

SUPERIOR COURT

Father stands trial on abuse charges

Son tells jury he endured years of torment in multiple homes

By **SRUTHI GOPALAKRISHNAN**
Concord Monitor

Joseph Frechette was six years old, home sick from school, and alone with his father when he was asked to go into the bedroom.

At first, he didn't understand what his father, Douglas Frechette,

wanted. On Tuesday, Joseph, now 24, sat in a Merrimack County Superior Court courtroom and told jurors what happened next.

"He sat me on the bed and asked me to take my pants off," said Joseph, pausing between words. "He was saying he wanted to show me something."

The testimony against his father during his trial for aggravated felonious sexual assault — among other charges — became detailed and

graphic.

Joseph said that was the first day his father sexually abused him, but it would not be the last. The abuse went on for almost ten years and followed him from house to house: Hillsborough, New Boston, Henniker, Dunbarton, Weare. The address changed, he told jurors, but the abuse did not.

Joseph was asked to sketch the layouts of the homes where he had lived with his family, and those draw-

ings were presented to the jury.

Frechette faces multiple charges, including endangering the welfare of a child, sexual abuse of a minor, assault, and incest. The lengthy list took nearly 20 minutes for the clerk to read aloud on the first day of his jury trial.

Joseph's testimony created a palpable sense of discomfort as prosecutors asked him to lay out what

SEE TRIAL A5

FRANKLIN

Schools facing tax cap tension

Meeting focuses on community dialogue and solutions to resolve statewide funding issue

By **FINLEY WILLIAMS**
Concord Monitor

In the Franklin Middle School cafeteria, with early autumn darkness falling beyond the windows, Justin Ethier marveled at the quality of the city's school district.

Today's offerings are a far cry from what he remembered of his own time at Franklin High.

"We were lucky to have doors on the bathrooms," he said. "I think it's never been better. I would love to go here right now."

He was speaking with Dave Pollak, a Franklin High teacher since 2022. The two had never met, even though Ethier's daughter is one of Pollak's students. Ethier's son attends the middle school.

Pollak looked on quietly as Ethier described distributing hundreds of signs that read "Protect Franklin's tax cap" ahead of the town's municipal elections earlier this month, when the city's existing tax cap emerged as a prominent issue.

As a longtime New Hampshire educator now working in a district that frequently faces difficult funding choices — between paying for extracurricular instructors or facilities

SEE FRANKLIN A6

ARTS AHEAD

Halloween stories and crochet class

By **EMILIA WISNIEWSKI**
Concord Monitor

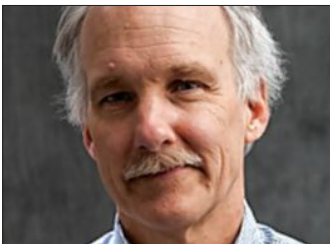
It's the last week of October — something I'm shocked to write because it seems like the fall season just got started. As much as I tend to fret about time slipping by so easily, this time I'm actually looking forward to the month's end. It's finally Halloween time!

Even though I don't knock on doors anymore to ask for candy (although I wish I still could), I still love getting dressed up and having fun with friends on a night out. I'm getting all the seasonal bucket list items checked off too: I hiked in the White Mountains two weeks ago and I'll be picking apples from a local or-

SEE ARTS AHEAD A3

GRANITE GEEK: Dartmouth's 150-year-old telescope heads off for a major restoration, with plans to bring the historic Shattuck Observatory back to life

A new look at the stars



DAVID BROOKS
Granite Geek

Its days doing scientific research might be decades behind it, but the Clark telescope at Dartmouth College's Shattuck Observatory still has one big advantage: It looks *exactly* the way a telescope should.

"Kids really love it because it is what they imaged. You've seen a cartoon of an astronomer looking through a huge telescope, and it matches perfectly. Modern telescopes don't have the same presence," said Marie Calapa, instructional lab manager for the Department of Physics and Astronomy.

The Clark refracting telescope with its 12-foot-long tube and 9.4-inch-wide main lens stands on a big stand chockablock with wheels and cogs to shift it around and covered with a finderscope, counterweights, and other serious-looking attachments. There's a big observatory dorm overhead and desks with sciency-looking stuff.

But it is still human-sized: You can walk up and peer through the eyepiece just like you've seen scientists do in movies and get a view of the surface of the moon or the rings of Saturn enlarged some 60 times.

"They don't build observatories like this anymore," she added. Modern research telescopes are massive things located far from city lights and you don't peer through eyepieces; you look at computer screens giving out data collected digitally by the scope — assuming it's not blocked by the increasing number of satellites in the sky.



SOPHIA SAHNI / For the Monitor

SEE GRANITE GEEK A5 The Clark telescope seen through a door at the observatory on Friday.

HANNAH DUSTON

New panels aim to offer context around monument

By **YASMEEN SAADI**
Concord Monitor

Three interpretive panels that aim to provide broader context on Hannah Duston, the Pennacook people and Commercial Street will soon be

erected near the Hannah Duston monument area in Boscawen.

The panel content was created by Boscawen's Duston Island Task Force, established in May as a response to State Rep. David Nagel's legislative request to remove the

statue in 2025. In January, Nagel drafted an amendment to his bill, proposing an advisory council to create an interpretive site rather than taking down the monument entirely.

Over the past five months, the task force worked on three panels covering

five subject areas: the mills, the railroad, native presence, Hannah's story, and Commercial Street. Each panel includes a narrative with photos, sidebars and a QR code linking to addi-

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