

Crafting the new year for Lewiston Public Schools under COVID-19

By Nathan Tsukroff

LEWISTON - A commitment by the Lewiston Public Schools in the spring of 2020 to give parents a choice of in-person or remote schooling was “kind of our springboard” to crafting the new school year under the restrictions brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We knew that we were going to have the remote option, and we were going to have to find out which parents wanted which option” for classes starting in the fall of 2020, according to newly-appointed Superintendent Jake Langlais.

Langlais took over as interim superintendent for the schools in July when previous Superintendent Todd Finn resigned for health and personal reasons after just a year in the position. Langlais had been the Lewiston High School principal since 2017, and was previously principal at the Lewiston Middle School.

“And then when we looked at the physical size of our district, and at least the estimate, at the time, of who wished

to be remote, we had as many as the high 70’s and low 80’s percent” of parents who wanted their children to attend school in-person, he said. “So when the (State of Maine) guidelines came out at the end of July, we looked at our projection of students that we thought wanted to come to school, and we took that number and started looking at the social-distancing requirements. And that’s when we knew that if this number stays that big, or gets bigger, we were going to have to cut this group in half somehow.”

At the same time, the school district was looking at providing additional support for students, and trying to determine how to provide office hours for teachers to be available for students. “And also some planning around social/emotional” needs of the students as they deal with the stress and trauma of dealing with the pandemic, Langlais said.

“And so that led us to say, okay, if we’re splitting our groups, what’s the best way to do this? Is it an alternating – is it a Monday/Tuesday, nothing Wednesday,

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Lewiston High School senior Josh Randall won’t be able to play traditional football against other schools this year, due to restrictions put in place by the Maine Principal’s association during the COVID-19 pandemic. Lewiston football players will have intra-mural scrimmages this fall. (Photo courtesy of Josh Randall)

Gorham had lots of decisions to make for the 2020-21 school year

By Nathan Tsukroff

GORHAM – Crafting the 2020-21 school year for the Gorham School District began last spring, as schools were shut down under the initial rules brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

There were lots of decision to be made. Would schools only offer remote learning in the fall, or fully in-person classes, or a combination of the two? How many students would attend in-person, and how would they be kept safe under the social-distancing guidelines?

Superintendent Heather Perry, starting her sixth year in her position, said committees started planning in earnest in mid-May, “once we got settled” after the emergency shut down in March. “We began really thinking about, how do we open school again, because we know we’re going to shut down school for the summer.”

Several committees worked on plans

for this new school year, including the District Leadership Team, which is made up of all the principals, assistant principals and program directors in the district, a medical advisory group, made up of the school physician, district nurses, and four local physicians. The school committee was also involved, and was given documents and other information for members to provide feedback on the decision-making process.

“It was a very fluid and flexible process, with those major committees playing leadership roles,” Perry said.

“We also did some significant surveys with our parents at the end of the school year in June, to try to get feedback from parents around what their thoughts were on what was working well or wasn’t for remote learning.” Parents were also asked for their thoughts and concerns about safety issues with in-person learning. The district had “great participation” with three

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Students are masked and socially distanced as they arrive at Gorham High School the first week of school in the Gorham School District. (Photo courtesy of Superintendent Heather Perry)

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- Former Lewiston-Auburn Chamber of Commerce Member
- Auburn Recreational Department Youth Basketball Coach
- Father of four children and five grandchildren
- Avid hunter, fisherman, snowmobiler, boater and drag racer
- Committed to helping the homeless and at risk teenagers
- Supports training of at risk youth to enter the job market
- Committed to fight the opioid crisis

SeniorsPlus online classes for October

From SeniorsPlus

LEWISTON – The Online Education Center classes from SeniorsPlus for October 2020 will take place online or by telephone.

Please register for classes by emailing ed-center@seniorsplus.org or calling 795-4010. For more information, visit seniorsplus.org/education-center or our Facebook page. Classes are free, unless noted.

Zoom 101: Using Video Technology to Stay Connected

Date: Tuesday, October 13

Time: 10:00-11:00AM

Instructor: SeniorsPlus Staff

Location: Zoom

Join us for a 30-minute class to become more familiar on how to use Zoom to participate in SeniorsPlus’ online classes, or to simply stay connected with friends and family near and far. You do not need a Zoom account or to download any apps to participate in this class. You do not need a video camera for your computer, although it is helpful. You can participate with computers or hand held devices. Educational material and resources will be provided for continued.

Medicare Made Simple

Date & time: At your convenience

Instructor: SeniorsPlus Staff

Location: Online video

Reach out to receive this pre-recorded Zoom class to learn how to navigate Medicare with this introductory course. Learn about your insurance options with Medicare, when to enroll or change plans, and how state law may affect your choices. This presentation is perfect for people who are new to Medicare or anyone who currently has Medicare and would like to learn more.

Cyber-Senior Mentors - A Tech Resource

Date & time: At your convenience - varies

Instructor: Cyber-Senior

Location: Phone and/or online

Due to COVID-19, Cyber-Senior Mentors are providing technology training in the form of online webinars and telephone support for older adults. If you are interested in group or 1-1 technology support please reach out to us for their information. They have trained volunteers standing by to answer your tech questions and to also help you sign up for online training sessions.

Infection Control for COVID-19 & the Flu Season

Date: Wednesday, October 14

Time: 1:30-3:00PM

Instructor: Beacon Hospice Staff

Location: Zoom

Come review ways to boost your immune system and avoid illness during the winter months! In this presentation, we will review how we get sick and identify healthy habits to decrease your risk for COVID-19, Pneumonia, Influenza, and the Common Cold. We will also discuss how to communicate your with your physician and caregivers to help diagnosis your illness.

Writing Your Life Story

Date: Wednesdays, October 14- November 18

Time: 9:00-11:00AM

Instructor: Connie Jones, Surprised by Aging

Location: Zoom

Class limited to 8 people

We’ve all got stories! Wouldn’t it be great if we wrote them down – for ourselves and our families and friends? This informal class will get you on the road to writing about your life, from the mundane to the marvelous. You don’t have to be a “writer” to take this class, and this will not be a critique of your writing style or grammar. Each week there will be a writing assignment, with topics chosen by the group. At the end, you will have written the first six chapters of your life story. Take a chance on finding out that you’ve lived a pretty interesting life after all!

Legal Services for the Elderly: An Overview & COVID-19 Update

Date: Thursday, October 22

Time: 10:00-10:45AM

Instructor: Andrew Milne, LSE Staff Attorney

Location: Zoom

Join Andrew on Zoom to learn all about Legal Services for the Elderly, their services, Helpline, and how they are still here for our community through COVID-19. Learn what they can help you with and who to call for areas outside their specialty, such as estate planning. Andrew will also provide a brief update on courts, evictions, and foreclosures during the pandemic. Since the process has been changing rapidly and is confusing the information may help orient you to the change.

Crafting with Corinne

Date: Wednesday, October 28

Time: At your convenience

Instructor: Corinne Saindon

Location: Pre-recorded video/instructions

Cost: \$5.00 for 2 project kit

In this class, you will create a holiday pull treat holder and coordinating card. Class material cost is \$5.00 and is due at material pick-up. All materials provided for each project. Class size is limited to 10.

Tai Chi Skills Session

Date: Friday, October 30

Time: 10:00-11:00AM

Instructor: SeniorsPlus Staff

Location: Zoom

Join SeniorsPlus staff and volunteers for a hour of Tai Chi practice together. Whether you took a Tai Chi program with us years ago or just ended a workshop, we welcome you to join us and look forward to it!

Groups & Exercise

Coffee & Comfort - Bereavement Support Group

Date: Monday, October 5

Time: 3:00-4:30PM

Instructor: Beacon Hospice Staff

Location: Zoom or Telephone

Loss is hard. The great news is, no one needs to feel alone through their bereavement. Coffee & Comfort offers a safe place where one can receive the grief support they are seeking. Due to current public health concerns, the group will meet over Zoom versus in-person. Zoom phone and video-conferencing information will be provided to registrants.

Navigating Grief & Healing || A Six-Week Support Group

Dates: Wednesdays, October 21-November 25

Time: 2:00-4:00PM

Instructor: Beacon Hospice Staff

Location: Zoom or Telephone

If you have experienced the loss of a spouse or life partner, facing the holidays and increased isolation due to the pandemic can be challenging. Please consider connecting with us for this closed widows/widowers group. We will meet once per week for six consecutive weeks. Each meeting will provide a space to share pictures and memories of your loved one as well as explore grieving over the holidays. Making connections while providing support.

Virtual Knitting Group

Dates: Every other Wednesday - October 14 & 28

Time: 5:00-6:00PM

Group Lead: SeniorsPlus Staff

Location: Zoom

Join our knitting group to work on your own project while socializing!

Caregiver Support Groups - NEW SCHEDULE BELOW!

Dates & Times:

Monday, October 12 from 5:30-7:30PM

Thursday, October 29 from 8:30-10:00AM

Location: Zoom or Telephonic

Our caregiver support groups offer a safe place for caregivers, family, and friends to meet and develop a mutual support system. Participation can be an empowering experience. Due to current public health concerns, the group will meet over the phone vs in-person.

Total Strength & Balance

Dates & Times:

Mondays	11:15-12:00PM	OR	12:15-1:00PM
Wednesdays	11:30-12:15PM		
Fridays	11:30-12:10PM	OR	12:30-1:10PM

Instructor: Linn Morin, Certified Trainer

Location 1: Facebook

Location 2: Seated classes at Lisbon Falls REC

Participants will gain physical and neuro-muscular strength, as well as balance to improve activities of daily living. Light weights or soup cans, a basic bouncing ball and for some tubes are used in this seated exercise class. Water is recommended during the class. As always be sure to check with your physician prior to any exercise class. These classes are held online until the CDC lifts restrictions. To register or for more information, call Linn at 523-9055.

Healthy Living for ME Workshops

HL4ME has launched multiple virtual programs, including Tai Chi for Health & Balance, Better Health NOW, Better Health Now with Diabetes toolkit, Better Health Now with Chronic Pain toolkit, and our Living Well workshops! Reach out today to learn more.

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

From the Editor

A new look for our newspaper

By Nathan Tsukroff,
Managing Editor

Welcome to a new look and feel for our newspaper!

In recent weeks, we have updated captions under photographs to make them easier to read, and changed the fonts for headlines for a more modern look.

We also changed our style to include bylines (who wrote or submitted the article), datelines (in

which town do the events in the article occur), and photo credits for all photographs.

As a weekly publication, we can't really report on breaking news, so we look for stories about our community that give background on recent events and will resonate with our readers.

With more than 40 years of writing and photographing for newspapers in New England, I'm pleased to meet people throughout our community, and tell their stories in photographs

and words.

What do YOU find of interest or concern around you? Let us know with a story idea, or a Letter To The Editor.

A printed newspaper may be old-fashioned, but it is just an arms-length away, and won't disappear suddenly if the batteries run out of power . . .

Please contact us with a story idea you would like to see in print. Reach me at either editor@twincity-times.com or editor@gorhamweekly.com

ACADIA Academy honors staff



ACADIA Academy board member Christopher Brann of Mechanics Savings Bank with award-winning teacher Jodi Pollack, award-winning director Brittyny-Rae Perron, ACADIA Board President Amy Dieterich of Skelton, Taintor & Abbott, and board member Victoria Stanton of Safe Voices. (Photo courtesy of ACADIA Academy)

From Acadia Academy

LEWISTON -- ACADIA Academy, the public charter school serving children in pre-K through grade 6, honored two of its own at an Aug. 31 staff event to mark the start of the school year.

Jodi Pollack, a second grade teacher, received the David M. Gendron Excellence Award in recognition for her abilities in the classroom and her deep commit-

ment to students and to her colleagues. The award was created last year to honor Mr. Gendron, a benefactor of ACADIA Academy.

Brittyny-Rae Perron, ACADIA's director, received the Eagle Service Award, which celebrates extraordinary contributions to the advancement and well-being of the school. Perron was nominated by staff and trustees for her leadership through the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

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ACADIA Academy is one of 10 public charter schools in Maine, with a mission to provide a rigorous, comprehensive educational program for children of the Lewiston-Auburn area, promoting high educational achievement through directed instruction opportunities that are entwined with extensive experiential learning opportunities. For more information, visit www.acadiaacademy.org.

Letters to the Editor

Gideon has done nothing

As Speaker of the Maine House of Representatives, Sara Gideon is the one person in position to call the full Maine Legislature (aka all Maine's elected representatives) back into Session to revisit Governor Janet Mills's

go-it-alone Covid-19 decisions. Yet, despite calls for such a Session from hurting business owners and others across Maine, Sara Gideon has done nothing in this regard.

Gideon shows a total lack of sympathy, concern,

and respect for the State. She would be just as unsympathetic, unconcerned, and disrespectful as a US Senator.

No thank you.

Eileen Willis Heidrich
Turner

Letters to the Editor

Vote for a candidate to strengthen Medicare

This election season, as an older Mainer, I want to urge fellow Maine voters to consider candidates with clear plans to protect and strengthen Medicare, which provides health care for more than 52 million Americans 65+, half of whom live on incomes below \$23,500 per year.

Medicare is a crucial safety net for hardworking Mainers who pay into the program their entire working lives, but this 2020 election could determine whether there are changes to the country's health care

system, including to Medicare. Medicare enrollments in the U.S are expected to grow rapidly in the next decade, so we need to ensure that our elected officials offer plans to ensure that there are no cuts to Medicare and the program is protected for current and future generations.

Particularly in Maine, the oldest state in the country, Medicare supports older Mainers regardless of their incomes or health status. So, many Mainers depend on Medicare coverage, and in light of the

COVID-19 pandemic, protecting access to health care for older folks like me feels especially critical.

So, please, as you consider candidates prior to the 2020 election, urge them to prioritize guaranteeing Medicare coverage in their platforms for the millions of older Americans like me that rely on the program. Before you decide who to vote for, ask candidates to state their plans for protecting Medicare for those of us who need it now and others in the future.

Ruby Parker
Scarborough

Maine's Original Social Distancer

He arrived in Monson flush with cash, lost every cent, then made it back. All the while, he was hiding a secret.

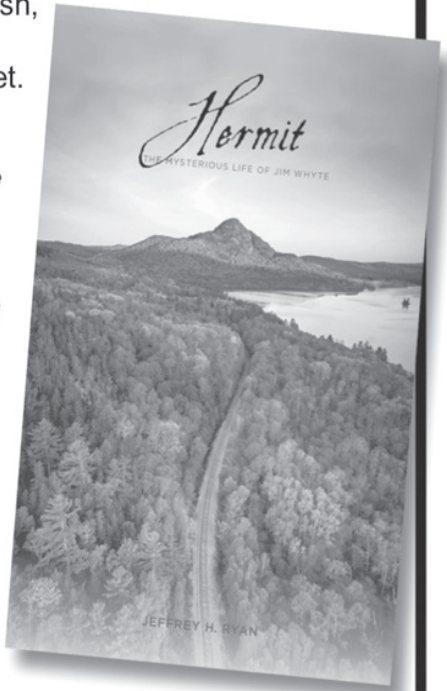
"Ryan is an excellent storyteller, and this tale is as good as any novel, especially since it's based on real people and real events."

— Bill Bushnell, *Bushnell on Books*

"I can tell you it will not take you many days to read, because you won't be able to put it down. I wasn't surprised when Hermit was named a top pick for 2019 on a December Maine Calling show on Maine Public Radio."

— George Smith, *Bangor Daily News*

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What's Going On

WIC Benefits Now Available Through EBT Cards

From Maine CDC

AUGUSTA —The Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) nutrition program has completed the transition from paper food vouchers to an electronic benefit transfer (EBT) card more than a month before a deadline established by the federal government. The new system is called eWIC.

The WIC program, administered by the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC), works to improve the health and nutrition of women, infants, and children during critical times of growth and development. WIC provides healthy foods, nutrition education, breastfeeding support and supplies, and referrals to other services. Participants statewide at nutritional risk receive WIC benefits through local WIC agencies in their communities.

The WIC program serves more than 16,500 individuals. Pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women, and infants and children up to age 5 are eligible. Participants must meet income guidelines, live in Maine, and be determined by a health professional to be at “nutritional risk.”

Through the new eWIC system, benefits for WIC-approved foods are automatically entered onto an EBT card similar to a debit card. This card replaces the current paper-based food instruments and cash-value vouchers that were redeemed at WIC-authorized stores statewide.

Maine rolled out eWIC in phases by county. Penobscot and Piscataquis counties went live on June 22. Aroostook, Hancock, Washington, Kennebec and Somerset WIC participants began receiving cards on July 20. Participants in Androscoggin, Franklin, Oxford, Sagadahoc, Waldo, Lincoln, Knox, Cumberland and York counties started receiving cards on August 31.

Recognizing the value of eWIC, the federal Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 mandated that each state WIC agency implement an electronic benefit transfer system throughout the state by October 1, 2020. Benefits of conversion to an electronic system include smoother and faster transactions at the register and automatic electronic payments to vendors.

During the implementation period, Maine WIC paused its enrollment of new vendors. This pause has now been lifted. Enrollment information for stores can be found at www.maine.gov/WIC.

For more information about the benefits of WIC, how to enroll as a new participant, or store locations, please go to www.maine.gov/WIC.

Workshop on Internal Bias

From EarthTides

Implicit bias can be defined as the automatic unconscious neurobiological processes that influence stereotyping and prejudice. These processes can shape our perceptions, attitudes, and actions toward others. By understanding internal bias, we can make more appropriate choices in our lives and within communities to create spaces of respect and civil justice in Maine.

In this free workshop about Exploring Internal Bias in Pagan Practices, cognitive scientist Laura Ligouri of Mindbridge, will talk about our own internal implicit biases and to explore terms related to implicit bias. Laura’s presentation will be followed by an open-ended discussion about implicit biases within the landscape of modern Paganism.

Hosted by EarthTides Pagan network, this will be a virtual workshop via Zoom, on Sunday, Sept. 27, from 7-9 p.m.

Register at: <http://bit.ly.ws/9Mxc> for a link to the workshop.

PMA seeks submissions for Untitled, 2020 art show

From PMA

PORTLAND - Leading up to 2020, many people throughout Maine anticipated a transformative and reflective year. But no one could have predicted how much the state, and the world, would soon change in such a brief amount of time.

With the COVID-19 pandemic upending the fabric of our daily lives, and a coalescing movement against systemic racism, 2020 quickly revealed itself to be one of those pivotal moments that will alter the course of history.

At the Portland Museum of Art (PMA), we strive to understand the world through the lens of artworks, and we’re deeply curious about the ways in which the events of this year are affecting our artistic communities. When we work together and listen to one another, we create opportunities for change, but how is that change manifesting itself through the art we are making? This year has impacted us all in powerful and distinct ways, and as we navigate these historically challenging and remarkable times, we ask ourselves: how is art defining the moment?

Untitled, 2020: Art From Maine In A _____ Time seeks to unpack this question by highlighting artworks created in Maine during 2020 and showcasing how artists in the region are responding in the wake of generational events. Submissions for this show will be accepted by PMA through the end of September.

This focused scope—coupled with the realities of a rapid timeline and responsiveness to a moment in time within that moment of time—has led the PMA to shift its development process for the exhibition.

Untitled, 2020 will feature an open call and juried exhibition, developed in partnership with five community leaders in the arts—Katherine Bradford, Cody Castle-Stack, Jeremy Frey, Séan Alonzo Harris, and Ayumi Horie—each with unique perspectives on how artwork developed in Maine at this moment reflects and interprets the times. The resulting selection of works, all made in Maine in this historic moment, will create opportunities for empathy, togetherness, and impact during a time when we need it most.

The title adapts the format used by artists to designate some works of art as untitled, inviting and enabling participating artists and audiences alike to define this historic moment for themselves. As the exhibition progresses, we will see how the PMA community defines this moment.

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Rounding the Swan



Kayakers stop for a break in a grassy cove near Swans Island Head. (Photo courtesy of Ron Chase)

By Ron Chase

THE MAINE COAST - When my friend Ken Gordon contacted me about a sea kayak trip Amy Schrag was organizing circumnavigating Swans Island, I didn't have time for the four day endeavor. Since I'd never paddled around Swans Island,

curiosity compelled me to research the online Maine Coastal Waters Forecast. Stellar conditions were predicted throughout. Although only three days remained before their departure and my schedule definitely wouldn't accommodate the adventure, I requested a little more time to decide.

It's amazing what can be accomplished when sufficiently motivated. Tentative plans were cancelled. Tax consulting deadlines extended. Essential chores postponed. Within twenty-four hours, I'd blocked off the requisite timeframe for the ambitious undertaking and was a bona fide member of a predominantly elderly foursome that included Bob Dawson. Amy is young but the rest of us are over seventy and demonstrably ancient mariners.

I wasn't part of the decision-making but whoever decided to launch from Seal Cove Boat Landing on Mount Desert Island made an excellent choice. Ample parking and a convenient area to load and unload kayaks merits my coveted five star rating. Situated several miles north of Swans Island, a collection of smaller islands are conveniently located about midway.

Our tentative plan was to complete a six mile largely open crossing to a campsite on Pond Island and assess the situation. Paddling conditions were

superb on the traverse. Arriving at Pond midafternoon, skies were clear and seas calm so the consensus was to continue an additional six miles to distant and remote Marshall Island.

Navigating past Sheep Island, we cruised south through a shallow channel between Opeechee and Black Islands. Continuing adjacent the west side of Buckle Island, a senescent respite was required in a grassy cove near Swans Island Head. Persisting around the head and along the scenic western shore of Swans Island, a narrow passage was negotiated to a gravel beach on Hat Island. After riding a feisty tidal flow east of Hat, our weary band persevered south towards Long Point on the northern terminus of Marshall Island hoping the campsite was still available. Luck was on our side arriving just prior to a large crew in a motorboat.

Exceptional conditions greeted us the following morning with sunny skies, light winds, and tranquil seas. Taking advantage of the remarkable weather, the day began with a circumnavigation of rockbound Marshall Island stopping at a secluded beach in Sand Cove. Embarking from prominent Devils Head, another lengthy unprotected traverse was accomplished. Passing Brimstone, Green, and Scrag Islands, Big Baker Island positioned just south of Swans Island was our choice for a lunch spot.

A rising tide negated sometimes treacherous tidal currents traveling northeast along Swans Island to a campsite on West Sister Island. After establishing camp, a unique hike was completed on impressive ledges that envelop the entire island. Our plan was to spend two nights at West Sister as reconnoitering nearby consequential Long Island was on the agenda for the next day. An ominous fog bank engulfed us just before retiring.

Lobster boats could be heard hauling traps in dense fog when we arose in the morning. A worsening forecast called for fog throughout the day with strengthening winds from the southwest. An excursion

around rugged exposed Long Island lost its glitter so alternatives were contemplated. Electing to journey north along the protected east shore of Swans Island to the campsite on Pond Island was our conservative choice. The selection was a wise one as concentrated fog dominated the Long Island area for the duration of the day.

Following a compass bearing in a virtual whiteout proceeding towards Ram Island, a combination of fog and penetrating sunshine created a surreal optical illusion as we approached the tiny atoll just east of Swans Island. The diminutive islet appeared to be a snow-capped mountain range. Persisting along the picturesque northeast shore of Swans Island to North Point, the fog gradually lifted. Sweltering heat and humidity were endured while island hopping northwesterly to our destination.

The campsite on Pond Island was exceptional and a refreshing breeze provided for a comfortable late afternoon. While others explored, a nap was this old man's choice. The ubiquitous fog rolled in at dusk.

Fog lingered through the night saturating tents and gear. Departing in the misty haze, the murky conditions diminished as we rounded the northwestern extremity of Pond. Partial visibility and glassy seas highlighted the six-mile crossing to Seal Cove. Despite the foggy complications, ours had been a memorable voyage in one Maine's most scenic coastal regions.

Ron Chase is a resident of Topsham and 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 ronchaseoutdoors@comcast.net.

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A kayaker paddles along the eastern shore of Swans Island with Mount Desert Island in the background. (Photo courtesy of Ron Chase)



Two kayakers paddle along the eastern shore of Swans Island with Mount Desert Island in the background. (Photo courtesy of Ron Chase)

Lewiston

Continued from page 1

then a Thursday/Friday?" he said. "The picture started to paint itself, because we landed in a place where our available staff and our parent desire to be in school" pointed to two cohorts, or groups of students, that would attend split sessions at the schools.

The district also looked at students who might have special education needs, and students who would attend the Lewiston Regional Technical Center, which provides "a pretty specialized program" for students from six schools in the area, Langlais said. The requirements of the programs at LRTC generally means students must attend in-person four days a week.

That led the district to create four cohorts, starting with cohort A, which attends classes in-person on Monday and Tuesday each week, with remote learning on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Cohort B attends in-person on Thursday and Friday, with remote learning on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

Students who opted for only remote schooling make up Cohort C. These students are being taught mostly by dedicated teachers who are doing just remote classes," he said. "In most cases, we had enough students who wanted to be remote that we could take a group of teachers and have them do just remote teaching." More than 100 students each at the elementary schools, "and a pretty high number (of students) at the middle and high school" have chosen remote schooling.

Cohort D is made up from students in the vocational classes, technical education classes, and some of the district's "special populations", Langlais said. This group of students will attend school in-person four days a week, although limits on staffing mean

some classes may not be possible this school year.

The district has around 5500 students, and about 1100 staff members.

For the remote sessions, whether hybrid or full-time, students are being provided with computers to connect to the schools for classwork over the internet. The district received Mifi cellular "hot spot" devices from the State of Maine last spring, and provides them to families that need internet access. The Mifi devices connect to the Verizon cellular network to provide wifi internet access, but cannot be used for phone calls.

Students connect remotely over apps that include Zoom and Google Classroom, along with the Seesaw learning app for the younger grades.

Langlais said there are some supply-chain issues, which means some students will have to wait for needed hardware.

Last week was the first day of school for the new year, "and the energy was incredible!" Langlais said. Wednesday was a full remote day, where teachers had the choice of coming to their schools or working from home. Students had remote activities and teacher support sessions on Wednesday.

Splitting the classes into two groups means that 10 or fewer students are in a classroom, wearing face masks and properly separated under mandated guidelines. Lunches are delivered to students in classrooms by the nutrition program staff, and students are allowed to remove face masks for eating, while remaining at least six feet apart from other students.

The district staff "did a lot of brainstorming" as well as sharing ideas with other school districts to arrive at this final model for the school year, Langlais said. Schools in Maine also built on the knowledge of schools in the southern and western states which

opened earlier in the summer.

Teachers who needed to stay out of the buildings due to concerns over the spread of the virus are generally able to work with students remotely, so most of teachers in the district have remained on staff.

The other big impact for Maine schools is the requirement for social separation in sports. The Maine Principals Association just recently set guidelines that do not allow for tackle football games between schools. Students on the Lewiston teams will be able to scrimmage against each other, but not play in the traditional games against other schools. The district is looking at the possibility of 7-on-7 football, "which is more of a flag football" game, Langlais said.

The district is considering an abbreviated football season this spring, with competition between schools, although that will depend on the trend in the pandemic infections in the area.

Indoor volleyball is not allowed, and may be moved outdoors.



Josh Randall, a senior at Lewiston High School, in front of the stone maker at the entrance to his school. Randall attends school in person two days a week, then works remotely from home the other three days, under a plan put in place by Lewiston Public Schools to provide proper social distancing for students in classrooms, under the guidelines mandated by the COVID-19 pandemic. (Photo courtesy of Josh Randall)

NRA-PVF endorses Dale Crafts

From Dale Crafts for Congress

LISBON – The office of Dale Crafts announced last week that the candidate has been endorsed by the National Rifle Association-Political Victory Fund, the NRA's political action committee.

Crafts is the Republican nominee for Maine's 2nd Congressional District, currently represented by Jared Golden (D).

"When it comes to our second-amendment rights, I do not just talk the talk. During my time on the Inland Fisheries and

Wildlife Committee and as a Board Member for the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine, I have led the effort to ensure all Mainers have the right to bear arms for personal protection, sport, recreation, and collection," Dale Crafts said. "I am thankful to have the NRA on my side as we work to win back Maine's Second Congressional District. In Washington, our rights are under attack every day. The radical left is reaching into your gun safe with every chance they get. As your Congressman, I will protect the Constitution, because it is clear, 'The right

of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.'"

The NRA Political Victory Fund (NRA-PVF) is NRA's political action committee. The NRA-PVF ranks political candidates - irrespective of party affiliation - based on voting records, public statements and their responses to an NRA-PVF questionnaire. Crafts received an A+ rating from the organization.

Golden enlisted in the Marine Corps infantry following the 9/11 attacks in 2001, serving combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. He was elected to

represent Lewiston in the Maine House of Representatives in 2014, and subsequently elected to the seat in the U.S. House of Representatives in 2018.

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Safe Voices seeks donors for holiday outreach

From Safe Voices

AUBURN - Safe Voices, the domestic violence resource center based in Lewiston, invites businesses and community members to participate in its annual holiday programs Feed-a-Family and Adopt-a-Family.

Individuals, businesses and community organizations are welcome and may choose to support one or both programs.

This annual program serves more than 100 families across Androscoggin, Oxford and Franklin counties.

This year, advocates anticipate even greater need as survivors continue to struggle with increased risk and instability brought on by COVID-19 and social distancing. For parents and children who are struggling with isolation brought on by abuse, or who have had to flee a dangerous situation at home, donors can help provide a happy holiday in difficult times.

The Feed-a-Family program matches donors with a family to provide a complete Thanksgiving dinner. Donors purchase the supplies for a traditional dinner of turkey, sides and dessert and deliver them to Safe Voices, who will then bring them to the family in need.

The Adopt-a-Family program matches donors with families to provide gifts in celebration of the December holidays.

If you would like to participate as a donor, please call or email Becca Tinkham at 207-795-6744 x217 or btinkham@safe-voices.org. Donors may also complete a participation form online at www.safevoices.org.

If you, or someone you know, is in a domestic violence situation, please call Safe Voices' 24-hour helpline at 1-800-559-2927.

Come PLAY with us!

From The Public Theatre

LEWISTON - Do you miss theatre as much as we do? The Public Theatre is creating a PLAY Club (like a Book Club but we read plays) and we're inviting you to join.

Every year when we pick our season, we read tons of great plays that never appear on our stage (sometimes for the simple reason that the cast size is too big). We thought it would be fun to share some of these great scripts with you and find out if you like them as much as we do.

Each month we'll choose a play and meet on ZOOM to talk about it. We'll meet three times and discuss three fabulous plays. Executive Artistic Director Christopher Schario will be the moderator and Professor Martin Andrucki of Bates College will provide insights and suggestions for discussion.

PLAY Club members will be responsible for acquiring and reading all scripts prior to each meeting. We recommend you sign up quickly as group size will be limited to ensure great conversations. If demand is high we may consider adding a second group.

The first play we'll discuss in October will be the Pulitzer Prize and 2012 TONY award winning play *Clybourne Park*.

Inspired by Lorraine Hansberry's groundbreaking 1959 play, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Clybourne Park* is set in two different eras, with conversations happening in the same house fifty years apart. Act One takes place in 1959, when a white couple unknowingly sells their home to the first black family in the neighborhood (the same neighborhood mentioned in *A Raisin in the Sun*) and their neighbors want them to stop the sale. In Act Two, it's 2009, and the same property is being bought by a young white couple, and the now predominantly African-American neighborhood battles to hold its ground in the face of gentrification. Excruciatingly funny, thought-provoking and squirm-inducing, there's a reason this play won the Pulitzer Prize!

Both *Clybourne Park* and *A Raisin in the Sun* are easily available for purchase online. It is not necessary to read *A Raisin in the Sun*, but we suggest it. We will provide a synopsis

See Play, page 13

DOG OPERA AUDITIONS

Talented Pooches Wanted

From Penobscot Theater Co.

BANGOR – Calling all canines!

Penobscot Theatre Company seeks talented pooches to cast in its upcoming series of Dog Operas, and auditions must be submitted by the end of September.

The Barker of Seville, Tosca the Ball, and Dog Giovanni are three, short “pupperas” created for dogs. Beginning in March, as a part of Digitus Theatrum, Penobscot Theatre Company's 47th Season, Dog Operas are the perfect offering for all theatre lovers and their loyal companions.

Dog Operas are a Penobscot Theatre Company commissioned project, helmed by Christie Robinson, Larrance Fingerhut, Kat Johnson and Brad LaBree. All operas will be created as short films and will be streamed to households, worldwide!

The ideal canine-imate is well behaved, knows basic commands (sit, stay, paw, etc.), works well with other species (humans) and possesses impressive talents (heart-stoppingly adorable counts). Households with multiple talented dogs are encouraged to apply.

If your pooch/es are ready for the spotlight: submit a 3-5 minute audition video in .mp4 format no later than Wednesday, September 30th to casting@penobscottheatre.org. Include your name, city of residence, email and phone number along with your dog's name and special skills (bonus if these are captured on camera!).

Filming will begin in October in Bangor. If your dog is selected, a member of the Dog Opera team will contact you directly to schedule a specific film date. Dogs will be filmed one at a time on a closed set with COVID precautions in place. Companions and their pups must be willing to travel to Bangor.

Canine stars who cannot travel to Bangor may still submit an audition tape. Submissions “from away” may be featured in one or more of the Operas.

Questions can be directed to Rachael Bechtel, artistic administrator at rachael@penobscottheatre.org.

Penobscot Theatre Company is America's Northeastern-most professional, year-round theatre company. It is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization producing a wide variety of plays and musicals each season and owns the historic Bangor Opera House. For a complete list of show times, pricing and more information about the season visit www.penobscottheatre.org



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Questions can be directed to Rachael Bechtel, artistic administrator at rachael@penobscottheatre.org.

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Guest Column

Be engaged and make your voice heard



Sen. Nate Libby (D-Androscoggin), Maine District 21, the City of Lewiston. (Photo courtesy of Nate Libby)

By Senator Nate Libby

This past Thursday, Sept. 17, was Constitution Day, also called Citizenship Day. It’s a day to celebrate the rights and freedoms we enjoy as Americans. For me, it’s also a great reminder that these freedoms come with the responsibility to be an engaged citizen and informed voter. Maine has some of the strongest voting laws in the country, and we have consistently high voter turnout rates for elections. The more people participate in our democratic process,

the stronger our government and our state are. I know there is a lot at stake for many people this election season. I also know there are a lot of questions and concerns about how voting is going to work in the middle of a pandemic. I’m proud to report that the dedicated staff at Lewiston City Hall have been hard at work planning, organizing information and making sure everything is in place so Lewiston voters can cast their ballots safely for Election Day. If you’re thinking about voting absentee, it’s

a good idea to request your ballot as soon as possible. You can do that or learn more about the process by going to www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/voter-info/absent.html or by calling your local municipal office. The Lewiston City Clerk can be reached at 513-3124. Ballots will be mailed out in early October. Once you have your ballot, you can fill it out at home, and then mail it in or bring it back to City Hall. Municipal workers all over the state have heard people’s concerns about the recent problems with U.S. Postal Service delivery. To help people feel more secure about getting their ballot in on time, cities and towns across Maine, including Lewiston, are setting up secure ballot drop-off boxes. Lewiston city officials have worked with Lewiston police and will position the box in view of a security camera to ensure it remains secure. Lewiston city workers have also put together information and resources for voters in one central place on their website, at www.lewistonmaine.gov/117/Elections. Cities and towns also are making it a priority to keep open as many polling

locations as possible, but almost all of them are facing a shortage of poll workers. That’s where you come in. If you’re able, please consider volunteering on Election Day to help your neighbors vote. To sign up to volunteer in Lewiston, go to this website: <http://bit.ly/ws/9Mxq> or call city hall. For those who don’t live in Lewiston, you can call your local town or city office for more information. Volunteer poll workers do an incredible service for all of us, making sure our elections run smoothly. Free, fair and open elections are the cornerstone of our government. But as the saying goes, decisions are made by those who show up. It’s the voters who make our government run and keep elected officials honest. So make sure you’re registered, make a plan to vote, and make your voice heard. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, you can email me at: Nathan.Libby@legislature.maine.gov or call me at (207) 713-8449. Sen. Nate Libby (D-Androscoggin) represents Maine Senate District 21, which comprises the City of Lewiston.

Organ recital Oct 4 at basilica

From Portland Diocese

LEWISTON - Organist Mark Thallander will be joined by Maine organists Ray Cornils, Randall Mullin, Harold Stover and the Norumbega Brass Ensemble at 6 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 4, at the Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul in Lewiston in an hour long concert meant to lift the spirits in these difficult times.

This free concert will be open to 50 people and live-streamed to those not able to attend. To register or for more information, please visit PrinceofPeace.me or contact Scott Vaillancourt at Scott.Vaillancourt@PortlandDiocese.org or call at 240-9419. For everyone’s safety, concertgoers should be masked while in the basilica, and follow social distancing guidelines.

Drive-through bean supper Sept. 26 in Minot

From Minot UMC

A drive-through bean supper is being hosted by the Minot United Methodist Church, 142 Minot Ave, Minot, from 4-6 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 26. Meals are \$7 each, and must be ordered by calling Eve Rice at 207-404-6911. The menu includes

Pea Beans & Mac & Cheese, Red or Brown Hot Dogs, Cole Slaw, Brown Bread, Homemade pickles and Apple Squares. there will also be an outside Craft Table with whole pies, jams, pickles, Hot Pads and other goods... Masks and social-distancing are required for service.

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Seguin promoted at Geiger

From Geiger

LEWISTON — Ronald Seguin was recently promoted to Program Manager at Geiger.

Seguin has been an Assistant Program Manager in Corporate Programs since 2019.

During the first several months of the Covid-19 Pandemic, he temporarily assisted, where needed, in the A/R Dept.

In his new role as a Program Manager he will be creating and maintaining solid business partner relationships with assigned Sales Partners and their clients.

Seguin lives in Lewiston with his wife, Taylor.

He graduated Cum Laude in 2019 from the



Ronald Seguin of Lewiston was recently promoted to Program Manager at Geiger. (Photo courtesy of Geiger)

University of Maine in Augusta with his Bachelor's in Business Administration and Management.

LIGHTING UP LEWISTON!

From City of Lewiston

The Downtown Lewiston Lighting Committee is spearheading an effort to annually "light up" a designated area of the city of Lewiston, ME, - an exciting boost for the holidays!

During the winter of 2019, Kennedy Park looked striking, decked out in a multitude of lighted white globes.

For the 2020 holiday season, the committee is focusing on Dufresne Plaza, which was named after Chief Justice Armand A. Dufresne, Jr.

However, the committee cannot accomplish this goal without community help. To fully light up Dufresne Plaza this season, 53 globes are needed!

To contribute to this effort, in memory of someone or in tribute to someone, a donation in the amount of \$150 is asked for each globe. Donations may be made at: www.lewistonmaine.gov/lightinguplewiston. A recognition page will be created on the City of Lewiston website.



Lighted globes hang in Kennedy Park in Lewiston, ME, in the winter of 2019-20.

- Reasons for community members and businesses to donate include:
- To Remember a Loved One
 - To Recognize Employees
 - To Thank a Veteran
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Maine's fall foliage season creeping in

From Maine DACF

AUGUSTA – Last week marked the official start of reporting 2020 fall foliage conditions in Maine.

Maine's leaf-bearing trees will show off their brilliant colors of yellow, orange, and red in the upcoming weeks. The Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry's (DACF) 2020 Fall Foliage Report for Wednesday, September 16, 2020, reports spotty color change (10 percent) in the forest.

Typically, northern Maine (zones 6 and 7) reaches peak conditions the last week of September into the first week of October. The rest of the state's progression of color will start occurring from north to south in mid-October. Coastal Maine typically reaches peak conditions mid-to-late October.

"Despite the drought conditions throughout Maine, we anticipate a brilliant fall foliage season," notes Gale Ross, Maine's fall foliage spokesperson. "As with every autumn, the weather determines Maine's extended foliage outlook. Please keep your fingers crossed for warm days, followed by chilly nights, which will set us up for that perfect panoramic display of fall colors during the foliage season."

Aaron Bergdahl, Forest Pathologist with

DACF's Maine Forest Service, reports that overall, Maine's abundant, healthy, resilient and diverse forests assure us of an excellent display of colors."

During these unusual times, please be safe while exploring Maine this fall. For travel and visitor information as it relates to COVID-19, go to visitmaine.com/travel-with-care.

Many of Maine's annual fall events that residents and visitors alike have grown to love have been canceled or have become virtual this year, but there are still ways to enjoy autumn in Maine safely. Celebrate the changing season with apple picking at a local orchard. In addition to picking your own apples, some orchards like Ricker Hill in Turner provide even more fun with hard cider for the adults and fresh apple cider donuts. Or, bring the whole family to find your way through an elaborate corn maze, like this year's design at Treworgy Orchards in Levant that honors Maine's bicentennial. If you're looking to get out and about this weekend, check out Freeport's Makers on Main that will take place every Saturday until Indigenous Peoples' Day (October 10), featuring artwork, crafts, and treats.

As Maine foliage transitions from north to south throughout the season, the optimal place to

spot the changing leaves should first lead you to Aroostook County. Enjoy social distancing in the fresh air and roam the historical landmarks and river views of St. John Valley by bike. For an incredibly scenic drive, pack up the car for the Fish River Scenic Byway (Route 11) from Portage to Fort Kent. Expect to stumble upon meadows, forested stretches for foliage sightings, Maine's highest peak, and picturesque Eagle Lake. Keep your eye out for an array of wildlife from eagles to moose.

Autumn enthusiasts can visit the state's official foliage website at www.maine-foliage.com to sign up to receive weekly reports by email and are encouraged to share foliage images from regions throughout the state as the progression of color begins. Be sure to tag your images with @mainefoliage on Instagram and use #MaineFoliage. Our Facebook page will also include safe ways to enjoy fall this year. For more information about visiting Maine safely this fall, visit maine.gov/covid19.

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

Online SAT Prep Matters course

From U. of Maine

BELFAST - Preparation for the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) will be the focus of an upcoming online class through the Hutchinson Center this fall.

The online course, Prep Matters, is designed for rising high school juniors and seniors who plan to take the SAT this fall. The course will be offered on Saturdays and Sundays, from 11 a.m.-noon. The cost is \$240 per session. The session runs Oct. 3-25. More information is available on the Hutchinson Center website at: <http://bitly.ws/9N3L>

The redesigned SAT has a total score made up of two parts — verbal skills and math. The average SAT score for students in Maine is 1031 total (College Board report, graduating class of 2018 all Maine schools). According to the

College Board, to attain at least a C in a non-remedial college math class, a student must score 530 out of 800 on the math section of the SAT. However, only about 40% of high school students can do so.

Course instructor Dr. Mary Smyth says that students need to understand the concepts, not just cram at the last minute to pass a test. For 15 years, Smyth has tutored students for the ACTs, AP Calculus, SATs and SAT subject tests. Under her tutelage, and through their own hard work, most of Smyth's students have improved their SAT scores by 100-200 points.

Smyth has been teaching algebra through calculus at Watershed School in Camden for over a decade and has coached SAT prep for 15 years. She is a retired pediatrician and is a local expert on college admission testing.

According to a parent of one of Smyth's students, "Mary is the ultimate SAT coach — intelligent, patient, funny and, most importantly, she knows the SAT inside and out. Thanks to Mary's coaching, my daughter's score dramatically improved from the PSAT to the SAT and she now understands concepts that were confusing to her before. I highly recommend Mary Smyth to anyone looking to improve their SAT score."

A limited number of scholarships are available. More information about upcoming UMaine professional development programs, registration and need-based scholarship applications are online at: <http://bitly.ws/9N3L>

For more information or to request an accommodation contact the Early College Program, um.earlycollege@maine.edu; 207.581.8024.

\$6.6 Million to Support Affordable Housing

From U.S. Sen. Susan Collins

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Senator Susan Collins, the Chairman of the Housing Appropriations Subcommittee, announced that the State of Maine has received a total of \$6,678,216 in the third

installment of funding to support affordable housing, assistance to businesses and bolster COVID-19 prevention and response efforts throughout the state. This funding, awarded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), was allocated through a section of the

CARES Act that Senator Collins co-authored directing \$48.5 billion to support housing and transportation programs.

"The COVID-19 pandemic is taking an unprecedented toll on communities. Maine's state agencies and local govern-

See Housing, page 12

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Crafts for Congress releases first TV ad

From Dale Crafts for Congress

LISBON - The Dale Crafts for Congress campaign launched their first television ad last week, titled "American Dream".

The ad features Dale Crafts telling his story from tragedy to successful businessman and public servant.

Crafts is the Republican candidate running against Jared Golden (D), who was elected to Maine's second district for the U.S. House of Representatives in 2018.

"I am honored to have the opportunity to share my story with the voters of Maine's Second Congressional District," said Dale Crafts. "Thirty-seven years ago, I woke up in a hospital bed and learned I was paralyzed and would spend the rest of my life in a wheelchair. At that moment, never did I image I would have the opportunity to build multiple businesses that have employed hundreds of Mainers, raise six children, serve my community on the Town Council and in the State Legislature, and now be running for Congress to serve YOU in Washington."

Dale continued, "I have lived the American Dream, because this country provided me the opportunity to work hard and build it for myself. I am running for Congress, because I want to ensure my children and yours have the same opportunity to build their own version of the American dream right here at home."

The Crafts for Congress

campaign calls the television ad "a positive, uplifting message about the American Dream, hope and resilience. A theme that every Mainer can relate to."

In the ad, Crafts says, "The American Dream doesn't mean things never go wrong... it means through faith and grit you can pick yourself up. I'm Dale Crafts. After a car swerved in front of me on my motorcycle... I was paralyzed. But I never quit I built multiple businesses employing hundreds of Mainers ... protected our second amendment rights ... and passed the largest tax cut in Maine's history."

I'm Dale Crafts. I approve this message because I'll stand up for Maine families."

During the pandemic, first responders have faced increased challenges. Every call they answer could not only be dangerous, but could also expose them to the coronavirus. First responders and health care workers are facing circumstances they never could have imagined. To help them through this difficult time, the state opened the FrontLine WarmLine a few months ago. This phone line is staffed by mental health volunteers to offer

First Responders Day

help and advice to frontline workers as they deal with the anxiety, stress and grief that comes with responding to COVID-19. You can call the FrontLine WarmLine at 207-221-8196 or 866-367-4440. The line is staffed from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., 7 days a week.

I invite you to join me in thanking our incredible first responders and frontline workers, today and every day.

Sen. Nate Libby (D-Androscoggin) represents Maine Senate District 21, which comprises the City of Lewiston.

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

APL Launches Senior Care Call Program

From Auburn Public Library

AUBURN - In the United States, about forty-three percent of those over the age of sixty report feeling lonely and this staggering statistic was discovered before Covid-19. In response to the isolation many of the Auburn/Lewiston seniors are feeling, the Auburn Public Library has developed a Senior Care Call outreach program.

If you are concerned about a senior friend or family member, you can request that Library staff

See APL, page 16

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Housing

Continued from page 10

ments are working hard to provide seniors, individuals with disabilities, and low-income families with safe and affordable homes that promote their health, independence, and overall wellbeing,” said **Senator Collins**. “As the Chairman of the Housing Appropriations Subcommittee, I worked hard to secure these vital resources to help Maine continue to provide critical assistance during this difficult time.”

Auburn received \$137,932; **Bangor** received \$283,175; **Biddeford** received \$126,650; **Lewiston** received \$193,379; **Portland** received \$634,669; **Cumberland County** received \$976,929; **State of**

Maine received \$4,325,482

As the Chairman of the Housing Appropriations Subcommittee, Senator Collins helped to secure more than \$16.5 million in the first installment and more than \$4.3 million in the second installment of CARES Act funding to support affordable housing efforts throughout Maine.

The funding was awarded through HUD’s Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The CDBG program provides grants to states and local units of government to support housing and expand economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons. These grants can also be used in coordination with local health authorities to respond to COVID-19.

Common Ground Country Fair online Sept 25-27

From MOFGA

The Common Ground Country Fair, the premier educational event of the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA), will be held online September 25, 26 and 27, 2020. This year, due to COVID-19, it has become especially apparent how important local farms, nonprofit organizations and other businesses are to Maine’s communities.

Additionally, for many businesses, the Common Ground Country Fair supplies an important source of revenue. Recognizing that it is not possible to host a typical in-person fair in 2020, MOFGA created an online marketplace

to offer a space for vendors and fairgoers to connect.

“We’re really excited about this opportunity. It’s not the same as seeing all of our friends in person, but, especially because it is going to go into the holidays, we are looking forward to the potential to reach new audiences,” said Amy Grant from Good Karma Farm in Belfast, Maine.

MOFGA’s Online Marketplace and Fair Directory will offer a one-stop shopping experience, providing access to vendors and organizations who would typically participate in MOFGA’s in-person fair. The Online Marketplace and Fair Directory will run from Sept. 25 to Jan. 8, 2021, and will feature a

wide range of Maine businesses and organizations. April Boucher, MOFGA’s fair director, said, “While we can’t gather together in person this year, we’re committed to supporting local businesses and organizations focused on sustainability.”

Nearly 200 businesses and organizations will participate in the Online Marketplace and Fair Directory, including farmers, food producers, crafters, artisans, energy and shelter businesses and more. All of the participating vendors and exhibitors have been reviewed by the fair’s volunteer coordinators and MOFGA’s staff to ensure that they meet the fair’s current guidelines — which

support local, organic and sustainable sourcing and practices. The fair’s popular Youth Enterprise Zone, which annually provides an opportunity for 13- to 21-year-old entrepreneurs to sell products and services in alignment with the fair’s values, will continue to be featured this year. A wide variety of nonprofit organizations focused on topics related to the environment, agriculture, low-impact forestry and more will also take part.

The Online Marketplace and Fair Directory will be available at fair.mofga.org beginning on Sept. 25 and running through Jan. 8, 2021. A sneak peek of some vendors and products is available now.

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The 2020 Common Ground Country Fair artwork features bee balm and bees. (Courtesy of MOFGA)

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John Grenier
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Friday, Sept. 25
9 a.m.-4 p.m.
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.

Friday, Sept. 25
6 p.m.
LEWISTON - A healing prayer service will take place at 6 p.m. at Holy Cross Church, 1080 Lisbon Street, Lewiston. Fr. Michael Seigny, OFM Cap., parochial vicar at Prince of Peace Parish, will preside at the service. To attend, register at www.princeofpeace.me or by calling the parish at (207) 777-1200. Social distancing and crowd restriction protocols will be followed at the service.

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,

Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

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).

Sunday, Oct. 4

6 p.m.
Basilica of Sts. Peter and Paul, Lewiston
Organ concert at the basilica, limited to 50 in-person and live-streamed. To register, call 207-240-9419 or email: Scott.Vaillancourt@PortlandDiocese.org

Wednesday, Oct. 28
7-8:30 p.m.
The PLAY Club reading of Cybourne Park. Email info@thepublictheatre.org or call 782-3200 today to reserve your spot in the Zoom session with PLAY CLUB!

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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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.

Play

Continued from page 7

sis of Raisin in the Sun to those who sign up for the Club.
At the end of the October meeting we will suggest four plays for the remaining two sessions. Those in attendance at the October meeting will vote on which two plays we will read for January and March.
Wed, Oct 28, 7pm – 8:30 PLAY: Clybourne Park by Bruce Norris
Wed, Jan 27, 7pm – 8:30 TBA
Wed, March 24, 7pm – 8:30 TBA
Email info@thepublictheatre.org or call 782-3200 today to reserve your spot in PLAY CLUB!

PMA

Continued from page 4

hibition opening approaches, the PMA will welcome members, visitors, and community members to share their thoughts on what 2020 means to them, and include these responses in some of the exhibition

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materials.
Untitled, 2020: Art From Maine In A Time is a tribute to Helen E. and William E. Thon, who have enhanced the PMA's regional contemporary program and enriched the cultural life and experience of the people of Maine for two decades. Since 2000, the Thon's have supported recurring contemporary series at the PMA that have featured Maine artists, enhanced the PMA's ability to flourish, and enriched the cultural life and experience of the people of Maine. As their support enters a third decade, the museum continues to reflect their vision, the growth of our region, the diversification of our communities, and a new inclusive mission.
Any artist living and working in Maine in 2020 is invited to submit their work for consideration via Submittable at: <http://bit.ly.ws/9IAH>. There is no fee for submissions. All applications submitted will be considered final and treat-

ed as such. Applicants will not be permitted to add to or edit an application once it has been submitted. All incomplete or duplicate applications will be immediately disqualified. Submissions close 11:59 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 30, and notification of jury results will be made by Nov. 16.

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Colonial Williamsburg, free time on the Virginia Beach Boardwalk, dinner cruise with entertainment on the Spirit of Norfolk, admission to Nauticus and Battleship Wisconsin, Virginia Beach Aquarium and Marine Science Center. A \$75.00 deposit is due when signing up. Price is \$775.00 pp double occupancy. For questions and detailed information on these trips, please call: Claire - 207-784-0302 or Cindy- 207-345-9569.

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Teachers point a student toward his classroom on the first week of school at Gorham Middle School. (Photo courtesy of Superintendent Heather Perry)

Gorham
Continued from page 1

full-scale surveys among parents, staff and community members, she said.

“It was an iterative process,” where the district presented ideas and thoughts to staff and parents for their feedback, Perry said. “And that went on for several months.”

The Maine Department of Education created three scenarios for schools to re-open in the fall – “Red” for only remote learning, “Green” for all in-person classes, and “Yellow” for a hybrid mix of the two.

“Our focus all along was preparing for the Yellow opening, because we knew that was the hardest one to plan for, and the hardest one to make happen,” Perry said.

The color designations for schools differ from the color designations the State of Maine created for counties. The state color designations provide citizens with an understanding of the level of COVID-19 spread and infections in a county. For example, York county is currently designated as a yellow county due to a recent upsurge in infections, while Cumberland county remains green. Gorham sits in western Cumberland county, on the border with York county.

Perry said she shared plans and documents with other superintendents in the Cumberland County Superintendents Association, which met three times a week after schools were shut down in the spring. By June, meetings were just weekly, as the districts continued to share ideas, thoughts and questions as

schools looked to re-open. A representative from the MDOE usually joined the meetings, and “often times, it was the commissioner of education herself (Pender Makin) who joined our meetings.”

While the different needs for each school district, such as in facilities and transportation, meant each district had to craft a unique plan, the superintendents worked together to ensure continuity among the schools. This was especially important for the Career and Technical Education program, where students attend classes in Westbrook, Perry said. Gorham chose Friday as a day for only remote learning, to coordinate with Westbrook.

The Gorham School District has about 2780 students, and just over 10%, or about 290 chose full remote

at lunchtimes, Perry said. For “580 kids, we can’t do it. There’s not enough real estate!”

For the Gorham schools, students are using the cafeteria and other areas in the school for meals, Perry said. This was important because “we wanted kids to still be able to get in a social situation, where they could interact with their peers outside of their (classroom) group, safely.” Meal areas are sanitized between each serving, and “there are a lot safety protocols that are being put into place.”

Having students leave the classrooms for lunch also gives teachers time to themselves. Personal breaks are “an important aspect of being a good, high-quality functioning teacher,” Perry said. The district will continue to

staffing for the district for this school year, she said. “At this point in time, we really are very, very lucky. I think we’ve only got a very small handful of staff who are on medical leave of one variety or another because of COVID. And the rest we’ve been able to figure out a way to accommodate” them so they can continue their work for the district.

Staff members have been assigned various roles to help with the remote learning, some working with students completely remotely, and others alternating between classroom teaching and remote teaching.

As with other schools in Cumberland county, football and indoor volleyball have changed for this fall. Gorham will have “more of an intra-mural approach” with students practicing and building skills



Students have face coverings and are socially distanced in their classroom as they return to Gorham Middle School for the new school year. (Photo courtesy of Superintendent Heather Perry)

learning.

Because of the size of the classrooms and the need to keep students properly distanced for their safety under pandemic guidelines, Gorham schools were not able to allow all students on campus at one time. Students were placed into two cohorts, or groups, with the A group students in school each week on Monday and Wednesday and the B group attending weekly on Tuesday and Thursday. Both groups do remote learning on Fridays.

At Great Falls Elementary School, with a student population of about 580, around 280-290 students are in school at one time under this plan. This means students have enough room to remain six feet apart when they remove their face masks

look at how students are served lunch, and make changes as needed.

The decision to alternate attendance days means that students are not away from the school building for more than five days, Perry said. This creates “a rhythm of learning that made sense for us.”

Another reason for keeping students and staff out of school buildings on Fridays is to provide about 72 hours to allow for the expiration of any virus that remains on surfaces after the daily sanitations. This means the schools have a fresh start each week, Perry said.

The medical needs and concerns of teachers and other staff members were reviewed and accommodated over the summer, with minimal changes in

only at their own school. An outdoor volleyball court is being created for student practice, and the football program is looking at possible flag-football games.

Other fall athletic events will take place between schools, under the Maine Principal Association guidelines.

The Gorham School District includes Gorham High School, Gorham Middle School, Great Falls Elementary, Narragansett Elementary and Village Elementary.

Before coming to Gorham, Perry was the superintendent for nine years at Maine Regional School Unit 3, centered in Unity. She is originally from the Machias area, where she was a teacher and school principal.

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APL
Continued from page 11

give them a bi-weekly call just to check on how they are doing. The ten to fifteen minute calls are just a way to prevent the creep-

ing feeling of anxiety and isolation that so many of our seniors are facing. The AARP estimates that social isolation can “be the equivalent of smoking fifteen cigarettes a day in terms of your health,” according to Amy Goyer, AARP’S fam-

ily and caregiving expert.

If you would like to have a library staff member reach out to a senior, please fill out the form at <http://www.auburnpubliclibrary.org/senior-care-calls/>. All information will remain confidential.