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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Guest Column

Nominees for word of the year

By Grammar Guy

During this unprecedented year we've been introduced to a number of words, phrases and terms, many of which we're eager to erase from our memories. The year 2020 has seen social unrest, political animosity and — of course — coronavirus.

With this bleak backdrop for context, here are Grammar Guy's nominees for the 2020 word of the year.

Social distancing. I'm not sure who coined this phrase, but it's not even accurate. The idea is that if we stay physically distant from each other, we will be less likely to spread the global pandemic of COVID-19. "Social distancing" is a misnomer because, technically, we can still interact socially, although it has been tremendously harder to do so.

Zoom. I know there are other virtual meeting platforms, but Zoom seems to be the most ubiquitous. The videoconferencing

service has been around since 2011, but it caught on this year because it's free (as long as you keep your meeting to forty minutes or fewer).

Bubble. While I've been tempted to purchase a personal bubble (like the "Bubble Boy" episode from "Seinfeld"), the most successful efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19 has been in social barriers, most notably with the NBA's and NHL's end of the regular season and playoffs. I do love that the WNBA's version of this became affectionately known as the "wubble."

Flatten the curve. The idea was that, if we mostly stayed home and severely limited contact with people other than the people living in our homes, the upward trajectory of the coronavirus surge would flatten out. It kind of worked for a few weeks, and then it didn't. Americans thumbed their collective noses at stay-at-home orders and suggested mask-wearing in the name of personal liberty. Now

new cases are surging. So much for "flattening the curve."

New normal. If I hear someone say "new normal" one more time, I'll scream right through my reusable face covering. It's not new anymore. I'm never going to accept pandemic life as "normal." Let's tar and feather "new normal" and run it out of town. Thoughts and prayers.

Sure, it's been a rough year. In fact, each week has felt like a year all on its own. I'm looking forward to turning the calendar to 2021, when hopefully we'll get a handle on coronavirus and start being kinder to each other. What word gets your vote? Is it one on this list, or do you want to nominate a different word? In the meantime, if you need me, I'll be in my bubble.

Curtis Honeycutt is a syndicated humor columnist. He is the author of Good Grammar is the Life of the Party: Tips for a Wildly Successful Life. Find more at curtishoneycutt.com.

Puritan to expand COVID-19 swab production

From U.S. Sen. Collins

BANGOR - U.S. Senator Susan Collins (R-Maine) announced recently that Puritan Medical Products, a medical supplies manufacturer based in Guilford, has been awarded \$11.6 million to expand its COVID-19 testing swab production.

This award, which was funded through the Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act enacted in April, will be used to increase production of swabs by three million per month.

"Increased testing is crucial to tracking and slowing the spread of COVID-19 and keeping our communities safe. Puritan Medical Products has risen to this challenge by exponentially increasing

its production of testing swabs, creating hundreds of jobs in Guilford and Pittsfield in the process," said Senator Collins. "I am very proud of the dedicated Mainers who have been involved in this manufacturing effort that is so critical to the health of our nation, and I will continue to advocate for the resources that they need to keep up the fight."

As a senior member of the Appropriations Committee, Senator Collins worked to secure a \$75.5 million investment for Puritan using Defense Production Act funds in April, which increased Puritan's production of testing swabs and helped to build a modern manufacturing facility in Pittsfield.

In August, Senator Collins announced a \$51.2

million grant that allowed Puritan to retrofit an additional facility in Pittsfield. Together, these contracts brought Puritan's total production of flock tip swabs and foam swabs to at least 90 million per month, and allowed the company to hire hundreds of additional employees.

The new award will help modify the newest plant in Pittsfield to accommodate additional object flocking machines to make swabs for Cue Health. This funding will cover additional engineering work, changes in utilities, and overtime needed to keep the overall project on schedule.

The complete project timeline has not changed, and Puritan will have intermediate operational capacity as a result of this additional funding.

Ski Maine COVID-19 Readiness Course

From CMCC

AUBURN - Central Maine Community College's Center for Workforce and Professional Development has partnered with the Ski Maine Association to create specialty COVID-19 Readiness training for Maine's robust ski industry.

Built off Maine CDC guidelines, the National Ski Areas Association Ski Well, Be Well recommendations, and the Ski Maine COVID-19 operating protocols, this training will be available to 2,500 employees from different ski sites across the state.

Employees who successfully complete this training

will earn a digital badge in COVID-19 Readiness Ski Industry Foundations. This badge serves as a digital representation of learning which the individual can use to promote their skills on LinkedIn or Facebook.

Dick Gowens, executive director of the Ski Association of Maine, said the training will proactively ensure Ski Maine employees are educated on how to work as safely as possible in a COVID-19 environment.

"The employee's knowledge will enhance health and safety by reducing risk for individual employees, team members, and customers while at area ski resorts," Gowens said. "The COVID-19 Readiness badge

Step up your online safety practices

From Boston BBB

BOSTON - The Internet has become a significant part of our everyday lives, allowing us to work, socialize and shop online. Unfortunately, cybercriminals also benefit from that same convenience and accessibility.

Through its online reporting tool, the Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) connects the public with the FBI. According to IC3's 2019 annual report, almost 500,000 complaints and \$3.5 billion in losses were reported last year, with adults over 60 being the demographic most impacted by internet crime. Texas ranks third in the United States for number of victims and fourth for total dollar losses.

Step up your online safety practices with these tips from your Better Business Bureau:

Increase your online privacy. Protect your online accounts by implementing multifactor authentication and using strong passwords, which consist of letters, numbers and special characters. Individuals should also refrain from accessing banking information or making online purchases when connected to an unsecured public network.

Stay secure while you work. As more employees work virtually during the COVID-19 crisis, they should be more vigilant about internet scams and online fraud. Business and personal information should be treated with the same care; avoid sharing it with unfamiliar parties or over unsecured networks. It is important to keep the security software on your business devices up to date, because

only one employee needs to be compromised for an entire organization to experience a data breach.

Use social media responsibly. Social media is a great way to connect with friends and family, but it can also allow scammers and cybercriminals to target you. Only accept friend requests from people you trust, avoid clicking links in messages from strangers, and refrain from posting your personal information online. Remember to be careful about what you share. Remember, there is no "delete" button online.

For more online safety tips, visit at BBB.org, and go to CISA.gov to learn more about National Cyber Security Awareness Month.

Have you encountered cybercrime? Report it to BBB.org/ScamTracker and IC3.gov/Complaint.

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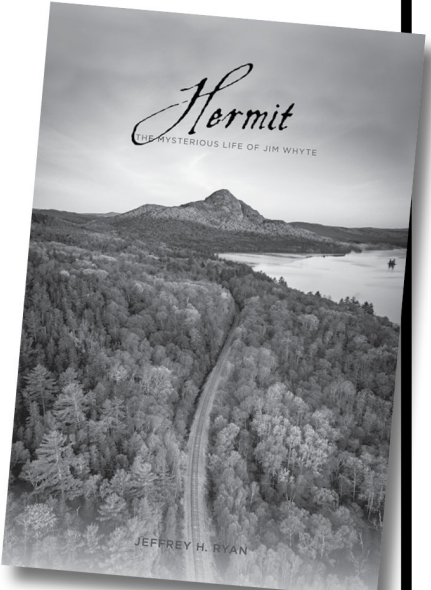
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— Bill Bushnell, Bushnell on Books

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— George Smith, Bangor Daily News

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

citylink looks to better future

From ATRC

AUBURN - citylink has been providing Lewiston and Auburn with bus service since 1976.

With the dramatic changes in the area's population over the last ten years, the Androscoggin Transportation Resource Center is looking to re-examine that service and develop a plan for both immediate and long-term improvements – not just in Lewiston and Auburn, but in the adjoining towns of Lisbon and Sabattus.

According to Jennifer Williams, MPO Transportation Director for the ATRC, the first step is to reach out to residents – even those who have never used bus service – with an online survey available at <http://bitly.ws/aJBk>

The survey is part of an extensive study that ATRC has launched to examine the transit needs of the region and make recommendations for improvement. It will be available online through mid-December.

The current citylink system operates Monday through Friday, generally 6 a.m.-6 p.m., with service on Saturday from 9:15 a.m.-5:15 p.m.. The service hubs are in Lewiston on Oak Street and at Great Falls Plaza in Auburn. Passengers traveling from as far away as Farmington can use the GreenLine to connect to citylink service, while the Lisbon Connection is available to those traveling from Lisbon to Lewiston's Oak Street hub.

The goal of the study is to design the most effective, efficient transit system for the region starting from the bottom up. The study will make recommendations to improve transit convenience, reliability, and accessibility for riders, reduce travel times between destinations, and expand service at times and locations where there is the highest demand.

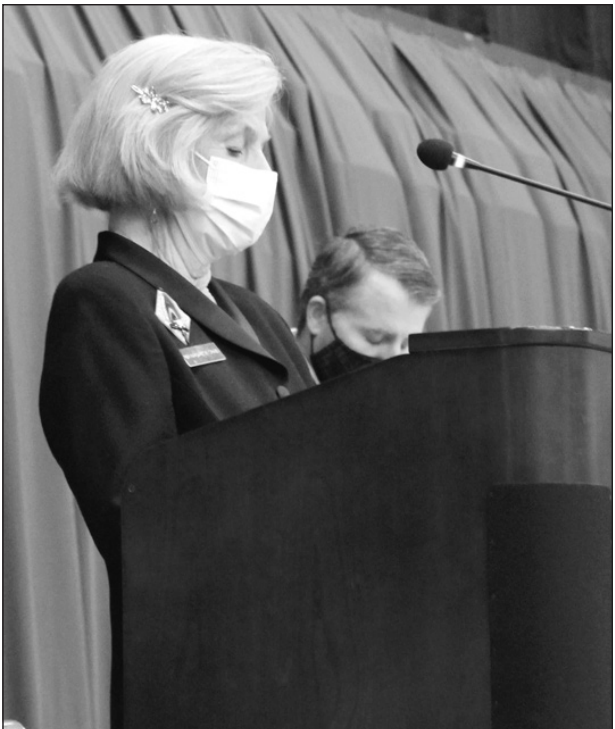
The online survey is anonymous, should take about ten minutes, and will help ATRC to make changes that will make transit more convenient for more customers.

Williams emphasized that they want to hear from everyone. "Even if you are not a current citylink customer, your feedback is essential to understanding what specific improvements we want to make, both short and long term,"

she said. She also noted that more information on the survey is available at <http://bitly.ws/aJBm> and that the survey is easily completed on a cellphone or any other web-linked device.

While nationwide transit usage has understandably gone down over the past months due to the COVID-19 pandemic, transit experts are expecting numbers to begin to return to normal sometime next year.

The study is scheduled to be completed next year, with study updates and the final reports available on <http://bitly.ws/aJBm>. The recommendations will be designed to be implemented over time; some will be shorter term, some could take a few years.



State Rep. Margaret Craven, D-Lewiston, leads the Maine House of Representatives in prayer at the start of Swearing-In Day at the Augusta Civic Center last week. Craven delivered Beannacht by Irish poet John O'Donohue to open the 130th session of the legislature. (Photo courtesy of House Democratic Office)

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Annual Escort of Wreaths and Virtual Convoy

From WAA

COLUMBIA FALLS - The annual Wreaths Across America escort will run from Dec. 15 to Dec. 19.

Wreaths Across America (WAA), is a national non-profit whose Mission to Remember, Honor, and Teach, is in part carried out with the placement of sponsored veterans' wreaths at 2500 participating locations across America, most notably, at Arlington National Cemetery, each December. Another highly anticipated piece of this annual event is the weeklong, mile-long parade of tractor trailers, wrapped vehicles carrying veterans and Gold Star Families, law enforcement and motorcycle riders, leading the escort of wreaths to Arlington for placement.

This year's annual escort of wreaths will have a different look and feel due to the necessary changes being made throughout the country for health and safety. The physical journey – which will include one tractor trailer load of wreaths hauled by Gully Transportation professional driver JD Walker, who is also a Gold Star Father and NAVY Veteran, 11 wrapped CHEVY vehicles carrying Gold Star Families, and nine police cruisers – will take place from Tuesday, Dec. 15, through National Wreaths Across America Day, Saturday, Dec. 19.

“For those who have had the opportunity to participate in the escort

of wreaths over the years, it is truly an experience of a lifetime,” said Karen Worcester, executive director, WAA. “The way we have been welcomed into communities, over the years, with flags waving and streets lined with children and veterans, is something we always wished every American could witness. And now, thanks to PenFed’s support, we’ll be able to offer this incredible journey to all those who wish to participate. We are both grateful and excited to safely share the mission with all who want to participate.”

In partnership with PenFed Credit Union’s digital media content team, PenFed Digital, this year’s escort will also be shared virtually for the nation to join along from the safety of their own homes. PenFed Digital and WAA are overcoming pandemic-related challenges to ensure fallen heroes are honored safely. During the escort and leading up to its departure, viewers can follow along, learning about the mission and hearing stories from the people it impacts on Wreaths Across America’s Facebook and PenFed’s Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn pages. From the professional truck drivers hauling this precious cargo to the hard-working, dedicated volunteers receiving them on the other side of the country, we are going to share their journeys too!

“We are proud to partner with Wreaths Across America to tell the

stories of our nation’s veterans – the men and women who served to protect our freedoms,” said James Schenck, CEO of PenFed Credit Union and PenFed Foundation. “It’s even more important that we continue to support the military community and give back during these uncertain times. This year is going to be especially memorable with both in-person events and the sharing of many incredible stories via social media with those at home. Everyone needs patriotism this holiday season and PenFed is proud to support Wreaths Across America’s mission to remember, honor and teach.”

The WAA escort will down the northeast portion of the country and invites people to come out and wave flags and share signs and cheers of encouragement.

Tuesday Dec. 15
9:00AM Coastal Washington County Institute of Technology
12 Addison Rd., Columbia, ME 04330
10 am Parade through downtown Ellsworth, ME
12:45PM Arrive at Central Maine Veterans’ Memorial Park
Roderick Rd, Winslow, ME 04901
3:15PM – Arrive at Ocean Gateway, Portland ME
14 Ocean Gateway Pier, Portland, ME 04101
Wednesday Dec. 16
8:00AM Leave Portland (small detour through York Village)
10:10AM Arrive

at MA State Line
12:30PM Parade through portion of Worcester, MA
3:30PM Arrives at Regal Cinemas, Branford, CT
325 E. Main St. Branford, CT
7:30PM Cross the George Washington Bridge
Thursday Dec. 17
9:45AM Arrive at Vietnam Veterans’ Museum, Holmdel, NJ
1 Memorial Ln, Holmdel, NJ 07733
1:30PM Arrive at Holy Rosary Church (The Guardian of the Defenders Memorial)
3200 Philadelphia Pike, Claymont, DE 19703
3:30PM Arrive at Whitehall Village
801 Mapleton Ave., Middletown, DE 19709
6:00PM Arrive at American Legion Post 278 Kent Island
800 Romancoke Rd, Stevensville, MD 21666
Friday Dec. 18
Virtual Event 6:30-8:30PM – Watch LIVE on Wreaths Across America Official Facebook Page
These stops will take place with safety in mind, and citizens can tune in to various radio stations to hear real-time updates from Wreaths Across America

Radio who will be traveling in the escort.
Maine
Ellsworth, Maine (parade through town) - 98.5 FM
Central Maine Veterans Memorial, Winslow, ME- 91.9 FM
Ocean Gateway, Portland, Maine - 90.7 FM
Massachusetts
Parade through portion of Worcester, MA -97.1 FM
Connecticut
Branford, CT Regal Cinemas - 91.9 FM
New Jersey
Vietnam Veterans Museum, Liberty Park, NJ - 91.9 FM
Delaware
Holy Rosary Church, Guardians of the Defenders Memorial, Claymont, DE - 90.5 FM
Whitehall Village, Middletown, DE - 90.5 FM
Maryland
American Legion Post 278 Kent Island, Stevensville, MD – 90.3 FM
Washington DC - 90.5 FM
PenFed Digital is the only group following Wreaths Across America’s escort from Maine, where the wreaths are assembled, to the laying of the wreaths at Arlington National Cemetery and around the entire country.
To find a cemetery

near you to support or to learn how local events are being modified for safety in your community click here.
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 we endeavor to honor all veterans laid to rest on Saturday, Dec. 19 as part of National Wreaths Across America Day. You can text WREATH to 20222 to sponsor a wreath for Arlington National Cemetery right from your phone.
Wreaths Across America is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded to continue and expand the annual wreath-laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery begun by Maine businessman Morrill Worcester in 1992. The organization’s mission – Remember, Honor, Teach – is carried out in part each year by coordinating wreath-laying ceremonies in December at Arlington, as well as at thousands of veterans’ cemeteries and other locations in all 50 states and beyond. For more information or to sponsor a wreath, visit www.wreathscrossamerica.org.



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Maine requests first COVID-19 vaccines

With no vaccine yet approved, Maine CDC prepares for first shipment

From Maine DHHS

AUGUSTA — The Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) announced Friday that the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) has placed orders for doses of COVID-19 vaccine for 12,675 people to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Operation Warp Speed.

This order represents the first in a series of vaccine requests that Maine CDC will file in the coming weeks and months, as specified by Operation Warp Speed, as part of Maine’s accessible, flexible, and equitable distribution plan for the vaccine.

Maine CDC’s order reflects the maximum number of doses that the federal government recently informed Maine would be available in the first allocation. When fulfilled, the order will be enough to vaccinate approximately 12,675 people with the first of two required doses.

“We look forward to FDA authorization of the vaccine as we await the initial doses,” said DHHS Commissioner Jeanne Lambrew. “We thank Maine’s congressional delegation for their collabora-

tion and their support for additional federal funding that will be vital to the success of this monumental undertaking to protect the health of Maine people.”

“This is a significant step, but placing the order is not the same as having the vaccine in hand,” said Dr. Nirav D. Shah, Director of the Maine CDC. “We are confident that Maine CDC will receive these doses and are in position to administer them to the highest priority recipients, such as health care providers and residents of long-term care facilities. As we await potential FDA authorization, we are continuing our planning process and remain committed to efficient and equitable distribution of the vaccine.”

Maine CDC expects the initial allocation to be composed of doses from Pfizer, which will require ultra-cold storage. After the initial allocation, which Operation Warp Speed leaders said could arrive as soon as mid-December, Maine CDC has been told to expect two more weekly allocations of 12,675 doses of the Pfizer vaccine, and approximately 24,200 doses for the first week and 10,700 doses for the second

week of the vaccine created by Moderna, pending FDA authorization.

Per guidelines approved by the U.S. CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, the initial allocation will be administered to frontline health care professionals, as well as residents of skilled nursing and long-term care facilities. The first shipments of Pfizer vaccine will be sent to six locations with ultra-cold freezer capacity throughout Maine. Receiving 975 doses each will be Maine Medical Center in Portland, Northern Light Mercy Hospital in Portland, Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center in Bangor, Central Maine Medical Center in Lewiston, Northern Light A. R. Gould Hospital in Presque Isle and the Maine CDC.

The remaining 6,825 doses will be administered to residents of long-term care facilities in Maine, through a collaborative agreement with elder care

facilities and pharmacies.

With the assistance of Maine’s congressional delegation, the Mills Administration has received additional information from the federal government about the significant reduction in Maine’s initial allocation of COVID-19 vaccine. The federal government originally estimated that Maine would receive 36,000 doses in the initial allotment, nearly three times more than the amount now expected. The Mills Administration was informed that Pfizer reduced the number of vaccines it expects to ship worldwide, including to Maine, due to supply chain challenges. The company also extended the schedule for shipping vaccine doses over a longer period.

Maine’s planning for COVID-19 vaccine distribution began in spring 2020, building on the existing network of vaccine providers throughout the state. In October, Maine CDC submitted the first

See Vaccines, page 12

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Arts & Entertainment

Christmas Concerts in church field and the Basilica

From Portland Diocese

LEWISTON - To help bring people closer to Christ this Advent and Christmas, Prince of Peace Parish in Lewiston continues to show creativity in finding ways in which they can reach parishioners and the wider community.

Two concerts at the Basilica of Saints Peter & Paul as well as an outdoor service of lessons and carols in the field of Holy Family Church are scheduled for December. All are welcome to attend. Registration is requested.

“The Spirit of Christmas” with Organist Ray Cornils Sunday, Dec. 13, at 1:30 p.m. at Basilica of Saints Peter & Paul, 122 Ash Street, Lewiston - The free concert will feature the much-loved favorites of the Christmas season including arrangements of “O Holy Night,” “O Come All Ye Faithful,” “Jesu Bambino,” and others. Cornils

was the municipal organist for the City of Portland from 1990 to 2017. He has performed throughout the United States, Germany, France, Spain, Russia, New Zealand, and Ecuador. Cornils has been a featured recitalist for conventions of the American Guild of Organists and the Organ Historical Society, and he performs regularly with the Portland Symphony Orchestra. Admission will be limited to the first 50 people who arrive. Although the concert is free, donations to the organ maintenance and restoration fund would be greatly appreciated.

If you would like to reserve a spot or if you have any questions, please contact Scott Vaillancourt at scott.vaillancourt@portlanddiocese.org.

“A Christmas Concert” with the Vaillancourt Family on Sunday, Dec. 20, at 1:30 p.m. at Basilica of Saints Peter & Paul, 122

Ash Street, Lewiston - The Vaillancourts will present a program of Christmas music for strings and organ to the help lift the spirits of the assembly. Scott, Linda, Madeleine, Genevieve, and James Vaillancourt have lived in Lewiston for 15 years. Scott is the music director at the Basilica of Saints Peter & Paul; Linda is a teacher at North Yarmouth Academy, where she teaches instrumental and classroom music and received the 2018 Maine Music Educator of the Year Award; Madeleine, age 14, plays cello and flute and has appeared in musicals for the Maine State Music Theater; Genevieve, age 11, is a budding violist and hornist who performs with the Portland Young Persons String Consort; and James, age 8, plays the violin and piano. Admission will be limited to the first 50 people who arrive. Although the concert is free, donations to

the organ maintenance and restoration fund would be greatly appreciated.

If you would like to reserve a spot or if you have any questions, please contact Scott Vaillancourt at scott.vaillancourt@portlanddiocese.org.

“An Outdoor Service of Lessons and Carols” on Friday, Dec. 18, 7 p.m., in the back field of Holy Family Church, 607 Sabattus Street, Lewiston - All are welcome for this free outdoor service of lessons and carols. Normally held at the Basilica, the traditional service of nine lessons and carols tells the story of the fall of humanity, the promise of the Messiah, and the birth of Jesus in nine short Bible readings or lessons from Genesis, the prophetic books and the Gospels, interspersed with the singing of Christmas carols and hymns. The music will be led by a few members of the Basilica Schola Cantorum.



Prayer candles at the Basilica of Saints Peter & Paul in Lewiston. (Photo courtesy of Portland Diocese)

For more information about this service, call the Prince of Peace Parish office at (207) 777-1200 or email PoP@portlanddiocese.org.

A special section featuring a wide range of Advent resources, materials, and schedules of Masses and events at Maine parishes is now available on the Diocese of Portland’s website. The Advent section (www.portlanddiocese.org/advent) will be updated throughout December.

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Selecting seeds for vegetable gardens Dec. 16

From UMaine
ORONO - University of Maine Cooperative Extension and the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association will offer a webinar about selecting suitable seeds for Maine vegetable gardens from noon–1 p.m. Dec. 16.
“Planning Your Vegetable Garden: Selecting the Right Seeds” includes variety selection, disease resistance, quantities to

order and more. MOFGA crop and conservation specialist Caleb Goossen will lead the workshop.
Registration is required; a \$5 donation is optional. Register on the event webpage to attend live or receive a link to the recording. This is the final session in a six-part fall gardening webinar series.
For more information or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact Pamela Hargest, 207.781.6099; pamela.hargest@maine.edu.
As a trusted resource for over 100 years, 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 econ-

omy.
Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA, www.mofga.org), formed in 1971, is the oldest and largest state organic organization in the country. The organization aims to educate about and advocate for organic agriculture, illuminating its interdependence with a healthy environment, local food production, and thriving communities.



Swiss chard. (Photo courtesy of UMaine)

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Restaurant

Continued from page 1

sider it six different restaurants with 10 chefs.”

Chefs at the ghost kitchen have been furloughed or are out of work because of the pandemic. “So all these chefs that are out of work are coming here . . . these amazing chefs . . . and we’re creating this experience. It’s not takeout food that you’re used to,” Nason said.

“So all of these wonderful menus and desserts can be delivered to your home, with your wine choices and your beer, and you don’t have to move!” she said. Housed in a former bar/restaurant space, the kitchen is stocked with a selection of wines and craft beers curated by Nason. The handsome wood bar itself is no longer used for guests, but for lining up orders for delivery.

Nason said the ghost kitchens are important because the COVID-19 pandemic “has already changed how you’re going out now. A lot of people aren’t going out at all.”

The ghost kitchen is really a concept introduced by Domino’s Pizza decades ago. “You never went to Domino’s to sit down. You just wanted Domino’s to deliver,” she said. “They were really the official first ghost kitchen, and they’re one of the few people that have successfully done well” during the pandemic.

“It’s like having Thanksgiving dinner” each night, because each person can have their choice of special food, Nason said. So with “COVID stopping the restaurant experience, we’re going to bring it to



Ghost Karen’s Kitchens at 29 School Street, Gorham, is a take-out and delivery-only restaurant with six different menus. It opened this week with both delivery and pickup service. (Tsukroff photo)



Co-chef David Robinson transfers pizza dough to a container to give it more room to rise as one of the first steps in a three-day process for the New York-style pizza he bakes for the Brooklyn Benny’s menu at Ghost Karen’s Kitchens in Gorham. The kitchen features six different menus with a variety of offerings. (Tsukroff photo)

you.” Nason sees a positive side to the pandemic restrictions with families spending more time together. “I think we’ve learned to like eating at home with each other, which has been lacking for a very long time. Kind of our social graces kind of got lost along the way. You know, it’s nice to sit around the table and have dinner.”

Nason’s Grand Central Station Wine Bar is considered to be a lounge, not a restaurant, she said, and it offers a limited menu. Now, guests will be able to order a variety of meals to be delivered right to the wine bar for them to enjoy.

Nason graduated from Gorham High School in 1982, and moved from Gorham to New York City when she was 21 to pursue her singing dreams. She eventually owned a jazz bar and plant shop in New York City and a café in Hoboken. She returned to Maine with her attorney husband Frank DeGrim and calls Gorham home again.

David Robinson, one of the co-chefs in the ghost kitchen, is a fellow Gorham classmate and graduate. He was found in the kitchen recently creating the dough for the New York style pizzas found on the Brooklyn Benny’s menu. The pizza dough takes three days to get it ready for the oven, he



Karen Nason samples one of the bottles of wine at the Ghost Karen’s Kitchens that opened earlier this week for delivery or pickup of meals from six different menus. Located at 29 School St in Gorham, the kitchen provides delivery service throughout the Gorham area. (Tsukroff photo)

said. Pizzas are baked in a brick-lined oven at about 600 degrees. The result is a thin, crunchy crust that enhances the flavor of the pizza toppings.

Just a block or two from the campus of the University of Southern Maine campus in Gorham, Ghost Karen’s Kitchens offers the students remaining on campus a variety of meals that are not found in the school’s food services.

Delivery of meals to the college will be by e-bike, Nason said. The bike has huge tires for a safe ride in inclement weather, and the built-in electric motor powers it at up to 20 mph. About 100 students remain on campus.

Other deliveries will be made by drivers working for the kitchen, or through outside services that include GrubHub and DoorDash.

Pickup of ordered meals can be made right in the lobby, using a special temperature controlled locker system with individual compartments. The kitchen will send a pass-code to the customer to be used to open the compartment door with their meal or meals inside.

Bottles of wine are \$24 each.

Menus may be found at Ghostkitchensmaine.com. Consumers may place orders online or by calling (207) 222-2121.



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HNTB celebrates 75 years with MTA



Changes in the Maine Turnpike over the years – 1947, the late 1990s, 2014, present day. (Photos courtesy of HNTB)

From HNTB

SOUTH PORTLAND - HNTB Corporation announced on Tuesday that it is celebrating 75 years of partnership with the Maine Turnpike Authority.

The partnership, which is HNTB's longest-standing continuous client relationship, dates back to 1945, two years before the Maine Turnpike was built, when HNTB signed on as the general engineer consultant for the project.

The project ushered in a new era of transportation for Maine and the greater United States. In 1947, when the MTA officially opened the new road, the Maine Turnpike became the first U.S. superhighway built in the postwar era and one of two modern toll highways in the entire country financed solely with revenue bonds.

In addition, the Maine Turnpike was the largest construction project in the state at the time.

"We are thrilled to celebrate this milestone alongside the Maine Turnpike Authority," said Roland Lavallee, PE, HNTB vice president. "We are proud of the great work we've been able to accomplish together, which without this partnership, simply would not be possible. Together, we have advanced the transportation possibilities for the state of Maine, its residents and the greater community."

The Maine Turnpike Authority is committed to the maintenance and modernization of the turnpike, which over seven decades, has been an important transportation corridor for the state. To help the MTA achieve its objectives and ensure the needs of bondholders are being met, HNTB has provided

highway, tolling and transportation expertise to guide the engineering of the turnpike.

HNTB is also involved in toll conversion for certain sections of the highway. To support the open road tolling conversion beginning in 2013, HNTB provided project management, traffic planning, civil engineering design, toll system procurement and oversight, and construction services for the authority's toll plaza conversion project in New Gloucester, Maine.

"Over the years, HNTB has helped the authority bring forward their vision of the future of transportation for Maine," said Peter Mills, executive director at the Maine Turnpike Authority. "The Maine Turnpike has helped facilitate travel and boost vital economic development in our state, and HNTB's expertise and professional excellence has been a critical driver of that success."

The Maine Turnpike opened Dec. 13, 1947. It now has a length of 111 miles and features 19 toll plazas, 183 bridges, and 22 interchanges.

The Maine Turnpike Authority processed 90,280,830 transaction in 2019 to generate \$140 million in net revenue.

HNTB Corporation is an employee-owned infrastructure firm serving public and private owners and contractors.



Guest Column Home Country

By Slim Randles

Steve was just sitting there on the tailgate of his pickup, looking out at the world and thinking he's doing all right. The two little kids walking down the sidewalk saw their favorite cowboy sitting there and grinned.

"Hi Steve!"

"Oh hey there, Bobby ... Sylvia ... how you kids doing these days?"

"Had a good Thanksgiving. Yep. Getting ready for Christmas. Bobby was telling me just a while ago that he wants to train horses, like you, when he grows up."

"I told you not to say anything, Syl, but there you go again. Now Steve will think all I want is horse training lessons."

"Horse training lessons?" Steve said. "Now that would be a good idea, actually. It's always a smart thing to learn from others' mistakes before you make the same ones."

"Mistakes?"

"See this scar on my arm?" They both nodded. "Barbed wire fence at 27 miles an hour. Horse didn't have a mark on him."

"That was a mistake?"

"Sure was, Bobby. I wasn't supposed to ride that horse. I was about 12, and they told me to ride something gentler."

"But you didn't, huh?"

"No, Sylvia I didn't, because when you're 12, you already know more than the grown-ups around you. It was great, being that smart when I was only 12."

The kids examined every inch of the scar. "I bet you learned, huh?"

"Oh sure, I learned never to run a fractious horse along a barbed-wire fence. And I learned other stuff, too. My right leg's been broken once and I couldn't work for almost two months. My left foot was stomped on and two bones broken by a draft horse I was shoeing, and this scar on the back of my neck? Low branch on a tree and a runaway colt. And on this other arm ... see these? That's all from a horse jerking his hoof while I was shoeing him and I hadn't clinched the nail yet."

Bobby thought for a minute. "That's a lot of learning, Steve. Did it hurt?"

"Every one of them and a couple I don't show to anyone. Are you ready to learn how to be a cowboy? Need some scars?"

"I well ... I guess I'd better ask my folks first."

Brought to you by A Cowboy's Guide to Growing Up Right. Look it over at www.riorandebooks.com. Avuncular tips from a guy who made lots of mistakes.



New birding club for Maine youth

From UMaine

Orono, Maine — University of Maine Cooperative Extension 4-H is offering a new statewide birding club for youth ages 9–18, with online monthly meetings to be scheduled December through April.

The "4-H Bird Chats" club is for youth interested in citizen science, learning more about birds and sharing observations with others. Participants will learn how to contribute data to Project Feeder-

Watch, a winter survey of birds in locations across North America, and share learning experiences with peers.

The club is free to join; registration is required. Register anytime on the 4-H Bird Chats webpage. Online meeting schedule to be determined by Dec. 1.

For more information or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact Zabet NeuCollins, 207.667.8212; zabet.neu-collins@maine.edu.



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Guest Column

Swearing-in day — a sign of things to come

By Sen. Ned Claxton

AUBURN - On Wednesday, Dec. 2, the 130th Maine Legislature was sworn into office.

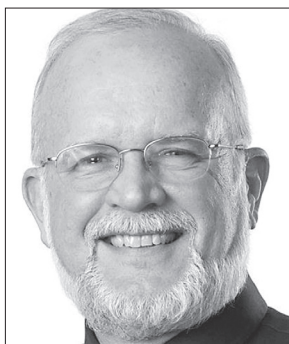
Swearing-in day, which falls on the first Wednesday of December every two years, has become a memorable tradition for legislators, their families and friends.

In a normal time, this day would be a celebration, with legislators gathering in their respective House or Senate Chamber in the State House accompanied by loved ones. But I don't need to tell you that this year is anything but normal, and Wednesday's swearing-in ceremony reflected that.

The biggest difference was where the ceremony took place. Because the Legislature has so many members — 186 of us between the House and Senate — the Augusta Civic Center was used in order for us to maintain social distancing.

I, along with 31 of my Senate colleagues who were in attendance that day, took one room in the civic center, and the House of Representatives used the main auditorium. Every legislator was seated at least six feet apart from one another, and we wore masks for the duration of our session. Once we were sworn in and voted on some administrative measures in the morning, the Senate moved down the hall to the main arena for a joint convention with the House. We then voted on the positions of Secretary of State, Attorney General, Treasurer and State Auditor, and our day was complete.

Although Wednesday was unique in that it only happens once every two years, it was also a sign of



Sen. Ned Claxton (D-Androscoggin), Maine District 20, Auburn, Mechanic Falls, Minot, New Gloucester, and Poland (Photo courtesy of Sen. Claxton)

things to come. In order to keep folks safe, in-person attendance at the Civic Center was limited to legislators, staff and the press. This was an unfortunate but necessary requirement. Despite this, the entirety of the day's proceedings were streamed live online on the Legislature's website at www.legislature.maine.gov. Even Gov.

Janet Mills, who was forced to quarantine after coming into contact with a member of her security team who tested positive for COVID-19, joined us virtually, pre-recording a welcome message to the new Legislature. Virtual legislative meetings will continue for the foreseeable future, with the State House and committee rooms remaining closed to the general public.

While conducting our business this way is an unfortunate necessity, it has raised questions for me about how we make sure the public still has access to our work.

Making sure the Legislature is accessible to the general public is absolutely critical, no matter the circumstances we find ourselves in. Folks not only have the right to watch government in action and participate in it;

the public's participation also helps form policy and holds elected officials accountable. Thankfully, staff have been working since the pandemic first began to make sure the general public can still be a part of the process.

When our legislative session officially kicks off in the new year, members of the public will be able to listen to all committee meetings and watch sessions live as they happen, as well as being able to testify in committee, both live on video and by submitting written testimony. There's no doubt we'll have challenges when conducting business, but we won't let it affect access or the quality of work we do. Every step of the way, I'll do what I can to make sure that everyone who wants to participate in government has the opportunity to do so.

As a reminder, you can always contact me if you have a question, concern or just want to make your voice heard. You can send me an email at Ned.Claxton@legislature.maine.gov or call my office at 287-1515.

Sen. Ned Claxton (D-Androscoggin) represents Maine Senate District 20, which includes Auburn, Mechanic Falls, Minot, New Gloucester, and Poland.

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Marine Corps League meeting Dec. 17

LEWISTON - Marine Corps League Central Maine Detachment 810 will host its monthly meeting at 6 pm. on Dec. 17 at

the Lewiston Armory, 65 Central Ave., Lewiston. All Marines, FMF Corpsman and Navy Chaplains are invited.

Anyone interested in Marines Helping Veterans is also invited to attend.

Get involved and help us help our veterans.

Students Earn Award from WGU

From WGU

SALT LAKE CITY, UT - Kira Sorumeito of Auburn and Andrew Keddell of Lewiston each recently earned an Award of Excellence at

Western Governors University College of Business.

Established in 1997 by 19 U.S. governors with a mission to expand access to high-quality, affordable higher education, online,

nonprofit WGU now serves more than 123,000 students nationwide and has more than 190,000 graduates in all 50 states. The college website can be found at: www.wgu.edu.

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City of Lewiston 2020 Holiday Activities

Santa Live

"Virtual Live Broadcast with Santa Claus"

Thursday, December 10, 2020

6:30 p.m.

Watch "Live" at www.lewistonmaine.gov/youtube

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While relaxing in his chair from the North Pole, Santa will be reading letters received from local children; picking four families to talk with live; reading *The Night Before Christmas*; singing with viewers & his elf; showing his live reindeer cam; sharing his favorite cookie recipes (with recipe links from local bakeries); sharing a fun Santa craft; sharing his wish for Christmas, and more!

Each child who writes to Santa **prior** to December 10th (**with legible name/address**) will receive a card from Santa via postal mail following the broadcast. Letters may be sent to "Santa Live, c/o Lewiston City Administrator's Office, Lewiston City Hall, 27 Pine Street, Lewiston ME 04240."



"We Look Festive" Lewiston Showcase!

If you want to decorate your residence or business this season to encourage holiday cheer and a festive spirit in Lewiston, please consider participating in "We Look Festive." The City of Lewiston will be posting submitted addresses/decoration themes so that folks can drive by, smile, and brighten up their day!

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Maine Theater Fund Awards \$76,000 in Grants



Grace and Jenny of Bana Mboka lead the audience in Congolese dance during a 2019 performance at Mayo Street Arts. (Photo by Vanessa Marcoux, MSA)

From MCF Portland & Ellsworth — The Maine Theater Fund of the Maine Community Foundation has awarded 17 grants that total \$76,829 to support professional and community theaters in the production and presentation of live theater. Grant recipients include Acadia Repertory Theatre, Somesville, to re-

place the theatre’s 40-year-old lighting system: \$3,000 Arts & Cultural Alliance of Freeport, for the purchase of a sound system for Meetinghouse Arts: \$5,000 Chocolate Church Arts Center, Bath, to replace ticketing and donation system: \$5,000 Community Little Theater, Auburn, for the theatrical rights and expenses for the production of AR Gurney’s Love Letters: \$4,000 Crowbait Club, Portland, for “King of Crows IX,” the yearly production of the winners of the monthly Theatre Deathmatch for 10-minute plays: \$2,000 Dramatic Repertory Company, Portland, to fund the 2020-2021 season, including two Maine premier productions: \$5,000 Everyman Repertory Theatre, Rockport, to present the 2021 season of plays that celebrate the arts in Maine and the state’s history: \$5,000 Friends of St. Lawrence Church, Portland, to supplement operating funds for maintenance of the Parish Hall Theater: \$3,000 Marsh River Theater, Brooks, for new lights: \$5,000 Mayo Street Arts, Portland, to renovate the box office and concessions area to ADA standards: \$5,000 Midcoast Actors Studio, Belfast, to provide quality year-round theatre opportunities in the new performance space at the former Waldo County Courthouse \$5,000 Ogunquit Playhouse Foundation, to help offset


the costs of COVID-19 personal protective equipment and safety upgrades for the 2021 season re-opening: \$5,000 Portland Lyric Theater, to install an air purification system to improve indoor air quality, preparing for safe opening: \$5,000 Saco River Theatre, to complete construction of staff/performer restrooms in the basement of the building : \$5,000 Terra Moto Inc., South Portland, to produce MAINEUSA: The History of Maine from the Ice Age till Now in July 2021 at Portland Players Theater followed by statewide performances: \$5,000 Theater at Monmouth, to produce Top-Dog/UnderDog by Susan Lori Parks as part of TAM’s (R)evolutionary Season Redux: \$5,000 Waldo Theatre Inc., to purchase and install essential flame-retardant stage masking curtains and the required stage rigging: \$4,829

An anonymous couple who recognized the connection between vibrant communities and support for the arts established the Maine Theater Fund in 2005 to strengthen and sustain theater performance throughout the state.

Awards are typically between \$2,500 and \$5,000. The next deadline for applications is September 15, 2021. Guidelines, application and a list of recent grants are available at www.mainecef.org.



Headquartered in Ellsworth, with additional personnel in Portland, Dover-Foxcroft, Rockport, and Mars Hill, the Maine Community Foundation works with donors and other partners to provide strong investments, personalized service, local expertise, and strategic giving to improve the quality of life for all Maine people. To learn more about the foundation, visit www.mainecef.org.

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Vaccines
Continued from page 5

version of its plan to distribute a COVID-19 vaccine. Maine will update the plan as more is learned about vaccine manufacturing, storage, efficacy in different groups, dosing schedules, as well as other factors that will affect the implementation of vaccination on a large scale. The vaccine distribution framework will also evolve with continued input from health care providers and various communities throughout Maine.

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**THURSDAY
DEC. 10
9:30 a.m.**
GORHAM – Baxter Library. Toddler Discovery Time - Join Ms. Dani for a Virtual Discovery Time on Facebook. She will read a story and present an extension activity related to the book. So much fun for this age group! (18 months-3 yrs)

**MONDAY
DEC. 14
5:30 p.m.**
LEWISTON - Planning Board Meeting – City Council Chambers. The Planning Board Agenda and information for this meeting will be available on the website on the Friday before the meeting date.

**TUESDAY
DEC. 15
8 a.m.**
GORHAM – Ordinance Committee meeting via ZOOM.
9:30-10 a.m.
GORHAM – Baxter Library. Preschool Discovery Time - If you love picture books, watch Ms. Heidi on Facebook as she reads a new book each week. (ages 3-5).
4-5 p.m.
AUBURN – Auburn Sewer District Trustees meeting. 268 Court St.
6 p.m.
LEWISTON - City Council Meeting - CAN BE VIEWED REMOTELY VIA ZOOM: Due to necessary COVID19 precautions, the December 15th City Council meeting will be broadcast via ZOOM - <http://www.lewistonmaine.gov/2020cc> Also, public comment will be possible at publiccomment@lewistonmaine.gov The meeting will be archived on the City's YouTube channel <http://www.lewistonmaine.gov/YouTube> by the next day.

Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

**WEDNESDAY
DEC. 16
8 a.m.**
GORHAM – Gorham Economic Development Corporation meeting via ZOOM.
10 a.m.
GORHAM – Baxter Library. STEAM More than a Box - Join Ms. Deb on Facebook for a virtual STEAM activity. Activities are geared toward K-5 learners and require minimal supplies that you'll likely have right on-hand at home. This time, re-think everyday objects around your house to build something fabulous! To kickstart your imagination, come to BML before or after you watch the video and pick up a Mystery Bag Building Kit. (Limited amount of kits available.) Participants are encouraged to take a photo of their creation and submit it to baxterlibvideos@gmail.com (by 12/31/20) to be included in our gallery of awesomeness.

6 p.m.
GORHAM – Baxter Library. Polar Express – Polar Express goes virtual at Baxter Memorial Library. Join us Live on Facebook as Conductor Jeff reads The Polar Express from the North Pole. To enhance your program experience we've prepared take-away packs to be picked up any time in December. Each child receives: a packet of cocoa, a candy cane, a ticket, and a bell. Hope to see you there!
6-8 p.m.
AUBURN – Conservation Commission meeting. Community Room, Auburn Hall (second floor).

**THURSDAY
DEC. 17
8-9 a.m.**
AUBURN – 9-1-1 Committee meeting. L-A Communications, 552 Minot Avenue.
9:30 a.m.
GORHAM – Baxter Library. Toddler Discovery Time - Join Ms. Dani for a Virtual Discovery Time on Facebook. She will read a story and present an extension activity related to the book. So much fun for this age group! (18 months-3 yrs)
6:30 p.m.
GORHAM – Zoning Board of Appeals meeting via ZOOM.

**MONDAY
DEC. 21
5:30-8:30 p.m.**
AUBURN – City Council workshop and meeting. Auburn Hall – Council Chambers.
**TUESDAY
DEC. 22
5:30-7 p.m.**
AUBURN – Agriculture Committee meeting. Auburn Senior Community Center (Pettingill Park).

**WEDNESDAY
DEC. 23
6-7:30 p.m.**
AUBURN – Complete Streets Committee meeting. Lewiston City Hall – Executive Conference Room.
**FRIDAY
DEC. 25**
Christmas holiday observed.
Town offices closed.

**MONDAY
DEC. 28
5:30 p.m.**

LEWISTON - Planning Board Meeting – City Council Chambers. The Planning Board Agenda and information for this meeting will be available on the website on the Friday before the meeting date.
**WEDNESDAY
DEC. 30
7:30-8:30 a.m.**
AUBURN – Auburn Housing Authority Board of Commissioners meeting. Main Office, 20 Great Falls Plaza.

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Online ENTANGLED film screening

From UMaine
BELFAST - The University of Maine Hutchinson Center will host a free online screening of the award-winning documentary, "Entangled," on Friday, Dec. 11, at 7 p.m.
The film will be introduced by filmmaker David Abel and followed by a discussion featuring a panel of researchers and industry experts.
The film will be shown online and the discussion will take place via Zoom. There is no cost to participate. To register, visit the Hutchinson Center website at <http://bitly.ws/aJDN>
"Entangled" is an award-winning, feature-length film (75 min.) about how climate change has accelerated a collision between one of the world's most endangered species, North America's

most valuable fishery, and a federal agency mandated to protect both. The film chronicles the efforts to protect North Atlantic right whales from extinction, the impacts of those efforts on the lobster industry, and how regulators have struggled to balance the vying interests. Directed by David Abel and Andy Laub — makers of "Lobster War" and "Sacred Cod," "Entangled" won a 2020 Jackson Wild Media Award, nature films' equivalent to the Oscars. It also won Best Conservation Film at the Mystic Film Festival.
"Entangled" was made with support from the Pulitzer Center, the LEF Foundation, the Society of Environmental Journalists' Fund for Environmental Journalism, and the Boston Globe.
After the screening, a panel of industry experts and researchers will participate in a Q & A moderated by Dr. Rick Wahle of UMaine's Lobster Institute. Additional panelists are Kristan Porter from the Maine Lobstermen's Association, Steve Train from the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and UMaine researchers Chris Tremblay and Nathan Willse.

This virtual film screening is offered through a partnership with the University of Maine Conferences & Institutes, University of Maine Division of Lifelong Learning, University of Maine Hutchinson Center, the University of Maine Lobster Institute, and the University of Maine Office of Sustainability.
For information or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact the Hutchinson Center, hutchinsoncenter@maine.edu; 207.338.8000.

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