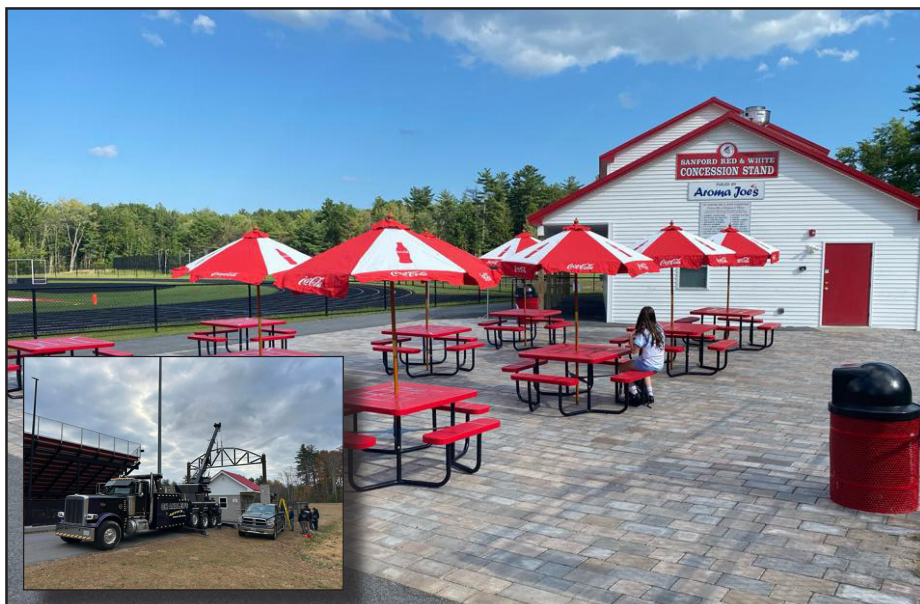


Small but **MIGHTY** promise



Among the Sanford Alumni Association members, pictured here in 2021, are, from left, Shane O'Connell (President), Lisa Blanchette (Secretary), Theresa Salls (Treasurer), Kendra O'Connell, Beth Letourneau, Kristie Blanchette, Aaron Tremblay and Amy Sevigny.

Looking around Alumni Stadium at Sanford High School and you see alumni-funded projects everywhere that make us "Sanford proud," such as the concessions patio, the ticket booth, the welcome archway made here by SRTC students, the inflatable football team helmet and more.

Alumni Association completes whopping pledge to Legacy Foundation

They're a small team tackling big things ... and smashing goals! What started off as a \$40,000 pledge to the Sanford Schools Legacy Foundation to name Alumni Boulevard quickly blossomed into \$250,000 to also name Alumni Stadium.

Seven years later, the Sanford Alumni Association has completed the final payment on their big promise.

"This achievement is truly remarkable," said Kendra Williams, outgoing president of the Sanford Schools Legacy Foundation. "This bold decision demonstrated their courage and commitment to the school's future. Through their belief in themselves and their community, and with hard work and determination, they accomplished something extraordinary."

The Alumni Association's Aaron Tremblay said they were able to take on considerable risk because of the Sanford community.

"Like the Legacy Foundation, we have a lot of people that are very committed to helping in different ways," said Tremblay, also Sanford High School Vice Principal. "We always have great community support. We have a lot of alumni that still live here, and many now have their own kids. When we put out the call, they are quick to respond."

The 2024 Spree of Trees, for example, raised nearly \$70,000 in its sixth year. That was in just four



days. The concession picnic table sponsorships at Alumni Stadium sold in a few weekends, as quickly as were the funds raised to buy the new \$10,000 inflatable helmet for football games.

"We're a small group but the support is unbelievable, between business and community members and alumni," said Tremblay.

The Alumni Association chose some key projects, such as Alumni Stadium complete with the ticket booth, the new metal archway welcome, a patio of memorial pavers and more, that without private funding would have been a scaled-down version of what it is now.

"The new stadium isn't just a facility," said Williams. "It's a symbol of what can be achieved when people come together. It's a testament to the power of community spirit and collective action."

Tremblay said it was important to this group of alumni, even more so because they all work in the district,

most at the high school. "It hits a little closer to home. We see what kind of impact we can have."

The annual Spree of Trees has been their most successful fundraiser of many, and it's become a signature of the holidays in Sanford. The Alumni Association expects to continue the tradition as a fund-raiser for the nonprofit.

Now that they've completed their pledge to the Legacy, the alumni plan to focus more on finding and fostering connections between alumni and students here in school. "The Spree of Trees will continue to be our major fundraiser, but we'll have other things going on throughout the year too," said Tremblay.

For now, the final piece of the ambitious Alumni Association project is the installation of a donor sign later this spring. Surrounded by many pieces of other alumni projects there, the sign will stand just inside the stadium entrance, recognizing some key contributors, among them Mike Gallo, Morris Hebert, John Roux and Roland Cote.

"Many of the amenities now enjoyed at the stadium are direct results of their efforts," said Williams. "From state-of-the-art facilities to enhancements that benefit both students and the broader community, their contributions have left a lasting legacy."