

A “surreal feeling” for winner of Miss Maine for America

by Nathan Tsukroff

“It is such a surreal feeling” to be named Miss Maine for America in the second year of this division of the pageant, according to winner Nicole Chamberland of Mechanic Falls.

Competing in a division created in 2019 for women older than 18 that are not currently married, Chamberland was one of three competitors for the title this year. Seven women competed for the title of Mrs. Maine America, with Meghan Gray wearing the crown after the event on Sunday at the Double Tree by Hilton Hotel in South Portland, across from the Maine Mall.

“I am beyond honored to be representing our state throughout the year and at Nationals,” Chamberland said. She will be heading to the Miss for America pageant in Las Vegas later this year to vie for the national title. The date has not been set, due to concerns about the COVID-19 pandemic. The Mrs. America pageant has usually been in August, with the Mrs. World pageant in November.

Debra Pronovost, executive state director of the Maine pageants for Mrs. America and Miss for America, said that national director David Marmell wanted to highlight



Nicole Chamberland of Mechanic Falls is crowned as the 2020 Miss Maine for America by the 2019 winner, Jenn Richardson at the second-annual pageant on Sunday at the Double Tree by Hilton Hotel in South Portland. The virtual event saw three contestants for the Miss Maine for America title, and seven contestants for the Mrs. Maine America title. (Sandra Costa photo)

single women 18 and over and give them a system to celebrate their accomplishments and a platform to continue initiatives in their communities that are important to them.

This year’s contestant group consisted of accomplished women from across the state and was smaller than last due to concerns with COVID-19. The pageant date was moved three

times, Pronovost said. The local organization partnered with the Maine Center for Disease Control & Prevention to conduct a safe pageant for the contestants, her team, and their communities. The original date in April was bumped to June, then moved again to September because of the pandemic. “I did not feel that there was enough information to safely hold the show prior.”

Chamberland said she competed for Miss Maine for America title last year as Miss Androscoggin County and decided to compete again with the same title.

The only people allowed inside the ballroom for the event were her team running the show and a single family-member for each contestant. The entire group was screened for temperatures and illness histories before entering the room. All participants wore masks up until the stepping on the stage for the show and even then maintained proper social distancing as

See Miss Maine, page 8



Squares for an afghan blanket are laid out and ready to be sewn together as part of a fundraiser for the Gorham Food Pantry this spring. Tara Higgins Benson of Gorham coordinated the fundraiser. (Photo courtesy of Gorham Food Pantry)

Fundraiser for Gorham Food Pantry

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

From Gorham Food Pantry

GORHAM - Early this Spring, as the pandemic was in full swing, Tara Higgins Benson of Gorham had an idea to help support the Gorham Food Pantry. She posted a request

on Facebook to all of her crocheting friends to create and donate four-inch granny squares in any color to be delivered to her house via mail by May; she would assemble all of those donated squares into an afghan and raffle it off, See Pantry, page 8

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Five new “Swab and Send” testing sites opened last week

From Maine DHHS

AUGUSTA— The Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and MaineHealth announced last week the launch of five new “swab and send” COVID-19 testing sites, further expanding access to reliable and timely testing for Maine people and visitors.

The new MaineHealth sites in Damariscotta, Rockport, Brunswick, Norway, and Farmington are opening this week. MaineHealth will begin accepting appointments immediately. These sites, in addition to the 22 previously announced, bring the statewide total of swab and send locations to 27, ensuring that approximately 90 percent of residents can now get tested within a 30 minute drive from their home.

“With these new sites, Maine continues to make progress in expanding access to testing so that those at risk of COVID-19 may take the necessary steps to protect themselves, their families, and other Maine people,” said Governor Janet Mills. “This important effort is crucial to mitigating the spread of this deadly virus and keeping Maine people safe and healthy.”

“Ensuring that people across Maine can protect themselves, their loved ones, and their communities by getting tested when at risk of COVID-19 is critical to keeping the state’s infection rates low,” said DHHS Commissioner Jeanne Lambrew. “We thank MaineHealth and all of the other health care organizations that have partnered with us to provide timely, accurate and

affordable testing to protect Maine people and visitors alike.”

Joan Boomsma, MD, chief medical officer of MaineHealth, said expanding testing capacity is an important priority in combating the spread of COVID-19. “We have prioritized fast, reliable testing for our patients throughout this pandemic,” he said. “Now, through our participation in this program, we can extend that commitment further into our communities.”

The sites will send samples to the Maine CDC’s Health and Environmental Testing Laboratory (HETL) for testing, and offer specimen collection free of charge to individuals who believe they may have COVID-19 or could have been exposed to the virus, with or without symptoms, as defined under the DHHS Standing Order (<http://bitly.ws/9uWd>).

The MaineHealth sites will operate as drive-through testing facilities. The Brunswick site, at Mid Coast-Parkview Health, will open on Monday, followed by the other four sites throughout next week. Appointments are required and may be made by phone. More information is available on MaineHealth’s website at: <http://bitly.ws/9uWg>.

DHHS also announced that a mobile testing site operated by Promerica Health, first announced on July 14, was initially launched at the Maine Visitor Information Center in Kittery on Tuesday, August 25. Promerica is accepting appointments at <https://covidtestforme.com/>. It will operate from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesdays,

Wednesdays, and Saturdays, and from noon to 7 p.m. on Thursdays and Fridays through the end of August, with similar hours in September.

As part of the Administration’s expansion of testing capacity, DHHS formally invited organizations to establish “swab and send” sites across the state. The swab and send sites help Maine meet the primary goal of the \$52.7 million of federal funding the Mills Administration announced in May: to enhance prevention, detection, and mitigation of the spread of COVID-19 in Maine. The full list of current and proposed swab and send sites is below.

These 27 sites are in addition to the roughly 40 current testing sites already available to the public. For a list of sites providing tests under the DHHS Standing Order, which includes all swab and send sites, visit the Keep Maine Healthy website. (<http://bitly.ws/9uWm>)

Some of the organizations operating swab and send sites, as well as other organizations, are offering testing to their patients at additional sites as well. For a complete and frequently updated list of COVID-19 testing sites in Maine, visit <https://get-tested-covid19.org/>

The 27 DHHS-sponsored swab and send sites are:

- Augusta: Maine-General
- Bangor: Northern Light
- Bar Harbor: MDI Hospital (currently operational for frontline workforce testing for participating businesses)
- Belfast: Penobscot Community Health Care

(PCHC)

- Blue Hill: Northern Light
- Brewer: PCHC
- Brunswick: MaineHealth (operational on August 24)
- Calais: Calais Regional Hospital
- Damariscotta: MaineHealth (operational on August 26)
- Dover-Foxcroft: Northern Light
- Ellsworth: Northern Light
- Farmington: MaineHealth (operational on August 27)
- Fort Kent: Northern Maine Medical Center
- Greenville: Northern Light
- Kittery: Promerica Health (mobile, operational on August 25)
- Lincoln: Penobscot Valley Hospital
- Norway: MaineHealth (operational on August 25)
- Old Town: PCHC
- Portland: Northern Light
- Pittsfield: Northern Light
- Presque Isle: Northern Light
- Rockport: MaineHealth (operational on August 27)
- Sanford: York County Community Action Corp./Nasson Health Care
- Skowhegan: Redington-Fairview General Hospital (operational in mid-September)
- South Portland: Northern Light (mobile)
- Waterville: Northern Light
- Westbrook: City of Westbrook

The Department is also separately supporting York Hospital with its drive-through point-of-care testing site that has been open since July 1, 2020.

Beware of unsolicited calls, texts or emails

From FEMA

WASHINGTON, D.C. - While many of our friends and neighbors work together to respond and recover from COVID-19, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) warns residents to be on the look-out for scammers targeting those affected by the pandemic.

These criminals often pretend to be in the government, contacting people by robocall, text message, email or social media. They offer financial help for money or personal information, such as Social Security, bank account or credit card numbers—but their real goal is to make money from, or steal the identity of, their victims.

Department of Homeland Security, FEMA, U.S. Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control staff never charge for disaster assistance. Res-

idents are urged to be vigilant when offered available benefits and programs. Seek official sources for the most accurate information such as Agency websites or consult with local leaders.

To dispel some of the false rumors circulating on the internet and social media, FEMA created a dedicated website to address some of the most common questions. Remember, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Visit the FEMA webpage at: <http://bitly.ws/9zcA> to get the most accurate information from trusted sources.

The Federal Trade Commission scams page has tips to help avoid scams online, on the phone, by text and through email. New Englanders are also urged to report any scams they encounter to the Federal Trade Commission at ftc.gov/complaint or contact their state’s Attorney General.

Growing garlic in Maine

From UMaine Extension

ORONO - University of Maine Cooperative Extension will offer a webinar about growing garlic in Maine from noon–1 p.m. on Sept. 14.

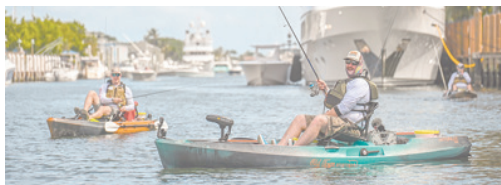
“Growing Garlic in Maine” topics will include planting stock, site selection, timing of harvest and proper drying. The webinar will be led by UMaine Extension agriculture and non-timber forest products professional David Fuller, who has grown garlic for 25 years and conducted applied research on hardneck garlic for the past eight years.

Registration is required; a \$5 donation is

optional. Register on the event webpage (<http://bitly.ws/9zeS>) to attend live or receive a link to the recording. This session is the fifth in a six-part summer gardening webinar series to be offered every other Monday through September. For more information or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact Pamela Hargest, 207.781.6099; pamela.hargest@maine.edu.

Send all items for What’s Going On to the Editor. Deadline is Friday by five.

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Optimist Club donates Pocket Constitutions



Charlena Beganny (L) from the Carrie Ricker School in Litchfield receives copies of the U.S. constitution from Optimist Club President-elect George Matthews. (Photo courtesy of George Matthews)

From Optimist Club

LITCHFIELD - Charlena Beganny, a teacher at the Carrie Ricker School in Litchfield, ME, received a donation of 105 pocket constitutions from Optimist Club President-elect

George Mathews last week. The Constitutions will be distributed to class members as an aid in studying U.S. history and the U.S. constitution.

The Optimist Club donates constitutions every year to schools, students,

or educators requesting them, in celebration of Constitution Day, Sept. 17.

Anyone interested in receiving a constitution may contact any Optimist Club Member, or call 783-5269 for additional information.

Gorham student graduates from Roger Williams University

From Roger Williams Univ.

BRISTOL, RI - Meghan Yaskula, of Gorham, ME, graduated with a B.A. Educational Studies in May as part of the Class of 2020 at Roger Williams University in Bristol, R.I.

With campuses on the coast of Bristol and in the

heart of Providence, R.I., Roger Williams University is a forward-thinking private university committed to strengthening society through engaged teaching and learning. At RWU, small classes, direct access to faculty and guaranteed opportunity for real-world projects ensure that its nearly 4,000 undergraduates - along with hundreds

of law students, graduate students and adult learners - graduate with the ability to think critically along with the practical skills that today's employers demand. Roger Williams is leading the way in American higher education, confronting the most pressing issues facing students and families - increasing costs, rising debt and job readiness.

USDA Rural Development announces \$64,885 grant

From USDA

WASHINGTON, D.C. - USDA Rural Development State Director Timothy P. Hobbs last week announced a Rural Business Development Grant in the amount of \$64,885 to the Maine Aquaculture Association <https://maineaqua.org>.

The Rural Business Development Grant will assist the Association with providing direct assistance to Maine aquaculture producers.

USDA Rural Development State Director Timothy P. Hobbs said, "This vital grant to the Maine Aquaculture Association

is going to be used where it is needed most- assisting the Maine aquaculture businesses who provide our state with shellfish, fin fish, and sea vegetables. Supporting our Maine fisherman will ultimately help the industry as a whole to thrive, while sustaining

See USDA, page 8

What do you think?

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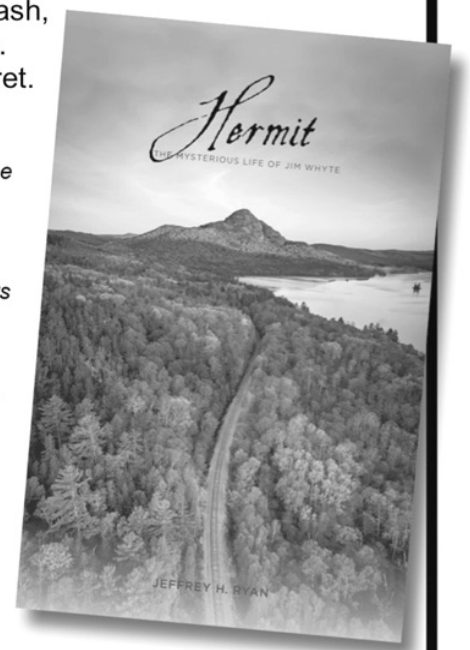
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What's Going On

Significant Trade Victory for Maine Lobster

From the office of U.S. Senator Collins

WASHINGTON, D.C.—U.S. Senator Susan Collins announced on August 21 that the United States and the European Union have reached an agreement to eliminate tariffs on live and frozen American lobster, which will help to substantially boost sales of Maine lobster to European markets. The White House called Senator Collins this morning to notify her of this positive development, for which she had strongly advocated.

Several years ago, the European Union was a top destination for American lobster, accounting for approximately 15 to 20 percent of annual lobster exports. In 2017, the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) was implemented between Canada and the European Union, reducing tariffs to zero on live Canadian lobsters and eliminating tariffs over a period of several years on frozen and processed Canadian lobsters. This put American lobster exporters at a serious disadvantage because, unlike Canadians, American exporters were facing tariffs of between 8 and 30 percent to sell into the European Union.

Under the deal, there will now be a 0% tariff on live and frozen lobsters from the U.S., retroactive to August 1st. The agreement is expected to last for five years, with the European Union taking steps to

make it permanent.

"This is welcome news for the hardworking men and women in Maine's lobster industry who are facing severe financial difficulties due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing trade war that has reduced exports. Placing U.S. lobster on a level playing field with Canadian lobster is a significant victory that will reopen this lucrative market to Maine lobstermen and women," said Senator Collins. "I will continue to fight on behalf of our state's lobstermen and women as well as the small businesses that rely on this industry by addressing the numerous challenges the industry faces."

"The removal of the EU tariff on live and frozen lobster from the US is significant," said Annie Tselikis Executive Director Maine Lobster Dealers' Association. "We are grateful for Sen. Collins's commitment to supporting our industry and her dedication to assisting us resolve our market access challenges in Europe. She has been at the forefront of this issue and has worked closely with our industry and USTR for several years."

In April 2018, Senator Collins urged U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue to help expand foreign markets for American lobster in response to the economic harm caused by CETA.

In July 2018, Senator Collins pressed U.S. Trade Representative (USTR)

Robert Lighthizer to continue fighting for the Maine lobster industry, citing CETA and China's retaliatory tariffs.

In June 2018, the Maine Delegation hosted a meeting between top USTR officials, members of the Maine Lobster Dealers' Association, and local lobstermen to discuss the impact of federal trade policies on the state's most productive and profitable fishery.

In November 2019, Senators Collins, and Angus King and Representative Chellie Pingree called on USTR Lighthizer to prioritize a trade deal with the European Union (E.U.) that would reduce or eliminate E.U. tariffs on Maine lobster.

What do you think?

We strongly encourage Letters to the Editor, Op/Eds, columns or any other submissions from our readers.

Agree with us or another columnist? Disagree? Write to us and let us know! Email all submissions, including name, address and phone number, to the editor.

New unemployment claims decrease across the U.S.

From WalletHub

Despite the fact that the U.S. is still struggling with the COVID-19 pandemic, new unemployment claims decreased week-over-week on August 17, and were still 85% below the peak during the COVID-19 pandemic. To help add some context to these statistics, WalletHub just released updated rankings for the states whose weekly unemployment claims are recovering the quickest.

To identify which states' workforces are experiencing the quickest recovery from COVID-19, WalletHub compared the 50 states and the District of Columbia across three metrics based on changes in unemployment claims.

Change in Maine Weekly Unemployment Claims

(I=Quickest Recovery, 25=Avg.):

Maine saw a 215.14% increase in Unemployment Claims (Latest Week vs Last Year), which is 1,103 claims the week of August 17, 2020 vs 350 the week of August 19, 2019. This is the 10th quickest recovery in the U.S.

Maine saw a 33.67% reduction in Unemployment Claims (Latest Week vs Start of 2020), which is 1,103 claims the week of August 17, 2020 vs 1,663 the week of January 1, 2020. This is The quickest recovery in the U.S.

A 1,618.66% increase in Unemployment Claims (Since Start of COVID-19 Crisis vs Last Year), which is 198,076 claims between the week of March 16, 2020 and the week of August 17, 2020 vs 12,237 between the week of March 18, 2019

and the week of August 19, 2019. This is the 10th slowest recovery in the U.S.

The full report and the ranking of each state can be found at: <http://bit.ly.ws/9yQ8>

WalletHub Q&A

How encouraged should we be that more than half of the states have been approved for the extra \$300 in weekly benefits from President Trump's executive order?

"We should feel somewhat encouraged that more than half of the states have been approved for an extra \$300 in weekly federal unemployment benefits. While President Trump's executive order can be a big help to unemployed people who have seen a sudden drop in income since the CARES Act benefits expired in July, it is not a long-term solution and may only last a few weeks," said Jill Gonzalez, WalletHub analyst. "In order to truly protect our unemployed population, we need a bipartisan agreement in Congress that creates a comprehensive relief plan, one which ideally will last until the pandemic ends."

What measures can we use to detect/trace COVID-19 in the workplace to prevent outbreaks that will lead to more unemployment?

"In order to prevent outbreaks of COVID-19 in the workplace that will lead to more unemployment, we should implement testing upon arrival as well as use apps to perform swift contact tracing for any employees found to have the virus," said Jill Gonzalez, WalletHub analyst. "The problem with current COVID-19 testing is that in order to preserve accuracy it is expensive and slow. For workplaces and public spaces like

airports, we need to have cheap, near-instant tests available for mass testing, even if they are not quite as accurate. Such tests are in development but need FDA approval."

How will unemployment be impacted if schools only hold remote learning this fall?

"If schools only provide remote learning this fall, we could see a jump in unemployment. Young children will need supervision during the day, and parents who are unable to do their job remotely may be forced to take a leave from work to provide that supervision," said Jill Gonzalez, WalletHub analyst. "Forcing parents to stay home could be especially devastating financially for single-parent households. To avoid a spike in unemployment, we should create a detailed plan for having in-person learning while providing a high level of safety for students and teachers, which will allow us to minimize negative consequences for both public health and the economy."

How is the wearing of masks linked to unemployment?

"Wearing masks helps prevent the release of droplets from the mouth or nose that may contain COVID-19, which consequently can help minimize the spread of the virus. Countries with more prevalent mask wearing have been less impacted by coronavirus, so mandating the use of masks in public may help us proceed to a full reopening sooner," said Jill Gonzalez, WalletHub analyst. "Consumers are more comfortable going out when they know everyone will be wearing masks, according to a recent WalletHub survey, and greater confidence leads to more people leaving the house

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Wreaths Across America calls for flag waving on 9/11

From Wreaths Across America

COLUMBIA FALLS, Maine – On Friday, Sept. 11, Wreaths Across America calls for every American to stand outside and wave a flag for one minute at 8:46 a.m. and again at 9:03 AM.

At 8:46 a.m., On Tuesday, Sept. 11, 2001, five hijackers took control of American Airlines Flight 11 and flew it into the northern facade of the World Trade Center's North Tower (1 WTC) in the heart of New York City.

At 9:03 a.m., five other hijackers crashed United Airlines Flight 175 into the southern facade of the South Tower (2 WTC).

Following the events of 9/11, three patriotic women, Elaine Greene,

Joann Miller and Carmen Foote, were moved to find an old American flag they had stored at home and stand on a hill in Freeport, Maine, waving that flag to honor victims. These women became nationally known as "The Freeport Flag Ladies," and proudly hoisted the Stars and Stripes every Tuesday morning for the next 18 years.

After they retired on Sept. 11, 2019, their last 9/11 remembrance, Wreaths Across America took the helm and continued the weekly flag waving tradition along US Route 1 in Jonesboro, Maine, on land donated by the organization's founder, Morrill Worcester, leading to the new Acadia National Cemetery.

Since then, Worcester

added a mile-long stretch of 105 American flags on both sides of the road that leads to the entrance of Acadia National Cemetery, which opened to the public for the first time this past Saturday. Worcester donated the land for this new National Cemetery to be built in his hometown.

"Each Tuesday, we are joined by dozens of members of the local community and curious people stopping to be part of something meaningful," said Worcester's wife, Karen, who is the executive director of Wreaths Across America. "Especially over the last six months, this flag waving has taken on new meaning for us all and given a spark of hope and patriotism during this difficult time in our country."

Participants are encouraged to take video and pictures of their participation in the national flag waving and share them with Wreaths Across America, their family and their friends to help remember, honor and teach the generation born after 9/11, how hard times can strengthen us as a nation. Please use the hashtag #FlagsAcrossTheCountry and #AmericaStrong when posting on social media and tag the Wreaths Across America Official Facebook page.

"My husband and the community's commitment to the mission and continuation of this important weekly tradition has taken on the additional meaning of American unity during this uncertain time," Karen said. "I hope Americans

will see this as an opportunity to not only honor those directly affected by 9/11, but also to follow in the footsteps of 'The Freeport Flag Ladies'."

Wreaths Across America is the non-profit organization best known for placing veterans' wreaths on the headstones of our nation's fallen at Arlington National Cemetery. However, the organization, in total, places more than 2 million sponsored wreaths at over 2200 participating locations nationwide and offers other programs throughout the calendar year. These programs remember the events of 9/11 in their own way, such as The Mobile Education Exhibit which will be visiting Kentucky in September and will join in the national flag

waving effort.

Radio host Michael W. Hale of Wreaths Across America Radio will hold on-air tributes, and the on-line store will be selling #AmericaStrong signs made by the brother of "Lone Survivor" Marcus Luttrell, who gave a special family message during the Wreaths Across America Virtual Concert now streaming on Showcase NOW.

You can sponsor a wreath for \$15 at <https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/>. Each sponsorship goes toward a fresh balsam veteran's wreath that will be placed on the headstone of an American hero as honor veterans who will be laid to rest on Saturday, Dec. 19, 2020, as part of National Wreaths Across America Day.

Research shows budget cuts cannot fuel economic growth

From Maine CEP

AUGUSTA - Tax cuts and reduced spending fail to spur economic growth, refuting a central argument by proponents of austerity, according to a comprehensive analysis of available scholarship published today by the Maine Center for Economic Policy.

"Decades of research show that budget cuts cannot generate economic growth, and will only pump the breaks on our recovery," said Garrett Martin, executive director of the Maine Center for Economic Policy. "As policymakers respond to an economic crisis of a magnitude unseen since the Great Recession, it's critical they recognize this fundamental truth about fiscal policy and the state's economy."

MECEP's research review examines the impact of state-level tax cuts on state economies, including a comparative analysis

of states that reduced individual income taxes and those that maintained or increased prior rates. The review finds:

Low-tax states fail to outperform higher-tax states. Higher tax states out-perform states without broad-based personal income taxes in terms of GDP growth, income growth, and employment.

LePage-era income tax cuts have not generated economic growth for Maine. Personal income tax cuts in Maine between 2012 and 2016 did not generate any noticeable change in Maine's economy. Maine's share of national private-sector jobs, personal income, and GDP in 2019 all were lower than in 2012.

'Millionaire taxes' have little impact on millionaire migration and do not hurt state economies. Eight states have instituted millionaire taxes since 2008. The experiences of

those states indicate the taxes do little to spur millionaire out-migration, and don't harm state economies.

The review also examines relevant research on the effect of spending cuts. It finds:

Cuts to public spending detract from economic growth. Spending cuts during the Great Recession reduced real GDP by roughly 1.2 percentage points.

Budget cuts usually harm schools and students. Public education is one of the largest components of state and local budgets, so spending cuts often include significant reductions to schools. Student achievement and per-student spending are linked, with cuts reflected in student outcomes.

Inequality grows as state spending declines. Income inequality grows when states rely on spending cuts during an economic crisis.

Managing daily stress and anxiety

By Stanley Popovich

Everybody deals with stress and anxiety. However, our anxieties can sometimes get the best of us. It's important to know how to cope with your anxieties and fears if they get out of

control.

With this in mind, here are some tips that a person can use to help manage their daily stresses and anxieties.

1. Take a break: Sometimes, we get stressed out when everything hap-

pens all at once. When this happens, a person should take a deep breath and try to find something to do for a few minutes to get their mind off of the problem. A person could take a walk, listen to some music, read

See Stress, page 12



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Arts & Entertainment

A solo exhibit of nature photographs in Bath



A photograph by Wanda Fern McNeil of Lucky Fern Photography, entitled "Heron", is included in the solo exhibit of McNeil's work at the Chocolate Church Arts Center Gallery in Bath through Sept. 23. (Photo courtesy of CCAC)

From Chocolate Church Arts Center

BATH - Wanda Fern McNeil of Lucky Fern Photography, West Bath, ME, is the featured artist with a solo exhibit of her work at the Chocolate Church Arts Center Gallery in Bath, through Sept. 23.

She has deep New England roots and a deep love for all-things-wildlife. She can often be found exploring hiking trails, or kayaking the lakes, rivers, and coastal waters of Maine accompanied by her camera.

What began as a personal pastime has grown

into "Lucky Fern Photography", where her passion for nature is reflected in her art. Her wish is to capture and share the beauty of nature, one amazing moment at a time. She manages to slide into nature, capturing intimate and graceful moments with great detail. Her work is so alive you can nearly smell the marshes, feel the air, and hear the bird calls.

McNeil reaches into the hidden heart of the environment and seizes hidden glimpses of the quiet workings of our natural world, according to a press release from the gallery.

Chocolate Church Arts Center Gallery is located at 804 Washington St, Bath, ME, and is open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday.

Outdoor concert series in Bath through September

From Chocolate Church Arts Center

BATH - The Chocolate Church Arts Center at 804 Washington Street in Bath is sponsoring a series of September concerts as part of its CCAC Real Outdoor Concert Series (CCAC ROCS).

Performers include Pat Colwell and the Soul Sensations on Sept. 12, The Mallett Brothers Band on Sept. 20, and Oshima Brothers on Sept. 26. The concerts will take place either at the Maine Maritime Museum, or at private outdoor areas revealed to ticket holders following purchase of tickets.

The concerts will be presented outdoors to audiences of no more than 100 people. Per CDC guidelines



Oshima Brothers. (Robyn Nicole photo)

and requirements from the state of Maine, audience members will be spaced at least six feet apart, and staff will enforce the wearing of masks, social distancing, hand sanitizing, and other health and safety measures at all events. For most shows, there will be two performances on each day,

at 3 p.m. and at 6 p.m..

Pat Colwell and the Soul Sensations perform a powerful mix of Motown and Memphis soul favorites. True to the genre, the band is complete with outstanding female singers and a full horn section. Their show on Sept. 12 at Maine Maritime Museum will highlight the music of the iconic Etta James, known for hits like "At Last", "I'd Rather Go Blind", and "Tell Mama". The band will also perform soul classics from the likes of Sam and Dave, the Supremes, Marvin Gaye, the Temptations, and Aretha Franklin.

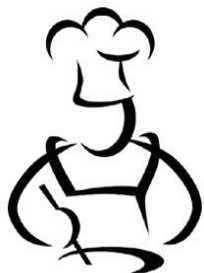
September 20 will bring a show from Maine's own The Mallett Brothers Band, who perform their own brand of independent

See Concert, page 8

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Music Education Provides a Note of Hope Amid COVID 19

From Maine Dept. of Education

AUGUSTA - As schools head back into session in the midst of a global pandemic, we face a never-ending flow of restrictions and requirements to keep everyone safe while still providing or receiving an education, according to the Maine Department of Education.

A well-rounded and comprehensive education consists of many necessary components to keep students engaged and learning. This includes robust music education programming, as all educators are well aware.

"The skills we learn in music lead to experi-

ences that are creative, aesthetic, and uplifting," said Sandy Barry, Maine Music Educators Association (MMEA) President and Middle School Band Director at Mahoney Middle School in South Portland. "A music classroom embodies the best of 21st century skills, including problem solving, critical thinking, collaboration and interdependent learning."

Yet on the minds of musicians and music educators around the world is the heartbreaking truth that singing and playing wind instruments while near other people is now considered a risk in transmitting COVID-19. While we mourn the absence of live concerts and impromptu choir practice in the halls, or even just singing at the top of our lungs in the car with our friends, music educators are busy trying to orchestrate a very different but essential music education program this school year.

"Preserving access to music education for all of our students during this difficult time is crucial. As we reimagine music education along with our students, it is important to focus on all that we can do in the music classroom, even though group singing and wind playing looks different right now," said Ben Potvin, MMEA Past President and Grades 3-5 Classroom Music, Band, and Chorus at Mast Landing School in

Freeport (RSU5). "Maine's music educators are up to the challenge of fostering connections with our students and maintaining safe, high-quality music instruction."

With hard work and a deep commitment to ensuring quality music instruction continued, Maine's music teachers took on the challenges posed by COVID-19. "I am in awe of the creative and innovative ways in which our music, and all our visual and performing arts, educators have re-imagined their craft," said Commissioner of Education, Pender Minkin. "Music is one of the core expectations for our schools exactly because it nurtures this kind of flex-

ible problem solving and creativity, skills that are vital for our classrooms and for the 21st century."

Even when schools had no choice but to deliver remote education in the spring, music educators found a way to encourage and engage students from home and students blossomed with the opportunity to get more of what they wanted.

"Because I had more time and flexibility in my schedule when we were distance learning, I was able to focus on my own musical goals and develop a more consistent practice routine," said Delia Harms, a Junior from Massabesic HS in Waterboro who plays the bassoon in the school band,

the Portland Youth Wind Ensemble, and the Symphony Orchestra. "I had time to really dig into more challenging music, but also to focus on returning to the basics and developing fundamental skills. Though it was different, every moment that I was able to connect with others about music, through recordings or on zoom, it brought back some of that excitement and connection that music has always created. It has been inspiring to see the resilience and commitment of my musical community that has allowed them to persevere through these difficult circumstances to continue making music."

For many, the chance

See Music, page 12

Renewable Energy Systems grants for Maine businesses and farms

From the USDA

BANGOR - The Trump Administration announced last week that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is investing \$973,172 to help 33 rural businesses, farms, and organizations in Maine with lowering energy costs.

"I am pleased USDA Rural Development is able to provide these vital funds for renewable energy systems, energy efficiency improvement, and energy audits for 33 Maine businesses, farms, and organizations," said USDA Rural Development Maine State Director Timothy P. Hobbs. "Under the leadership of President Trump

and Agriculture Secretary Perdue, USDA has been working tirelessly to be a strong partner to rural Maine in building stronger and healthier communities. Today's investment underscores this commitment."

The Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) provides grant funding to agricultural producers and rural small businesses for renewable energy systems or to make energy efficiency improvements. Through the REAP REDA the agency funds intermediaries who use the funding to assist rural small businesses and agricultural producers by conducting and promoting energy audits.

In Maine, 33 enti-

ties will receive funding through the REAP Program, including:

Androscoggin County:

Ivers, Inc., located in Lisbon, has been selected to receive a grant in the amount of \$15,742. This Rural Development investment will be used for the purchase and installation of a 24 kW solar array for Ivers, Inc. This project will replace 28,852 kWh (over 100%) of business energy usage and realize \$2,866 of savings annually.

Replenova Farm, in Durham, has been selected to receive a grant in the amount of \$7,866. This Rural Development investment will be used for the

purchase and installation of a 23.305 kW solar array for Replenova Farm, in Durham. This project will replace 30,569 kWh (85%) of business energy usage and realize \$3,114 of savings annually.

Cumberland County:

Frith Farm, located in Scarborough, has been selected to receive a grant in the amount of \$11,798. This Rural Development investment will be used for the purchase and installation of a 23.7 kW solar array for Frith Farm. This project will replace 28,346 kWh (100%) of business energy usage and realize \$3,922 of savings annually.

Maureen Goronson, dba The Goronson Farm, located in Scarborough, has been selected to receive a grant in the amount of \$10,907. This Rural Development investment will be used for the purchase and installation of a 19.935 kW solar array for Goronson Farm. This project will replace 30,265 kWh (over 100%) of business energy usage and realize \$2,843 of savings annually.

Downeast Concepts, Inc., located in Yarmouth, has been selected to receive a grant in the amount of \$50,767. This Rural Development investment will be used for the purchase and

installation of a 90.375 kW solar array for Downeast Concepts, Inc. This project will replace 95,537 kWh (88%) of business energy usage and realize \$16,060 of savings annually.

Natural Selection, Inc., located in Brunswick, has been selected to receive a grant in the amount of \$21,240. This Rural Development investment will be used for the purchase and installation of a 63.875 kW solar array for Natural Selection, Inc. This project will replace 75,440 kWh (22%) of business energy usage and realize \$10,169 of savings annually.

See Energy, page 12

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Nicole Chamberland of Mechanic Falls on stage at the Miss Maine for America pageant on Sunday at the Double Tree by Hilton Hotel in South Portland. Chamberland was competing as Miss Androscoggin County. (Sandra Costa photo)

Miss Maine

Continued from page 1

mandated.

Chamberland was cheered on in person by her mother, Mary Dempsey of Auburn, while her eight-year-old son and other family members viewed the live-streamed event over the internet.

“We had a talented panel of esteemed judges there” for the virtual pageant, Pronovost said.

Chamberland holds a bachelor’s degree in Psychology with a minor in Dance from The University of Maine, Orono, a master’s in education from The University of Maine,

Orono, and a Certificate of Advanced Study in Educational Leadership from St. Joseph’s College. She is the Dean of Students at Minot Consolidated School.

She said that holding the Miss Maine for America title would give her the opportunity to talk about

her passion, “which is to keep kids moving and active. Healthy habits lead to a happier lifestyle.”

“Our Miss division is still in its infancy, but I am ready to promote our sisterhood and make a lasting impact on Maine communities,” she said.

Jenna Richardson took the title of Miss Maine for America in the inaugural pageant in 2019.

Women are interested in competing in future events may find information about the organization and contact information at www.mrsmaine.net.

Pantry

Continued from page 1

with all proceeds benefiting the Pantry and the afghan going to the highest bidder.

Tara posted a quick tutorial on how to crochet a granny square, and volunteers got to work! Squares came in from Gorham and around the US over the course of the spring, and by June, Tara had enough to lay out a pattern and assemble the individual squares into a blanket.

Tara estimates that the creation of the 196 individual squares took a little over 65 hours to complete; the assembly of each square into the final product plus the border took another 25 hours total. Overall, the completed afghan took Tara

and six other volunteers approximately 90 hours to complete.

During the week of the online raffle, Upcycle Maine displayed the completed afghan in their window to help publicize the event; the afghan was raffled off to the highest bidder, and over \$700 was raised for the Pantry to help care for our neighbors in Gorham.

The Pantry board and volunteers have continued to be humbled and appreciative of the deep support shown by the Gorham community during the pandemic; so many individuals and businesses have made generous food, personal care and monetary donations to help support their neighbors. There are too many names to mention here, but the Pantry has appreciated each and every donation.

As a reminder, in addition to our regular Thurs-

day hours (10A-12P), the Pantry will also be open for clients on the 2nd and 4th Monday evenings of each month from 6P-7P, beginning in September. The Pantry is grateful to our partners at Gorham Rec who have been partnering to deliver food to clients who are unable to travel. Any Gorham resident can take advantage of the Gorham Food Pantry; you need only visit during pantry hours with proof of residency (a utility bill with your name and your Gorham address on it – not a drivers’ license). The best way to keep up-to-date on Pantry happenings and current needs is to follow them on Facebook (Gorham Food Pantry Friends), and messages via Facebook are responded to quickly.

Concert

Continued from page 6



The Mallet Brothers Band. (Ray MacGregor photo)

rock and roll, americana, and country. Though they are proud to call Maine their home, the band’s busy tour schedule across the country since 2009 has helped them to build a dedicated fanbase across the U.S. With a style that ranges from alt-country to jam and roots rock, theirs is a musical melting pot that’s influenced equally by the singer-songwriter tradition and by harder rock, classic country and psychedelic sounds.

The CCAC ROCS

shows wrap up Sept. 26 with a show from Maine’s rising stars, Oshima Brothers. Raised in a musical family in rural Maine, the brothers have honed a harmony-rich blend of contemporary folk and acoustic pop. On stage, brothers Sean and Jamie create a surprisingly full sound with dynamic vocals, electric and acoustic guitars, octave bass, loops, and percussion. With singles like “These Cold Nights” and “Colorblind”, Oshima Brothers

have scored hundreds of thousands of plays across music streaming services and views on YouTube.

Tickets prices vary for CCAC ROCS performances, and must be purchased in advance at www.chocolatechurcharts.org, or by calling 207-442-8455.

All audience members are required to bring masks or other appropriate face coverings, which must be worn when checking in and when purchasing concessions or merchandise.



Pat Colwell and the Soul Sensations. (photo courtesy of CCAC)



The finished afghan blanket on display at Upcycle Maine Home Furnishings on South Street in Gorham as a fundraiser this spring for the Gorham Food Pantry. (Photo courtesy of Gorham Food Pantry)

USDA

Continued from page 3

aquaculture-related jobs and businesses in Maine.”

This Rural Development investment will be used to directly help Maine aquaculture businesses. The Maine Aquaculture Association will work di-

rectly with Maine aquaculture business owners, meeting one-on-one, to provide training, assistance, and COVID-specific tools to help producers strategize and plan the business, financial, and production aspects of their farms. The program’s immediate focus is to help farmers cre-

ate a plan detailing how to survive the next two years of COVID impacts, with a secondary focus being placed on thorough five and ten-year growth plans. The funds will also be used to help business owners navigate the programs designed to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19.



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Letters to the Editor

A brighter future with Sara Gideon

I met Sara Gideon as a fellow parent of our school-age children. We spoke at their school about our mutual interest in seeing our children participate in fewer video games and more outdoor activities. With Sara's encouragement and partnership, I launched with Old Mast Landing Outdoor Club, which engaged kids in outings where we cleared trails, fished, picked up trash along roads, had search and rescue training with dogs, studied the night sky with an astronomer, hauled lobster traps and dug clams with local fisherman. I was impressed on these outings by the ease with which Sara spoke with clambers about issues like green crabs and their impact on the clam-

mers' livelihoods, and the insight she brought to her conversations with lobsterman about the impact of warming on the Maine Gulf.

Maine is my home and that of my ancestors going back ten generations. We have an enormous investment in the ecology of our state and are gravely concerned about the disturbing changes that climate change is bringing about.

But we are proud that our town of Freeport has put forward a candidate who can challenge the uninspiring tenure of Susan Collins. We have witnessed with enthusiasm her commitment to safeguarding the timber and lobster industries, and to protecting

the public lands we know so intimately. My family's long and proud history in Maine has forged a strong connection to the land and the sea, and our endorsement of a Senate candidate is deeply personal.

Sara has demonstrated her commitment to environmental issues and, based on what we have learned about her over the years, we are confident that she has the skills, drive, and determination to have a strong, positive impact on the Federal government's role in protecting Maine's ecosystems.

I look forward to a brighter, safer future for all Mainers with Sara representing us in the Senate.

Joseph P. Coleman
Freeport

Mainers grappling with hardships

With just over two months before the November 3rd elections, many Mainers find themselves grappling with unexpected hardships brought on by the coronavirus. We've heard from Mainers who are deferring retirement or coming to grips with unexpected unemployment. Some struggle to afford their health care and medications. Many family caregivers find that providing care, whether at home or long-distance, is now even more challenging.

Suffice it to say that the 2020 election will be like no other, but voters can count on AARP Maine to advocate on the issues our members and their families

care about. Through our non-partisan voter engagement campaign, Protect Voters 50+, we are providing information on how to cast your vote safely whether by absentee ballot or in person. We're also tracking key races and candidates' positions on issues that matter to voters 50+. Visit AARP Maine's election page www.aarp.org/mainevotes for details.

Additionally, as part of Protect Voters 50+, AARP is providing polling results, sponsoring debates and hosting tele-town halls. We know that Mainers want to hear how the candidates will address key issues like protecting Social Security and Medicare, bringing

down healthcare costs including prescription drug prices, and strengthening the economy.

I hope you, too, will ask the candidates where they stand on issues of concern to you and your family. Especially during this pandemic, it is essential for politicians to protect the health and financial security of older voters. Let's work together to demand action and ensure that Mainers 50+, whether they are working parents, grandparents or family caregivers, can vote safely and make their voices heard.

Pat Pinto
AARP Maine Volunteer State President
Portland, ME

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Seniors Not Acting Their Age Traversing the Big Lakes

By Ron Chase

I had two good reasons to organize a trip on the big lakes of western Maine. First, a traverse of Cupsuptic, Mooselookme-guntic, Upper Richardson, and Lower Richardson Lakes is one of the most exceptional paddling experiences in Maine. Second, the excursion would be an episode in my new

book tentatively entitled *The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine*. The publisher, North Country Press, plans to go to print in 2021 and my goal is to finish the manuscript by the end of September. A narrative about the exploit would be one of three remaining chapters.

A physically demanding logistically challenging expedition, enlisting at least

one willing victim was necessary for the shuttle. I began marketing the scheme to my regular outdoor companions weeks in advance.

Several factors make planning the journey exacting. The shuttle over back-country roads is about sixty miles in distance, weather and wind direction can be significant factors, and availability of campsites in this managed wilderness



Ron Cook paddles across a lake in western Maine. (Ron Cook photo)

area is sometimes problematic.

The choice of vessel is another issue. On my first traverse with my son Adam about thirty-five years ago, we used a tripping canoe. On a second outing, everyone paddled sea kayaks. Canoes carry more gear but kayaks are faster and easier to navigate in strong winds. A kayak was my preference. When the winds increase and waves get rough, kneeling is often necessary in a canoe. Kneeling with my aging arthritic joints and replacement knee is simply too uncomfortable.

Estimating the paddling distance to be about thirty miles with a portage in the middle and a long shuttle on both ends, three

days seemed the requisite timeframe to complete the endeavor. Identifying a perfect three-day weather forecast with only two days advance notice, my recruitment efforts were minimally successful. Frequent outdoor accomplice Brent Elwell signed on and we'd both be piloting sea kayaks. Since the forecast called for winds from the northwest for the first two days, our selection was a north to south traverse beginning on Cupsuptic Lake, traveling south through much of Mooselookme-guntic, portaging around Upper Dam, and continuing south through Upper and Lower Richardson Lakes ending the journey in the tiny community of South Arm.

Stephen Phillips Memorial Preserve manages campsites on Mooselookme-guntic Lake. I was able to reserve one on Brandy Point ideally situated two miles east of Upper Dam for the first night. The Richardson Lakes have a multitude of campsites. Trusting an elderly memory, my recollection was they were available without reservations.

Meeting at a large parking area near the boat landing in South Arm, Brent's kayak and gear were loaded onto my vehicle and his car left for the return shuttle. Wearing masks to protect against spread of Covid-19, ominous unwellcome rain clouds prevailed

See Lakes, page 16



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Stress

Continued from page 5

the newspaper, or do an activity that will give them a fresh perspective on things.

2. Carry a small notebook of positive statements with you: Whenever you come across an affirmation that makes you feel good, write it down in a small notebook and carry it around in your pocket. Whenever you feel anxious, open up your small notebook and read those statements.

3: You can't predict the future: While the consequences of a particular fear may seem real, there are usually other factors that cannot be anticipated and can affect the results of any situation. We may be ninety-nine percent correct in predicting the future, but all it takes is for that one percent to make a world of difference.

4. Challenge your negative thinking with positive statements and realistic thinking: When encountering thoughts that make you fearful or depressed, challenge those thoughts by asking yourself questions that will maintain objectivity and common sense. Focus on the reality of your situation and not on your thoughts.

5. Divide your activities into separate steps: When facing a current or upcoming task that overwhelms you with a lot of anxiety, divide the task into a series of smaller steps and then complete each of the smaller tasks one step at a time. Completing these smaller activities will make the stress more manageable and increases your chances of success.

6. Take advantage of the help that is available around you: If possible, talk to a professional who can help you manage your depression and anxieties. They will be able to provide you with additional advice and insights on how to deal with your current

problem.

Stan Popovich is the author of the popular managing fear book, "A Layman's Guide To Managing Fear". More information about Popovich's book and free mental health advice may be found at his website: www.managingfear.com.

Music

Continued from page 7

to continue having a creative space to practice and learn music through education programming provides solace during an uncertain time.

"Access to music education is incredibly important for a number of reasons, especially now, but the first one that comes to mind is to create a support system for kids" said Colette (Coco) Carrillo, a Junior from Waterville High School who is an active member of the school choral program.

"So many people I know see their school's music programs as a creative outlet and a safe place that they don't have anywhere else in the school," she said. "It offers them an activity that can not only relieve their stress but can also build so many skills for their futures. Whether it's in person or online, kids in music programs do those activities for a reason. They want to share their passion with friends, learn new material, and improve their skills. Getting rid of those programs or lowering the standard will harm their academic minds as well as their artistic minds."

Finding a new way to learn during the pandemic has been a challenge for everyone, and the reinvention of how we educate students and how we prioritize what we need to do has provided a valuable lesson in and of itself.

"When schools began to shut down, the music department was arguably hit the hardest, as playing/

singing together does not lend itself to virtual mediums very well due to the fact that digital latency prevents synchronization," said Tyler Lucca, a Junior from Yarmouth High School who plays the trombone in the school's honors level Wind Ensemble and Jazz Band, and sings in the honors level Chamber Choir. "This made making music with my peers nearly impossible, at least in the traditional way, and it showed me how important these classes that we took for granted truly are."

Music education is essential to a robust educational experience and while it may look very different this year, and possibly for years to come, it is more than just another education standard to meet or a lesson plan to fit into the schedule. It's an emotional state, it's a way to cope, and for many it's a vital part of what makes them who they are.

Energy

Continued from page 7

Bradbury Metalworks, LLC., located in Pownal, has been selected to receive a grant in the amount of \$2,630. This Rural Development investment will be used for the purchase and installation of a 6.48 kW solar array for Bradbury Mountain Metalworks, LLC. This project will replace 7,605 kWh (100%) of business energy usage and realize \$911 of savings annually.

Q-Team, Inc., located in Naples, has been selected to receive a grant in the amount of \$15,998. This Rural Development investment will be used for the purchase and installation of an outdoor wood boiler for Q-Team, Inc. This project will replace 145MMBTU (95%) of business energy usage and realize \$3,723 of savings annually.

Oxford County: TruStrength Prop-

erties, LLC., in Norway, has been selected to receive a grant in the amount of \$15,927. This Rural Development investment will be used for the purchase and installation of a 30 kW solar array for TruStrength Properties, LLC. This project will replace 46,380 kWh (92%) of business energy usage and realize \$6,878 of savings annually.

Turning Acquisitions, LLC., located in Buckfield, has been selected to receive a grant in the amount of \$37,853. This Rural Development investment will be used for the purchase and installation of a 2 MMBTU biomass boiler array for Turning Acquisitions, LLC. This project will replace 4,800 MMBTU (100%) of business energy usage and realize \$9,850 of savings annually.

J.W. Davis & Son, Inc., located in Hanover, has been selected to receive a grant in the amount

of \$13,516. This Rural Development investment will be used for the purchase and installation of a 16.32 kW solar array for J.W. Davis & Son, Inc. This project will replace 21,544 kWh (over 100%) of business energy usage and realize \$1,254 of savings annually.

Minuteman Metal, LLC., located in Oxford, has been selected to receive a grant in the amount of \$17,500. This Rural Development investment will be used for the purchase and installation of 254 new light-emitting diode (LED) lighting fixtures to replace existing high-pressure sodium (HPS) fixtures. This project will realize \$11,859 and 79,062 kWh in savings per year.

Sagadahoc County: TMDE Calibrations Lab, Inc, located in Richmond, has been selected to receive a grant in the amount of \$9,545. This Rural Development

investment will be used for the purchase and installation of a 16.32 kW solar array for TMDE Calibrations Lab, Inc. This project will replace 21,690 kWh (over 100%) of business energy usage and realize \$3,535 of savings annually.

Entities interested in the Rural Energy for America Program should contact Brian Wilson, Business & Cooperative Programs Director at (207) 990-9125 or brian.wilson@usda.gov.

USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities and create jobs in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural areas. For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov/me.

New UMaine food preservation webinars in September

From UMaine

ORONO - September brings the bounty of both summer and fall produce to Maine. Five new food preservation webinars from University of Maine Cooperative Extension focus on preserving local food with safety and flavor in mind.

Canning relish is the topic from 2-2:45 p.m. Sept. 1. Other webinars in the series will focus on: pressure canning soups and stocks, on Sept. 15; fermenting vegetables, on Sept. 22; and dehydrating

fruits and vegetables, on Sept. 29.

Registration is required; a \$5 donation per session is optional. Register on the program webpage (<http://bitly.ws/9vjy>) to receive the link and resources. The webinars are recorded. For more information or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact Kate McCarty, 207.781.6099; kate.mccarty@maine.edu.

The University of Maine Cooperative Extension has supported UMaine's land and sea grant public education role by

conducting community-driven, research-based programs in every Maine county. UMaine Extension helps support, sustain and grow the food-based economy. It is the only entity in our state that touches every aspect of the Maine Food System, where policy, research, production, processing, commerce, nutrition, and food security and safety are integral and interrelated. UMaine Extension also conducts the most successful out-of-school youth educational program in Maine through 4-H.

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Saturday, Sept 12
Sunday, Sept. 13
 Gorham Founders Festival Parade, with Maine-themed float contest, 3 p.m. in Gorham village. Please sign up for the parade on the website at: www.gorham2020.com, or contact Suzie Phillips at 892-9847 or: sphillips@gorham.me.us.

Monday, Sept. 14
 Gorham Planning Board meeting, 7 p.m., as a Zoom webinar.

Tuesday, Sept. 15
 9:30-10 a.m.
 Virtual Preschool Discovery Time, Baxter Memorial Library, Gorham.
 Join Ms. Heidi on Facebook as she uses stories, music, and movement to enhance early literacy skills and foster a love of reading. (3-5 yrs).

Wednesday, Sept. 16
 9:30-9:50 a.m.
 Babies en Plein Air, Baxter Memorial Library, Gorham.
 Bring your baby and a blanket to join us for an interactive, socially distanced, outdoor lap-sit program. To ensure the comfort and safety of all participants, we ask that caregivers wear masks and leave older siblings at home or with a friend during this community baby program. Program will be canceled in the event of inclement weather. (birth-18 months).

Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

Thursday, Sept. 17
 9:30-9:50 a.m.
 Virtual Toddler Discovery Time, Baxter Memorial Library, Gorham.
 Sing along with Ms. Dani on Facebook as she uses songs, rhymes, and books to enhance early literacy skills and foster a love of reading. Each week will feature a new book but use the same songs and fingerplays so the kiddos will be able to learn the words and actions to each month's song choices. (ages 18-36 months).

Tuesday, Sept. 22
 9:30-10 a.m.
 Virtual Preschool Discovery Time, Baxter Memorial Library, Gorham.
 Join Ms. Heidi on Facebook as she uses stories, music, and movement to enhance early literacy skills and foster a love of reading. (3-5 yrs).

Thursday Sept. 24
 9:30-9:50 a.m.
 Virtual Toddler Discovery Time, Baxter Memorial Library, Gorham.
 Sing along with Ms. Dani on Facebook as she uses songs, rhymes, and books to enhance early literacy skills and foster a love of reading. Each week will feature a new book but

use the same songs and fingerplays so the kiddos will be able to learn the words and actions to each month's song choices. (ages 18-36 months).

Friday, Sept. 25
 Restorative practices certificate program offered by UMaine Hutchinson Center and Restorative Justice Center. Six-session course from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For information or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact Michelle Patten, um.fhc.pd@maine.edu; (207) 338-8002.

Saturday Sept. 26
 10 a.m.-noon
 StoryWalk Ribbon Cutting, Gorham.
 Join us for the ribbon cutting ceremony of the Maine Birthday Book StoryWalk on September 26 at 10 a.m. This event celebrates the Maine Bicentennial and is a collaboration between Baxter Memorial Library, Gorham Parks and Recreation, Gorham Schools, and Shaw Brothers Construction. There will be a book sale and signing from 10 a.m. to noon with the author of The Maine Birthday Book, Tonya Shevenell. Join us as we walk, read, and follow the StoryWalk signs at

beautiful Cherry Hill Farm Trail in Gorham, Maine. This is an outdoor only event. Please maintain social distancing between family groups. Masks are recommended when social distancing is difficult to maintain. Rain date will be Sept 27 at 10 a.m..

Tuesday Sept. 29
 9:30-10 a.m.
 Virtual Preschool Discovery Time, Baxter Memorial Library, Gorham.
 Join Ms. Heidi on Facebook as she uses stories, music, and movement to enhance early literacy skills and foster a love of reading. (3-5 yrs).

Wednesday Sept. 30
 9:30-9:50 a.m.
 Babies en Plein Air, Baxter Memorial Library, Gorham.
 Bring your baby and a blanket to join us for an interactive, socially distanced, outdoor lap-sit program. To ensure the comfort and safety of all participants, we ask that caregivers wear masks and leave older siblings at home or with a friend during this community baby program. Program will be canceled in the event of inclement weather. (birth-18 months).

Thursday, Oct. 29
 Restorative practices certificate program offered by UMaine Hutchinson Center and Restorative Justice Center. Six-session course from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For information or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact Michelle Patten, um.fhc.pd@maine.edu; (207) 338-8002.

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Friday, Oct .30
 Restorative practices certificate program offered by UMaine Hutchinson Center and Restorative Justice Center. Six-session course from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For information or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact Michelle Patten, um.fhc.pd@maine.edu; (207) 338-8002.

Thursday, Nov. 19
 Restorative practices certificate program offered by UMaine Hutchinson Center and Restorative Justice Center. Six-session course from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For information or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact Michelle Patten, um.fhc.pd@maine.edu; (207) 338-8002.

Claims

Continued from page 4

and supporting businesses again.”

How do red states and blue states compare when it comes to recovery?

“With an average rank of 24 among the most recovered states, blue states had a better recovery from unemployment claims last week than red states, which rank 27 on average,” said Jill Gonzalez, WalletHub analyst. “The lower the number of the ranking, the

bigger the state's recovery was.”

How has unemployment in California – the state with the most COVID-19 cases – recovered?

“California's unemployment claims have experienced the 7th slowest recovery in the U.S. For the week of August 17, California had 209,516 new unemployment claims, an 80% decrease from the peak during the coronavirus pandemic,” said Jill Gonzalez, WalletHub analyst.

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Lakes

Continued from page 11

on the one and a half hour drive to Cupsuptic. Approaching the Town of Oquossuc, Height of Land Overlook on Route 17 provided a stunning panoramic view of much of our upcoming voyage.

Benefiting from a gentle tailwind, the sun was shining and the skies partly cloudy when departing from Cupsuptic Boat Landing. The Saddleback Mountain Range dominated views in the east. Traveling southeasterly through a narrows near Oquossoc, Bald Mountain on our left and highlands to the right created the impression of an inland fjord.

Passing Stony Batter Point, we navigated south experiencing continuous views of substantial Toothaker Island in the distance with Height of Land and Bemis Mountain towering above. Enjoying plentiful bird sightings throughout the outing, a family of Canada Geese led the way to our campsite on scenic Brandy Point opposite Student Island. The forecast called for a slight chance of showers so a tarp was erected ensuring a dry overnight.

Following an idyllic

stay at Brandy Point, a brief paddle west brought us to Upper Dam. An excellent trail facilitated the portage around the dam and a modest release was sufficient to maneuver through the rock-strewn outflow into Upper Richardson. A tailwind propelled us rapidly south to Black Point Campsite.

My senior moments seem to be increasing exponentially. A sign announced South Arm Campground now manages all camping on the Richardson Lakes. A cell phone call confirmed every location was reserved. Instead of a delightful evening blithely ensconced on one of the many sandy beaches, the disappointing revelation resulted in a long day paddling to South Arm.

Since the weather was superb and the wind continued to cooperate, our tiring odyssey was completed in good spirits despite the setback. We had thoroughly enjoyed one of Maine's finest outdoor adventures.

Rod Cook lives in Topsam and is the author of "The Great Mars Hill Bank Robbery" and "Mountains for Mortals - New England". Visit his website at www.ronchaseoutdoors.com or he can be reached at atronchaseoutdoors@comcast.net.

AARP Maine to mobilize older voters ahead of 2020 elections

AARP Maine recently launched "Protect Voters 50+," a comprehensive voter engagement campaign to support and protect Mainers aged 50 and older as they vote in the November election. The campaign, part of AARP's nationwide voter engagement efforts, will provide information on where candidates stand on issues that matter to Mainers older than age 50 and help them cast their votes safely from home or in person.

A centerpiece of the campaign will focus on providing information about voting options in Maine this fall at www.aarp.org/mainevotes <http://www.aarp.org/mainevotes> and through the AARP Bulletin, direct mail, digital communications and paid media. "AARP is demanding action to make sure that Americans aged 50 years and older, whether they are working parents, family caregivers, or seniors in nursing homes, can vote safely and make their voices heard," said Lori Parham, AARP Maine State Director. "Politicians need

to protect the health and financial security of these voters, especially during this pandemic."

The "Protect Voters 50+" campaign will provide Mainers with the information they need about this year's elections, including Information on how to vote absentee; questions to ask your municipal clerk to ensure you can vote safely in person; video voters' guides; polling; issue briefings and direct mail, text messaging, social media and paid media.

"Now more than ever, Mainers want to hear how the candidates will address key issues like protecting Social Security, bringing down health care costs, and strengthening the economy in this uncertain time," said Parham. AARP Maine will track key races, sponsor debates, and host tele-town hall events. Election information will be provided through a full-scale digital effort, including, the www.aarp.org/election2020 <https://www.aarp.org/election2020> hub, AARP Now app [\[mp=LNK-ABOUT-MOBILE-AARPNOW\]\(https://www.aarp.org/election2020\) social media, and news alerts.](http://now.aarp.org/?intc-</p></div>
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In addition, AARP is working again with TurboVote this election; a joint effort by America's biggest brands and organizations coming together in a nonpartisan, long-term commitment to increase voter participation. With the launch of Protect Voters 50+, AARP's TurboVote tool is now live at voting-tool.aarp.org <https://voting-tool.aarp.org> where voters can sign up to receive election reminders, updates on voting procedures and more.

AARP has a proud 34-year history of non-partisan voter engagement and does not endorse or oppose candidates, nor does AARP make contributions to political campaigns or candidates.

We encourage all Mainers to ask their municipal clerk about voting absentee or, should they choose to vote in person, how they can do so safely. In addition, AARP Maine encourages voters to ask questions of the candidates

so they know where they stand on important issues, and can make informed decisions on Election Day.

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