in addition to standard patrols, Loudon police will have

SEE TRAFFIC A8

CONCORD HIGH 'Mosaic of moments'

Crimson Tide class of 2026 displays diverse identities and future plans



Concord High School graduates throw their caps into the air at the end of their 2026 graduation exercises at NHTI on Saturday.

GEOFF FORESTER / For the Monitor

By EMILIA WISNIEWSKI
Concord Monitor

Drayden Nyambo had already addressed fellow students in his public speaking class and made public comments during a school board meeting. He had participated in talent shows for Project S.T.O.R.Y. and emceed at International Night two years in a row.

Concord High School's graduation ceremony may have been his biggest stage yet.

The journey didn't come easy to Nyambo: Since

elementary school, he struggled in his English courses. He came to high school and found methods that worked for him and practiced enough to receive high grades in his courses and even win an award for public speaking.

"Getting the award kind of finalized my achievement of not being able to read and write very well to being able to read and write out loud and do it in a way that it was good enough to get an award," Nyambo said to the class of 2026 on Saturday at NHTI.

Many other Concord High graduates said they

grew in their education, their talents and their identity while part of the Crimson Tide. For Caledonia Mahon, that meant growing her confidence.

Mahon moved to Concord High at the start of freshman year. She felt out of her element after being homeschooled until third grade and attending a Montessori school until eighth. But this year, she remembered a kayak and camping trip along the Merrimack River, finally landing on shore after 12 hours of paddling, and talking to peers she never

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COMING SATURDAY: A special section honoring the region's Class of 2026

BOW HIGH

The quest for exponential growth

Robotics club co-presidents Derek Baier and Dirk van der Merwe headed to Worcester Polytechnic Institute next year

By LILA DE ALMEIDA
Concord Monitor

At Bow High School's graduation on Friday, the robotics team executed one last project.

Graduates Derek Baier, Dirk van der Merwe and Colton Currier donned LED matrices atop their graduation caps, illuminated with words and designs of their choosing. Each cap had its own wifi network and, by connecting to it, the roboticians could manipulate the brightness, color and animation of the tiny bulbs.

Currier proudly tipped his head downwards to show his cap's message: UNH, where he will study mathematics in the fall.

"I started yesterday at 9," Baier said. "I was up until 3 a.m. building



GEOFF FORESTER / For the Monitor

Bow graduates Dirk van der Merwe, left, and Derek Baier, with their illuminated caps, get ready for the Bow High School graduation.

them, and then we programmed them at Panera earlier today."

Robotics club co-presidents Baier and van der Merwe led their team to the world championship this year. Aside from their electronic collabora-

tion, the two are old friends. Their shared interests and similar-sounding first names built a tight bond.

"In fifth and sixth grade, we were

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FRANKLIN HIGH

Taking life's lessons to heart

By EMILIA WISNIEWSKI
Concord Monitor

Before he even received his diploma, Jacob Osborne was holding his family close. His little sister jittered with excitement while standing beside her big brother, adorned with a royal blue robe and a golden tassel during his graduation ceremony.

Despite being at Franklin High School for only two months, Osborne had no trouble finding his people at school. One of his favorite memories was being introduced to the

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