



Myles Chase, Chief Matt Canfield, Officer Sean McCormack, Bob Champlin, Pleasant Street Principal Dave Levesque, Scott Davis and Lieutenant Mike Finogle join PSS first graders Aubrey Rushton and Ryder Woodall at MC Cycle and Sport on Wednesday. (Adam Drapcho/The Laconia Daily Sun)

## Police patrol planned along WOW Trail with new bikes

By RICK GREEN  
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LACONIA — Don't be surprised if you see police officers pedaling down the WOW Trail this summer on mountain bikes.

Myles Chase of MC Cycles & Sport donated one bike to the police department Wednesday and the children of Pleasant Street School students donated \$300 to help defray the city's costs for a second one.

Police Chief Matt Canfield, who jogs on the public trail a few times a week, says it is a safe place to walk, run and ride and wants to counter any perceptions to the contrary.

"There might be a perception of crime or danger on the WOW Trail, but it's really nonexistent," he said. "It's no more dangerous than walk-

ing anywhere else on any of the streets."

Police will also put portable cameras at key spots on the trail to further enhance security.

Volunteer "ambassadors" also frequent the trails to answer questions or report any problems.

The new Jamis bikes, which cost about \$800 each, should provide dependable transportation for officers, who already have a couple of older bicycles at their disposal.

The new bikes have hydraulic disc brakes, 18 gears and a suspension that can be turned on and off.

Officer Sean McCormack will be using one of the bikes on patrols of the trail, as well as the downtown area and occasionally along Lakeside Avenue at The Weirs.

"People see a police cruiser and they are like, 'Oh, no, the cops are

here," McCormack said. "But if you roll up on them, so to speak, on a bike, it's a little easier to talk to people."

He said the bikes should help in the department's community policing mission, which aims to strengthen ties between officers and the residents and businesses they serve.

McCormack also said that when he is on a bike, he is closer to the street and in a better position to observe the surroundings or go places inaccessible to a police cruiser.

On the other hand, it's good to know cruisers are nearby.

"That's the good thing about Laconia, we always have backup close to us," he said.

The WOW Trail — short for Winnisquam, Opechee and Winnepesaukee — extends 2.5 miles from the Belmont town line to the Lakeport area of Laconia.

Backers would like to extend the blacktop through a rail corridor along Paugus Bay from Lakeport to Weirs Beach, a proposal first made about 1980. Ultimately, the plan is to extend it all the way to Meredith.

Proponents say such trails attract tourists, help the local economy and are an asset to the community.

A study is now being done on extending the trail, which faces opposition from people who live in gated communities near the rail corridor and are worried that their privacy could be disrupted.

Meanwhile, plans are being made to extend the WOW Trail up Elm Street along improved sidewalks and accessing the old State School property near Ahern State Park.

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## Police say arrow used to shoot cat typically associated with compound bows

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Carmignani said Wednesday it was her understanding that Wolfie would lose his leg.

Both Carmignani and Canfield said the arrow shattered several bones in the cat's right rear leg.

Carmignani said she is worried about how she will be able to pay veterinary bills.

The cost to have the arrow removed was \$1,000, and the estimates for the further

care were around \$2,000, Carmignani said. "It's going to be well over \$3,000," she said.

Carmignani, noting she has three school-age children, said she cannot afford to pay all of that on her own, and so has set up a GoFundMe page to solicit donations. As of midday Wednesday \$500 had been donated, she said.

The cat was shot, Canfield said, with a Mossy Oak arrow, which is typically used with compound bows and crossbows. The chief said officers

were returning Wednesday to the area where the cat was found to look for the tip of the arrow. He said the tip would give investigators a better idea of what kind of bow was used.

"It's an active investigation," the chief said. If police are able to learn who shot the cat, that person will be charged with cruelty to animals — a misdemeanor — and potentially other crimes as well, he said.

The chief said police have no suspects at this time, and

he asked any member of the public who might have information to call the department at 603-524-5252.

Because Carmignani was unable to cover the costs of the cat's medical treatment she has had to sign over her rights to the cat. She said she hopes to be able to reclaim the animal.

"I don't want it going to an animal shelter," she said. "Who wants to adopt a three-legged cat?"

She said if Wolfie does come home he won't be able

to go outside anymore, which will be a hard adjustment because he spent most of his time outdoors.

A Facebook post about Wolfie's plight had already generated close to 60 comments as of midday Wednesday.

"The response from the community makes me feel better," Carmignani said. "Everyone is appalled."

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