

Maide for You in Gorham



Donna and Michael Foster own Maide For You, a cleaning service based in Gorham that cleans residential and commercial properties, and provides cleaning of buildings after construction. About 40 people work for the company. (Photo courtesy of Janice Pompeo)

By Janice Pompeo

GORHAM - Donna Foster and her husband, Mike, own and run Maide For You cleaning service located at 220 Naragansett Street in Gorham.

They have steadily expanded and grown their business year after year, providing services in Cumberland and York counties.

Maide For You specializes in both residential and commercial properties, offering individually-tailored services.

The COVID-19 pandemic created challenges, as with most businesses. Some staff members left because they felt it was

too dangerous and would rather not be out in public. Several have since returned, but others have not.

Maide for You also lost some clients that didn't want outside workers in their homes due to worries about the spread of COVID-19, but the majority of those have since returned.

The business successfully survived the pandemic due to their commercial line of business that includes cleaning of buildings after construction. "It's a roller coaster ride, we try to keep our sense of humor!" Donna said.

The cleaning staff wear masks and gloves while working, and Maide for You

coordinates with clients who travel to limit exposure.

"We find it very important to put health first," Donna said. "We form close bonds with clients and we try to have it reflect in our attitudes, cleaning and our interactions."

The hardest part of the business for the Fosters is finding "balance". They have amazing employees and want to make sure they are getting the hours and pay they need to support their families.

This line of work can lead to tricky hours, however. Summers are busier, while holidays and snow days lead to adjustments in cleaning schedules.

Donna grew up in Sanford on what she refers to as the "French side of town" with her two brothers Mike and John. She said that she met her now husband Michael, in a high school English class and soon after started dating.

These high school sweethearts married in 1989 and went off to live in Germany as Mike had enlisted in the U.S. Army SatCom (satellite communications). Donna calls him "pretty much a genius!"

The couple welcomed their first two babies in Germany, in a hospital where no-one spoke English. "That was a little scary," Donna joked.

After leaving Germany, their next move was to Fort Monmouth in NJ, where they welcomed two more little ones. By this time Mike's term with the army was over and he decided not to re-enlist.

The Fosters returned to Maine where it all began. They moved to Gorham and had yet one more baby together. (in case you lost count... Mike and Donna have five children). Donna stayed home with the children until the youngest was 5 and started school.

Once all five were in school, Donna came up with the business Maide For You. Her experience and all sorts of cleaning tips from her time on the army bases gave her several steps in the right direction.

When residents leave a "base" house while in the army, they have to leave it PERFECTLY clean. To this day, Donna holds herself and her employees to this standard.

The business began to grow through referrals and off it went! Starting with just herself in 2002, she now employs around 40 people.

She went from hauling her vacuum
See **Maide For You**, page 11

Transition to Town Trash Tags

From Town of Gorham

GORHAM – The Town of Gorham began a transition to town trash tags on Jan. 1.

Starting with the new year, Gorham no longer offer town trash bags, although town trash bags will continue to be available for purchase at local Gorham Stores and municipal facilities while supplies last.

Trash will continue to be collected in a town trash bag if residents have them. Trash bags will no longer be sold to local Gorham stores or available at municipal facilities after the bag supply has been exhausted.

Trash tags signify to the town's curbside collection contractor, Pine Tree Waste (Casella), that the resident has paid for the collection of each tagged trash bag.

The revenue from the sale of tags is used by the Town to pay for the trash and recyclable curbside collection contract.

Small trash tags are \$1.50 each, or \$7.50 per sheet.

Large trash tags are \$3 each, or \$15 per sheet.

Call Gorham's Solid Waste hotline at 892-3649 with any questions.

Gorham meetings

From Town of Gorham

GORHAM – Upcoming meetings for Town of Gorham:

Jan. 11 – 7 p.m. - Planning Board meeting via Zoom.

Jan. 13 – 7 p.m. – School Committee meeting via Zoom.

Jan. 18 – Town offices and Baxter Memorial Library will be closed in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Jan. 19 – 8 a.m. - Ordinance Committee meeting via Zoom.

Jan. 20 – 8 a.m.- Gorham Economic Development Corporation meeting via Zoom.

Jan. 21 - 6:30 p.m. - Board of Appeals meeting via Zoom.

Jan. 25 - 5:30 p.m. - Finance Committee meeting via Zoom.

Jan. 27 – 7 p.m. - Comprehensive Plan Amendment Committee meeting via Zoom.

Feb. 1 – 7 p.m. - Planning Board meeting via Zoom.

Feb. 2 - 6:30 p.m. - Regular Town Council meeting via Zoom



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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Vigil raises awareness of homeless

From New Beginnings

LEWISTON - The Lewiston/Auburn Alliance for Services to the Homeless (LAASH), L-A Multi-faith Group, and New Beginnings conducted their annual candlelight vigil to remember homeless people last week on the longest night of the year.

The vigil took place on Monday, Dec. 21, on Main Street in Lewiston, near the Longley Bridge that connects Lewiston to Auburn.

It was part of a national movement of cities marking National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day on or near the winter solstice, the first day of winter.

Supporters met

at 4:30 p.m. below the HOPEFUL sign along Main Street. They carried flashlights, candles and signs to raise awareness of homelessness to passersby during the Monday evening commute.

Activists said that three homeless people died in the Lewiston/Auburn area this past year.

Each year since 1990, the National Coalition for the Homeless has co-sponsored National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day to bring attention to the tragedy of homelessness. In an effort to maximize the impact of the day, organizers have encouraged statewide and local groups such as LAASH to conduct events of their own.



New Beginnings board member Mike Giasson and his wife, Toby Haber-Giasson, of Auburn, talk about issues with homelessness in the Lewiston-Auburn area with Rev. Sara Bartlett, also of Auburn, at the L-A Homeless Vigil last week that took place on Main Street in Lewiston near the Longley Bridge. (Tsukroff photo)



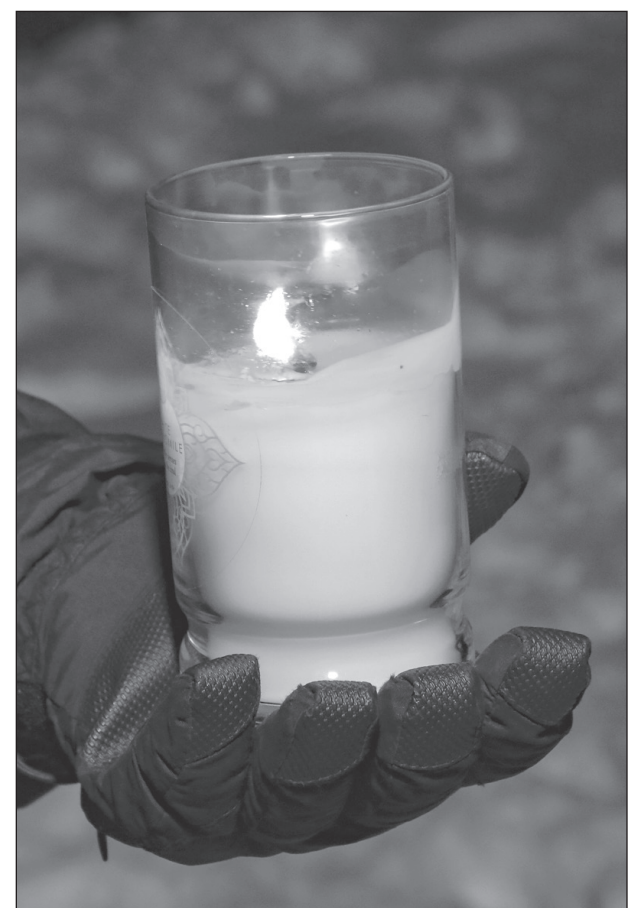
Matt Beliveau of Mechanic Falls holds a sign at the Lewiston-Auburn Homeless Vigil last week near the Hopeful sign on Main Street in Lewiston. (Tsukroff photo)



Denise Vaillancourt of Lewiston (left), Lisa Dumont of Auburn, and Jonathan Robinson of Turner stand silently near the Hopeful sign on Main Street in Lewiston with signs reminding passing motorists about the homeless, as part of the L-A Homeless Vigil last week on Monday, Dec. 21, the longest night of the year. (Tsukroff photo)



Rachel Spencer-Reed, Director of Development and Community Services at New Beginnings in Lewiston, holds a sign at the L-A Homeless Vigil near the Hopeful sign on Main Street in Lewiston last week. The vigil takes place annually on the longest night of the year, the winter solstice, to bring attention to issues with homelessness in the area. (Tsukroff photo)



A candle held by one of the people at the Lewiston-Auburn Homeless Vigil last week to bring attention to the problem of homelessness in the area. (Tsukroff photo)

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Androscoggin, Cumberland, Oxford, York counties remain 'yellow'

From Maine DOE

AUGUSTA — The Maine Department of Education announced last Thursday that Androscoggin, Cumberland, Oxford, and York counties will continue with a 'yellow' designation.

Under the "yellow" designation, which indicates an increased (moderate) level of community risk, schools may consider additional precautions, such as limiting numbers

of people in school buildings at the same time, suspending extracurricular or co-curricular activities including competitions between schools, limiting interaction through cohorting, or other measures based on the unique needs of each school community.

The Mills Administration released an update to its color-coded Health Advisory System that classifies counties' relative risk of COVID-19 trans-

mission to assist schools as they continue with their plans to deliver instruction and support to students safely.

The Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) continue to review evidence that indicates lower transmission of COVID-19 in schools compared to the general population. Over the last 30 days, the rate of new

cases is 33.5 per 100,000 staff and students, compared to 89.4 per 100,000 people statewide. This rate of new cases in schools is 37% lower than in the general population and is consistent with previous weeks.

DHHS and Maine CDC assessed COVID-19 data and trends for all counties and released the designations a day early, due to tomorrow's holiday.

REMAIN YELLOW: Androscoggin, Cumber-

land, Oxford, and York counties continue to have new case rates per 10,000 people and positivity rates that exceed the statewide average.

CLOSELY MONITOR: Aroostook and Penobscot counties remain green but their positivity rates have increased over the past 14 days, and are now above the statewide average.

All other counties remain in the green designation.

These designations are made out of an abundance of caution and for the consideration of school administrative units in their decisions to deliver instruction.

It is essential that school districts across the State of Maine continue to implement plans that adhere to the six requirements for returning to in-person instruction, regardless of their county's designation.

The next update will be provided on Jan. 15.

Medicare, Mainecare physician payments won't be cut

From U.S. Sen. Collins

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The recent year-end government funding bill included a provision that prevents cuts in payments to physicians.

U.S. Senator Susan Collins (R-Maine) announced last week that the year-end government funding bill that was signed into law includes a provision based on bipartisan legislation she co-authored to

prevent the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) planned payment cuts.

The cuts in payments had been scheduled to begin at the beginning of the year.

"These reimbursement cuts would have fallen primarily on the backs of health care providers across non-primary care specialties — from radiology to physical therapy to orthopaedic surgery —

and could have had a devastating effect on health care practices and, most important, patient access to care," said Senator Collins. "I am pleased that this provision included in the government fund-

ing bill will halt these ill-timed payment cuts from going into effect at the start of the New Year, helping to ensure that we do not further burden our health care system that is already





See Physician, page 11

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Out and About

Laying wreaths at Togus National Cemetery



Cindy Boyd, Patricia Vampatella, Joanne Sabourin and Kaye Bouchard wait at the Entrance Gate at Togus National Cemetery for the Hammond Lumber Company truck to arrive loaded with hundreds of boxes of Remembrance Wreaths for the Veterans' gravesites. (Visitor photo)

By Rachel Morin

Our seventh year for our annual trek to Togus National Cemetery for Wreaths Across America Day was on Saturday, Dec. 19.

It was a day we observed with many changes due to the Year 2020 with the COVID-19 Virus.

We felt it acutely as our number had dwindled to three due to traveling problems and other virus considerations. We were just as strong and motivated as ever to arrive at Togus to participate in the Sacred Tradition of laying Remembrance Wreaths on the graves of our Veterans.

Patricia Vampatella and Cindy Boyd, Co-Chair of WWA with Joanne Sabourin, members of USM's Lewiston-Auburn Senior College, drove in separate cars, no carpooling, and

met early at the cemetery with Kaye Bouchard, Coordinator for Wreath Laying at Togus. These women have been doing it for years and have the system memorized.

Kaye informed us there would be no noon-time Ceremony at the Togus flagpole in coordination with the noon Ceremony held at Arlington National Cemetery and Veteran cemeteries across the nation and overseas.

Due to Covid restrictions against mass gatherings, there would be no Representatives of Military Branches including Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard, Merchant Marines, POWs and MIAs at the flagpole.

These Representatives would have laid Remembrance Wreaths around the flagpole. No speeches, no prayers, no

singing and no Passing of the Colors. Although in our hearts, we had silent thoughts and prayers for our Veterans.

At 11 am the Hammond Lumber Company Truck was at the main gate of the cemetery to open the back doors as directed by Coordinator Kaye Bouchard to unload the hundreds of boxes of Remembrance Wreaths. This task was done swiftly as always. The Hammond Lumber Company has been a mainstay at Wreaths Across America at Togus forever.

We were heartened to see, as always, a large number of volunteers taking the boxes and stepping aside, to open the boxes and start distributing bunches of wreaths to outstretched waiting arms of volunteers. They set out quickly to their appointed cemetery locations. We noticed everyone wearing masks and were pleased.

Patricia, as always, makes a point to place wreaths on the tombstones of the two Medal of Honor Veterans at Togus - John Preston and David J. Scannell. Because of the heavy snow, she enlisted the help of a Police Officer who was patrolling the cemetery grounds.

The Officer was able to locate John Preston and cleared away the snow for us so we could read his history. Preston was born in Ireland in 1841, enlisted in Boston in the Navy, and served in the Union Navy during the American Civil

War at the Battle of Mobile Bay. Preston died May 26, 1885.

Unable to find Scannell's grave site, we knew that David J. Scannell was born Mar. 30, 1875 and died May 7, 1923. He was a Pvt in the U.S. Marine Corp and saw action in the Boxer Rebellion in China.

Patricia, ever the teacher, saw a young family at the Preston grave site, and gave an impromptu telling of the story of the two Medals of Honor Recipients, John Preston and David Scannell. The young boys were interested and had questions for the teacher which she was happy to answer.

It was getting late and time to leave. Our customary stopping for lunch along the way home was another custom not observed.

It was a different year as we all have experienced this past year with the virus engulfing our every turn. But we carry on, because we must. And each day, we remind ourselves "This too shall pass."

What is steadfast in the hearts of all the volunteers: "It is an honor and a privilege to participate

See *Togus*, next page



The Hammond Crew made short work of unloading the boxes of wreaths and are now down to the last box. (Joanne Sabourin photo)

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Togus

Continued from previous page

each year in the Laying of the Remembrance Wreaths at the gravesites of our Veterans.” We look forward to standing at each gravesite, looking at the name, and saying quietly, “I remember you,” and speaking their full name aloud.

Togus National Cemetery is located in Kennebec County, in the town of Chelsea, ME, on the grounds of the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical and Regional Office Center.



A Remembrance Wreath was placed on Medal of Honor John Preston’s tombstone by Cindy Boyd, Patricia Vampatella and Joanne Sabourin. (Kaye Bouchard photo)



A heartwarming scene as Remembrance Wreaths cover the Veterans’ tombstones at Togus National Cemetery. (Joanne Sabourin photo)



Patricia Vampatella tells a young family the story of John Preston receiving his Medal of Honor for his service in the Union Navy in the Civil War during the Battle of Mobile Bay. She also told the story of the other Medal of Honor Recipient, David J. Scannel, a Pvt in the U.S. Marine Corp at the Boxer Rebellion in China. (Joanne Sabourin photo)



A Togus police officer clears the snow covering Medal of Honor John Preston’s gravesite. Born in Ireland in 1841, Preston joined the Navy in Boston and served as a Union Navy Sailor in the American Civil War and received his Medal of Honor for his action in the Battle of Mobile Bay. (Joanne Sabourin photo)

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

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Arts & Entertainment

WinterKids App is 'Pay what you can' for 2021

From Winter Kids

WESTBROOK – The WinterKids App is the perfect way to begin your new year with outdoor activity.

Full of free and discounted winter sports opportunities, the native, mobile WinterKids App, at <https://bityl.co/53Ox>, is a great way to stay safe and have fun outdoors with your whole family.

A family membership covers a family of five (an adult and up to four kids) for the whole year, November 1, 2020 – October 31, 2021. Kids 17 and younger are included in the family membership.

Typically \$35 per family, this year you can name your price! If you need it, it can be completely free for your family. You can enter any amount when signing up for your mem-

bership.

“With outdoors being the safest place to be in this pandemic, WinterKids offers amazing opportunities for families statewide and in New Hampshire. We are excited to extend a ‘pay what you can’ WinterKids App membership for families this year” says Julie Mulkern, WinterKids Executive Director. “The App is an excellent way for families of all ages to try

new winter sports together, connecting to the state’s natural heritage and finding the joy and health benefits in our longest season,” says Mulkern.

The WinterKids App is FREE to download in the Apple App Store or Google Play Store. Get the app today to explore and preview all the offers waiting for you! Join the WinterKids App Facebook Group to share photos, tips and ex-

periences with other WinterKids families.

WinterKids expects 10,000 families in Maine, New Hampshire and Michigan to participate in winter activities through the WinterKids App this year. For more information on WinterKids programs, please visit www.winterkids.org.

WinterKids is a non-profit organization, based in Westbrook, that helps children develop healthy

lifelong habits through education and fun, outdoor winter activity. The organization delivers innovative outdoor programs for families, schools, and communities.

WinterKids’ Major Community Sponsor is Hannaford. Supporting Sponsors are Agren, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, L.L.Bean, Portland Glass, WEX, and WMTW 8 and The CW.

Food for Thought at Botanical Gardens

From L/A Sr. College

BOOTHBAY - The mission of Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens is to inspire meaningful connections among people, plants and nature through horticulture, education and research.

Founded in 2007, this lovely destination offers nature lovers, gardeners, and seekers of new experiences a sense of connection, reju-

venation, and awe-inspiring moments.

In a Food for Thought presentation on Jan. 21, Irene Barber, Horticulture Educator and Horticultural Therapist at CMBG, will provide a virtual tour of a day at the Gardens. Learn about bees at The Apiary or about our native moths and butterflies in the Butterfly House, indulge your inner child in the Bibby and Harold Alford Chil-

dren’s Garden, and invigorate your senses in the Lerner Garden of the Five Senses.

Take nature, art, and gardening classes onsite or online, participate in therapeutic garden activities, admire a variety of exhibits from sculpture to paintings, or simply take a long, enjoyable stroll along one of the coastal woodland paths. Though it may be a wintery day, spend some time in the

(virtual) sunshine and learn what there is to experience at Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens.

L/A Senior College is hosting this presentation free to the public on Thursday Jan. 21, at 4 p.m. on Zoom. Sign up by emailing senior college: laseniorcollege@gmail.com by noon Jan. 20. Please provide the presentation you wish to see and your name.



Irene Barber will provide a virtual tour of the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens in Boothbay in a Food For Thought virtual session on Jan. 21, hosted by L/A Senior college. Barber is the Horticulture Educator and Horticultural Therapist at CMBG. (Photo courtesy of L/A Senior College)



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Patients protected from surprise medical bills

From U.S. Sen. Collins
 WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Senator Susan Collins (R-Maine) announced last week that bipartisan legislation to protect patients from surprise medical bills was signed into law as part of the recent government funding package.

Americans increasingly pay more out-of-pocket for their health care, so it is crucial that they have access to the information they need to make informed decisions. The health and economic crisis we are currently experiencing due to COVID-19 has underscored the need for Congress to come together to increase the affordability and accessibility of medical care.

“Far too many Americans are struggling with

the skyrocketing cost of health care, which places severe strain on family budgets and threatens access to the care and medications they need. The last thing patients should have to worry about while they are sick or recovering is receiving an unexpected bill because they were unaware they were receiving out-of-network care,” said Senator Collins. “Increasing the affordability and accessibility of health care is one of my highest priorities, and this new law ending the unfair practice of surprise medical billing will help provide significant relief.”

The proposal to end surprise medical billing will also allow approximately \$18 billion in savings to be used to fully fund Community Health Centers, Teaching Health

Centers Graduate Medical Education, and Special Diabetes Programs for three years. As the lead sponsor of the Training the Next Generation of Primary Care Doctors Act, Senator Collins has long worked to bolster and expand this successful training program. As the founder and co-chair of the Senate Diabetes Caucus, she has championed the Special Diabetes Program, which has been instrumental in promoting advances in diabetes care such as the artificial pancreas system.

The bipartisan, bicameral agreement protects patients and establishes a fair payment dispute resolution process.

The agreement holds patients harmless from surprise medical bills, including from air ambulance providers, by ensuring they

are only responsible for their in-network cost-sharing amounts, including deductibles, in both emergency situations and certain non-emergency situations where patients do not have the ability to choose an in-network provider.

It prohibits certain out-of-network providers from balance-billing patients unless the provider gives the patient notice of their network status and an estimate of charges 72 hours prior to receiving out-of-network services and the patient provides consent to receive out-of-network care.

And It creates a framework that takes patients out of the middle, and allows health care providers and insurers to resolve payment disputes without involving the patient.

Under the agreement, insurers will make a payment to the provider that is determined either through negotiation between the parties or an independent dispute resolution (IDR) process. There is no minimum payment threshold to enter IDR, and claims may be batched together to ease administrative burdens.

If the parties choose to utilize the IDR process, both parties would each submit an offer to the independent arbiter. When choosing between the two offers the arbiter is required to consider the median in-network rate, information related to the training and experience of the provider, the market share of the parties, previous contracting history between the parties, complexity of the services provided, and any other information sub-

mitted by the parties. Following an IDR process, the party that initiated the dispute may not take the same party to arbitration for the same item or service for 90-days following a determination by the arbitrator. However, all claims that occur during the 90-day period are eligible for IDR after the 90-days.

The agreement also provides additional consumer protections when insurance companies change networks, including a transition of care for people with complex care needs and appeal rights for consumers.

It empowers consumers by providing a true and honest cost estimate that describes which providers will deliver their treatment, the cost of services, and provider network status.

Yvette’s Cocina celebrates first anniversary

From L-A Metro Chamber
 LEWISTON- On a bright, sunny Wednesday morning last week, Mayor of Lewiston Mark Cayer, LA Metro Chamber of Commerce President + CEO Shanna Cox, and members of the chamber celebrated the one year anniversary of Yvette’s Cocina with a ribbon cutting.

“I’m pleased to take part in yet another ribbon cutting ceremony for a local small business. Small businesses are and will be the backbone of our local economy.” Mayor Mark Cayer said. “In fact, if we

add up all of our small businesses in Lewiston, combined they are the largest employer in our community. This largest employer is made up of our local restaurants, accountant firms, law firms, book stores, and the many service providers, just to name a few.”

Yvette’s Cocina, an eatery named after owner Maria Carrion’s mother, opened in October 2019 serving up a Spanish-American blend of the dishes she grew up on.

Carrion had always dreamed of turning her passion for her mother’s

cooking into a business, she said. With flavors from her family recipes, Yvette’s Cocina has broadened the food culture here in LA with dishes like pollo guisado (chicken stew), steak and potatoes with yellow rice and gandules (pigeon peas), and pernil (slow cooked pork).

“Maria, your mom’s legacy continues through her recipes that you prepare and serve, and she would no doubt be very proud of you.” said Mayor Mark Cayer. “With individuals like Maria, brave enough to start their own business, our local econ-

omy is beginning to capture the interest of large developers and investors, in state and out of state. It’s important to remember that the livelihood of many of our friends, family members, and neighbors rely on the many small businesses in our community. When you support small businesses, you are supporting your friends, family members and neighbors.”

With the help of her family and friends, Maria has persevered and made it through not only her first year in business, but one

of the most challenging years for any business.

“We have seen long established small businesses struggle during this pandemic, and some have even closed their doors permanently. Yvette’s deserves to be celebrated, having spent most of their first year in the restaurant business in an unprecedented pandemic,” said LA Metro Chamber of Commerce President + CEO Shanna Cox. “Their survival is a testament to Maria’s good food, strong will, and business acumen.”



Maria Carrion cuts a ribbon to celebrate the one-year anniversary of Yvette’s Cocina, her restaurant in Lewiston named after her mother. (Photo courtesy of L-A Metro Chamber)





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Jingle Jog through Sabattus



Runners from the Sabattus Rec Club's Running Club at the Mixer's Nightclub parking lot at the start of their annual Jingle Jog through Sabattus that took place on Dec. 19. (Photo courtesy of Sabattus Rec Club)

From Sabattus Rec Club

SABATTUS - The Sabattus Rec Club Running Club conducted its annual Jingle Jog on Saturday, Dec. 19.

Jinglers ran in the Sabattus village area, dressed in colorful and festive holiday attire. The

weather turned out to be very nice for the fun jog, and Santa dropped off a few surprises while the runners were out spreading cheer.

The Rec Club Running Program is in its eighth year, and has been doing the Jingle Jog for the past few years. The

Club collected toys for area families again this year, making a donation to Loaves and Fishes.

The group meets every Wednesday at 6 p.m. in the Mixer's Nightclub parking lot night for free, no-pressure, group runs. Anyone and everyone is welcome.

Project to assist small businesses

From NVME

AUGUSTA - New Ventures Maine (NVME), a program of the University of Maine at Augusta, has been awarded \$85,000 in grant funds from national and regional organizations focused on supporting new and established small businesses in Maine and New England.

The objectives of these grants are to strengthen Maine small businesses and increase the financial security of business owners.

NVME is launching a Building Resilience with Rural Entrepreneurs project in Western, Northern, and Downeast Maine. This project will assist rural entrepreneurs in the start-up, rebuilding, or growth stage. NVME will work with entrepreneurs and partners to explore digital access for businesses, support economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, provide guidance in the form of resources, group work sessions, and small business planning classes

The Association for Enterprise Opportunity (AEO) and GoDaddy provided a second year of funding to support small businesses in New England to thrive online. This grant funding provides an opportunity for underserved entrepreneurs to learn about, assess, and create an online presence. Grow your Busi-

ness Online will be offered beginning in January. As part of the program, entrepreneurs receive free products including a domain name, hosting, website builder, branded email, email marketing, and SEO for two years. Coaching sessions with GoDaddy experts and working/lab sessions are available to entrepreneurs as they develop or refresh their web based marketing.

Maine Community Foundation's Downeast Innovation Fund awarded NVME's North Central/Downeast Region funding to strengthen collaborative partnerships within the Downeast Entrepreneurial Ecosystem, Four Directions Development Corporation and Eastern Maine CASH Coalition. This grant supports marketing and delivery of online training, small group networking sessions, and individual advising/coaching. Existing businesses, aspiring entrepreneurs, or unemployed persons seeking a new path in self-employment will benefit. Funds will be used to help spread the word about marketing mini-grants and matched savings programs including Wabanaki Savings Accounts, Rainy Day Savings, and Family Development Accounts.

AARP Foundation awarded NVME funding for the fifth year to support low income older adults as

they explore self-employment and develop businesses. NVME will use this funding to market and deliver online training and individual coaching. Work for Yourself@50+: Taking the Next Step builds upon the exploration of self-employment and provides individualized assessment, coaching, and business training to older entrepreneurs ready to implement their business ideas. NVME provides ongoing support, referrals and resources for "enclave entrepreneurs" as they move forward to create successful and sustainable businesses.

New Ventures Maine is a statewide community economic development program of the University of Maine at Augusta/University of Maine System. NVME creates an empowering environment for Maine people to define and achieve their career, financial, and small business goals. Through tuition-free classes and individual coaching, they help people find good jobs, start or return to college, launch small businesses, manage their money and build their assets. All interactive classes and workshops are available online. Individual appointments are available by video conference or phone. For more information on business programs and services offered by NVME, visit <https://bityl.co/53E1>

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DHHS expands substance use disorder treatment MaineCare can use federal funds for treatment options

From Maine DHHS

AUGUSTA— The Maine Department of Health and Human Services announced at the end of December that the federal government has approved the state's request to expand substance use disorder (SUD) treatment options for MaineCare members.

This will improve access to, and quality of, SUD treatment in Maine and advance DHHS' work to bridge medical and behavioral health care.

The U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) approved DHHS' 1115 demonstration waiver application, allowing federal Medicaid reimbursement for SUD treatment in facilities with more than 16 beds. Approval of this waiver allows residential SUD treatment facilities to serve more Maine people with SUD by adding more treatment slots and supporting new SUD providers in beginning to serve MaineCare members.

"This waiver advances our broader work to prevent Substance Use Disorders and ensure that Maine people have access to high-quality services at

all stages of treatment," said DHHS Commissioner Jeanne Lambrew. "Additional residential treatment options will improve our system of care and get Maine people the help they need during this challenging time."

"The receipt of this waiver will lead to more residential options for Maine people with substance use disorders in the near future," said Gordon Smith, Maine's Director of Opioid Response. "This initiative could not come at a more important time, as we continue to take action to help people with SUD during this pandemic."

Residential treatment facilities provide intensive programs that help individuals with SUD through the substance use withdrawal period and establish them in treatment. Some of these programs are tailored to specific populations, such as women or families.

Maine will begin implementing this waiver in February 2021, joining 29 other states. Under the waiver, states can waive the long-standing federal "Institutions for Mental Disease (IMD) Exclusion," which prohibits the use of feder-

al Medicaid funds for care provided to adult patients in mental health and SUD residential treatment facilities larger than 16 beds.

DHHS continues to reach out to providers about this opportunity to expand SUD services for MaineCare members, with several indicating that they would be ready to expand their capacity within three to six months.

Maine's goals for this initiative, however, extend beyond supporting residential SUD treatment facilities to serve additional members. DHHS aims to improve access to and quality of treatment for all adult MaineCare members with SUD, with a focus on increasing engagement in SUD treatment, especially in community settings; reducing overdose deaths, particularly those due to opioids; reducing preventable or medically inappropriate hospital visits; and improving access to care for physical health conditions among MaineCare members receiving SUD treatment.

This waiver adds to other SUD-related efforts MaineCare has underway. This includes the Maine Maternal Opioid Misuse

Model to improve care for pregnant and postpartum women with Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) and their infants by integrating maternal and substance use treatment services; SUPPORT for ME, which aims to increase MaineCare providers' ability to deliver SUD treatment and recovery services through technical assistance and support; and enhancing MaineCare's Opioid Health Home program to improve members' access to OUD treatment while promoting evidence-based treatment and encouraging integration with primary care.

To combat the disturbing rise in fatal drug overdoses exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, Maine also launched in October the "OPTIONS" (Overdose Prevention Through Intensive Outreach, Naloxone and Safety) initiative. Under the initiative, mobile response teams in every Maine county engage with communities that have high rates of drug overdoses to promote drug prevention and harm-reduction strategies, connect people directly to recovery services and treatment, and distribute naloxone, the lifesaving overdose medication.

Maine places fifth order for vaccine

From Maine DHHS

AUGUSTA – Last week, the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention placed an order for doses of COVID-19 vaccine for 17,075 people with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Operation Warp Speed.

This was the fifth order 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 available to Maine for new vaccines. Maine CDC's order, expected to arrive early next week, will comprise 8,775 doses from Pfizer and 8,300 doses from Moderna for the fourth week of distribution. The total number is less than the third week's allocation of 19,125. Additionally, sites are expected to receive next week the second dose of the Pfizer vaccine for individuals vaccinated in the first week of distribution, December 14.

Combined with the

previous orders, Maine expects to have enough to vaccinate approximately 81,850 people in the first four weeks of distribution.

Since COVID-19 vaccination began in Maine on December 15, 27,122 health care workers and long-term care residents have received the first dose of COVID-19 vaccine.

"It is a challenge to have less vaccine to distribute in each of the last two weeks, but Maine has now vaccinated more residents than have had COVID-19," said DHHS Commissioner Jeanne Lambrew. "Today's order allows Maine to expand vaccinations to patient-facing health care personnel outside the walls of hospitals who have been providing critical care to people in Maine."

"The changes in the number of doses and mix of vaccines we're receiving has forced us to alter some parts of our vaccination plan," said Dr. Nirav D. Shah, Director of the Maine CDC. "Despite those changes, we remain focused on ensuring that all Maine health care providers get the vaccine as efficiently and equitably as possible."

See Vaccine, page 14



Optometric Associates is proud to announce the addition of Dr. Abigail Heroth, O.D. to our optometric staff. Dr. Heroth is a graduate of the Pennsylvania College of Optometry, where she graduated with honors. She then completed a postdoctoral residency at the Togus VA Medical Centers located in Augusta and Bangor, Maine, where she focused on the study of ocular disease and primary eyecare.

Dr. Heroth is originally from Johnstown, New York. She attended Assumption College in Worcester, Massachusetts where she graduated Summa Cum Laude, earning her Bachelor of Arts degree in Biotechnology and Molecular Biology in 2015.

Dr. Heroth is happy to provide primary eye care to patients of all ages, as well as comprehensive, state of the art ocular disease treatment and management. Call our office to schedule your appointment today.

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Auburn reveals a 'Growth Team'

City Reimagines Economic & Community Development



Eric Cousens will be the new Director of Planning and Permitting for the new Growth Team for Auburn. (Photo courtesy of City of Auburn)



Jay Brenchick will take on the role of Director of Economic Development for Auburn's new Growth Team. (Photo courtesy of City of Auburn)



Glen Holmes joins Auburn's new Growth Team as the Director of Business and Community Development. (Photo courtesy of City of Auburn)

From City of Auburn

AUBURN –The City of Auburn is delighted to announce a reimagined approach to planning, permitting, economic and community development.

According to City Manager Phil Crowell, a restructure of the city's former Economic and Community Development Department (ECD) has established what the city is calling Auburn's "growth team," a term that helped drive the city's recent strategic planning process.

The team will be comprised of three very talented directors.

On Dec. 1, longtime employee Eric Cousens,

who has most recently served as Auburn's Deputy Director of ECD, took on a new role as Director of Planning and Permitting. Eric was born in Belfast, Maine, and he "has loved this State and everything outdoors from the beginning." After graduating from the University of Maine in 2000, Eric worked for the City of Lewiston as a Land Use Inspector and Assistant Planner until joining the City of Auburn in 2006. He has served Auburn in various Planning and Economic Development functions for the past 14+ years and looks forward to continuing that momentum as Director of Planning and

Permitting.

Glen Holmes has been named as Director of Business and Community Development and will come aboard on Dec. 14. Holmes comes to the City of Auburn from Community Concepts Finance Corporation, where he served as President. Holmes first joined CCFC in 2012 as Director of the Western Maine Economic Development Council. Holmes grew up in Mexico, Maine and entered the US Air Force after high school, attending the Community College of the Air Force. He has a wealth of management and executive level experience, ranging from Regional Sales Man-

ager for LifeTouch Corp., General Manager of Environmental Abatement Corporation, and Director of Media for MediaPower in Portland. Holmes also served as Town Manager in Buckfield for 7 years.

On Dec. 7, Jay Brenchick will join the team as Director of Economic Development. Brenchick began his economic development career when he served as the first director for the newly formed New Hampshire Film and Television Office. He segued into traditional economic development, serving as senior business development manager for the Manatee Economic Development Council in

Bradenton, Florida. He further developed his career in Virginia, where he held several positions, with the latest being president and CEO of Franklin Southampton Economic Development, Incorporated. He brings over \$300M of business attraction, retention, and redevelopment experience to the City of Auburn. Raised in Fryeburg, Maine, Brenchick is delighted to be back in his home state. In his free time, Brenchick enjoys spending time with his wife and three kids.

"I am very excited to introduce this new team," said Crowell. "Auburn has a legacy and commitment to taking steps forward, with 'no backward

steps.' The city has been experiencing considerable growth, and we have put together a development team that will be able to not only help implement our vision for continued progress, but will also help put our strategic plan recommendations into motion. This team will embody our new marketing initiative, "Auburn: Where your next opportunity is closer than you think."

According to Crowell, Cousens will be paid approximately \$94,000 per year; Holmes, \$93,000; and Brenchick, \$90,000.

Auburn's new growth team can be reached by visiting www.goauburn.me.

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Guest Column

I declare a new year

By Grammar Guy

Did you know there are four types of sentences in the English language? A complete sentence in English falls into one of these categories: declarative, exclamatory, imperative, and interrogatory. Out of all of these types of sentences, we hear and read the declarative sentence most often.

One of my favorite declarative sentences in pop culture is when Michael Scott, regional manager of the Scran-

ton branch of the Dunder Mifflin Paper Company in "The Office," walks into the eponymous office and announces, "I declare bankruptcy." The accounting department proceeds to tell Michael that you can't just "declare" bankruptcy, but you actually have to fill out paperwork to achieve legal bankrupt status.

A declarative sentence makes a statement, provides an explanation, or communicates a fact or information. You'll find declarative sentence (or

declarative statements) written in the present tense, and they usually end in periods. In Michael Scott's case, I would guess the bankruptcy line in the script ended with an exclamation point.

Among the declarative statements, we have two types: the simple declarative statement and the compound declarative statement. The simple declarative statements are just that — simple. They include a subject and a predicate: I have red hair. The Chiefs won the foot-

ball game. Potatoes grow underground.

A compound declarative sentence combines two phrases that have connected thoughts with a comma (or sometimes a semicolon) and a coordinating conjunction. In the case of compound declarative sentences that use semicolons, you'll often find a transition word such as however or so following the semicolon. Byron doesn't believe in the moon landing, but I do believe in it. We ran out of nachos, so everyone left the party ear-

ly. You can say there's no such thing as Santa, but as for me and grandpa, we believe. Forgive the improper "me and grandpa" in the previous sentence; I was simply quoting a seasonal song.

At the dawn of a new year, we're inclined to make broad, aspirational declarative sentences about our hopes for the next twelve months; we call them "New Year's resolutions." "I am going to lose weight." In order to make these things happen, you must accompany your

declarative sentence with some intentional action. Make a plan. Schedule your dream. Find someone to hold you accountable. Put motivational post-its around your house. Back up your declarations with do-clarations, and your 2021 will shape up to be a fantastic year.

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.

SNAP purchases now online in Maine

From USDA

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Maine's request to provide online purchasing of food to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) households was approved last week by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

This approval will allow Maine to expedite the implementation of online purchasing with currently authorized SNAP online retailers with a target start date to be announced at a later time.

Maine's SNAP participation is more than 144,000 individuals and more than 78,000 households, for a total of \$204 million annually in federal benefits.

SNAP online purchasing is currently operational in Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

Authorized online retailers include ALDI, Amazon, Carlie C's, H-E-B, ShopRite, The FreshGrocer, Walmart, Woods Supermarket, and Wright's Markets, Inc.

the states in which these retailers are operating can be found at <https://bitly.co/53OU>. With these states, more than 90% of all households receiving SNAP will have access to online purchasing.

Multiple stakeholders — notably, state agencies, their third-party processor, and any retailers that wish to participate — must work together to implement online purchasing using SNAP benefits. To ease the process, FNS put together a simplified template for states that want to operate online purchasing and provided guidance to interested retailers, which is available online.

USDA continues to provide significant technical assistance to all interested stakeholders to ensure implementation plans are thorough and appropriate preliminary testing is conducted to avoid compromising

the state's entire benefit system. Each state, EBT processor, and retailer presents their own mix of challenges so FNS is providing customer service based on each of their specific needs.

Until states are prepared to operate the pilot, USDA recommends utilizing other options that retailers may already provide, such as Pay at Pick-up (also known as "Click and Collect"), where SNAP cardholders can shop online and then pay for their purchase using their EBT card at pick-up. Grocery pickup is already an option that these retailers offer beyond SNAP so they are already thinking through

how they can provide a safe environment to do so with the concerns around social distancing.

During these challenging times, FNS is working hand-in-hand with state program leadership, to provide support and guidance to adapt to the challenges of this public health emergency. FNS is granting states significant program flexibilities and contingencies to best serve program participants across our 15 nutrition assistance programs. For up to date information and to learn more about flexibilities being used in FNS nutrition programs, please visit the FNS website at fns.usda.gov.

Physician

Continued from page 3

struggling due to the pandemic."

Senator Collins has long been a champion of improving access to health care, particularly in rural and underserved areas. In addition to sponsoring legislation to avert destabilizing cuts to medical providers that would have harmed patients' access to health care, Senator Collins sent a letter to Senate leaders in October, urging them to advance legislation to prevent these sharp reductions in payment.

Maide For You

Continued from page 1

around in her family minivan to owning a fleet of company cars for the day-shift workers.

The Fosters have

great aspirations for Maide For You. Donna said "I want to take over the world!" She said she has great people supporting the business, and wonderful office staff and cleaning staff.

"We will continue to grow!" she said.

Maide For You's mission statement reads, "To nurture a working environment that supports and encourages employees to be the best version of themselves which enables them to do work they can be proud of."

For more information or to contact Maide For You, call 653-1837 or visit maideforyou.com

Janice Pompeo is part of the Johnandjanice real estate team, and can be reached at johnandjanice@beangroup.com



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Crichton named ‘Manager of the Year’



Retired Auburn City Manager Peter Crichton speaks with members of the MTCMA board after being chosen as the 2020 “Linc Stackpole Manager of the Year”. (Photo courtesy of City of Auburn)

From City of Auburn

AUBURN – Retired Auburn City Manager Peter Crichton was recently announced as the recipient of the 2020 “Linc Stackpole Manager of the Year” Award, an honor bestowed annually by the Maine

Town, City and County Management Association (MTCMA).

The award, which celebrates a public administrator who has contributed to the public management field in an outstanding fashion, is the most prestigious award bestowed by the

MTCMA. Crichton, who was at the council meeting to present an award to a former intern, was not aware of the impending presentation and was surprised and humbled by the honor.

Andrew L. Hart, Knox County Administrator and President of MTCMA was presented Crichton with the award, and said, “Peter is a humble public servant who does not seek recognition for his service, but we cannot think of a municipal leader who is more deserving of the Linc Stackpole Manager of the Year Award.”

Hart was joined by members of the MTCMA Board of Directors: Rhonda Irish, Town Manager, Town of Wilton; Ryan Pelletier, County Administrator, Aroostook County; and Scott Morelli, City Manag-

er, South Portland.

“Peter’s reputation for integrity and thoughtful leadership is impeccable and widely known,” said Phil Crowell, Auburn’s current City Manager. “His diplomatic approach to management has earned the respect of his peers, employees, and citizens alike. He is an insightful, intuitive leader who values civility and respect as the cornerstones of municipal governance, and his ability to see all sides of an issue only adds to his credibility.”

Crichton’s “integrity and passion for the Manager role has provided him with a level of respect from his peers and colleagues that is undeniable,” said Christine Landes, City Manger of Gardiner.

Falmouth Town Manager Nathan Poore said,

“Peter has been an extraordinary advocate for ensuring there will be a training ground for young and emerging leaders in the municipal management profession. Peter may not be looking for accolades or awards for his service, but he certainly deserves recognition for leaving a legacy that will serve Maine people well into the future.”

Raegan Young, a recent intern in the Auburn City Manager’s Office was also celebrated and recognized by the MTCMA. Young, who graduated last Spring from the Muskie School of Public Service, was presented with the 2020 “Dr. Edward F. Dow Award for Future Leaders in Public Administration.”

“We have had many interns over the years who have performed their duties

and projects very well,” said Crichton. “But none who have contributed so much during their internship as Raegan Young. Raegan is a remarkable person who is wise beyond her years. The projects and deliverables that she has provided will have long term benefits to the city, from her careful attention to and authorship of the Ad-hoc Recycling Committee Report, to her work on a formal internship program for high school and college/graduate school students.”

Young’s internship with Auburn spanned February to July of this year. She currently serves as Community Planner and Outreach Specialist for the Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission.

Crichton has been actively involved in local government at the municipal and/or county level for more than 30 years. He began his career in municipal government with the Town of Mars Hill as the community’s first Economic Community Development Director. For ten years, Peter served as Superintendent of Public Works and Assistant City Administrator for the City of Lewiston. Before joining the team in Auburn as City Manager in 2017, Peter served as County Manager for Cumberland County for 18 years. Crichton retired from his position as Auburn City Manager on June 30, 2020.

In his time with the City of Auburn, he took on numerous initiatives, like the creation of a Strategic Plan for the city. Peter was able to bring together more than fifty community members committed to serving over a six-month period to develop a strategic roadmap for Auburn’s future success. He started with getting buy-in from elected officials and staff, then began recruitment of local leaders and residents. This initiative has emerged as one of the best, most impactful community partnerships in Auburn’s 150-year history.

Lincoln C. Stackpole was the Town Manager of Machias from August of 1970 until he died at the age of 55 on Sept. 5, 1977. He was a corporate member of the International City Management Association; President of the Washington County Economic Development Corp. Board of Directors; a member of the Maine Town and City Management Association, and the Washington County Municipal Officials Association. He was also on the Advisory Committee of the Maine Municipal Association.

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Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

<p>MONDAY Jan. 11 5:30 p.m. LEWISTON – Planning Board meeting via Zoom.</p> <p>7-9 p.m. GORHAM – Conservation Commission meeting.</p> <p>7 p.m. GORHAM – Planning Board meeting via Zoom.</p> <p>MONDAY Jan. 18 GORHAM – Town offices and Baxter Memorial Library will be closed in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.</p> <p>TUESDAY Jan. 19 8 a.m. GORHAM – Ordinance Committee meeting via Zoom.</p> <p>7 p.m. LEWISTON – City Council meeting, via Zoom from City Council chambers.</p>	<p>WEDNESDAY Jan. 20 8 a.m. GORHAM – Gorham Economic Development Corporation meeting via Zoom.</p> <p>THURSDAY Jan. 21 6:30 p.m. GORHAM – Board of Appeals meeting. Zoom webinar: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83618869640</p> <p>Monday Jan. 25 5:30 p.m. LEWISTON – Planning Board meeting via Zoom.</p> <p>5:30 p.m. GORHAM – Finance Committee meeting. Zoom webinar: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89288915185</p> <p>TUESDAY Jan. 26 5:30 p.m. AUBURN – Agriculture Committee meeting at Auburn Senior Community Center in Pettengill Park.</p>	<p>WEDNESDAY Jan. 27 7 p.m. GORHAM – Comprehensive Plan Amendment Committee meeting via Zoom.</p> <p>MONDAY Feb. 1 7 p.m. GORHAM – Planning Board meeting via Zoom.</p> <p>TUESDAY Feb. 2 6:30 p.m. GORHAM – Regular Town Council meeting via Zoom</p>
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Send all items for What's Going On to the Editor. Deadline is Friday by five.

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Letter to the Editor Wish Vs Goal for 2021

And January Starts . . .
 This month not only starts with fierce weather but with a fire inside me. They say the statistics of people making resolutions for the new year only last for a month or two, then people give up!

So I've never been one to say resolutions but I've always been "goal oriented".

Yes there are always important goals on the top of the list that are consistent every year - health, exercise, better ways to handle stress. Goals are different for everyone. I think it's a very personal mission and I also think it changes as we go through different phases and ages in life. So no matter where you are in life or no matter what your age is, think about what you want in life and where you want to go with it!

Prioritize what is most important to you. Take good care of yourself and Start today. Make your "Wish" a Goal!

**Cynthia Chadwick-Granger
 Saco, ME**

Vaccine Continued from page 9

Maine's vaccine planning aligns with the recommendations of the U.S. CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). Maine has prioritized its limited supply of vaccine for health care personnel and residents of skilled nursing and long-term care facilities under Phase 1a. While the federal government controls the state's vaccine supply, Maine CDC continues to work with partners throughout the state to vaccinate as many Maine people on the front lines of the pandemic as quickly as possible.

Maine is beginning to extend vaccination beyond hospital staff to additional health care workers in Phase 1a. The goal, recognizing that Maine's planning is dependent on the federal government's vaccine allocation, is to provide vaccine by February to all health care personnel and long-term care residents in Phase 1a.

"The MMA is committed to further collaborating with Maine CDC and thanks them for their willingness to engage with us on the vaccine process," said Andrew McLean, CEO of the Maine Medical Association. "We're looking forward to first protecting health care workers caring for patients with COVID-19, and those who are at most risk as patient-facing clinicians."

In the fourth week of distribution, shipments of 17,075 doses of vaccine will be sent to hospitals (7,000), outpatient groups (2,500), emergency medical services (200), independent pharmacies serving skilled nursing facilities (2,500) and the retail pharmacy long-term care program (4,875).

Physicians, nurses, and similar health care providers who practice outside of hospitals are beginning to be vaccinated. Over half of next week's allocation is targeted toward the patient-facing staff at hospital-affiliated medical practices, dialysis centers, oncology practices, federally qualified health centers, and independent medical practices that provide urgent and acute care. Given the limited supply of vaccines, sites that have a large number of employees will begin to receive vaccine in the fourth week, with additional sites being added in the following weeks. Additional information on how all health care personnel can get vaccinated will be provided in January.

The Department has adopted ACIP's definition of "health care personnel", which can be found at: <https://bit.ly.co/53Dj>. Given the limited and smaller-than-expected supply of vaccine, the Department recommends starting with health care personnel key to maintaining our critical care capacity, including outpatient clinicians who provide care to people with chronic or serious conditions. The Department then recommends vaccinating other patient-facing health care personnel, and then vaccinating all other personnel falling into the ACIP definition. Information on how health care personnel can find out about when and how they can be vaccinated is posted at <https://bit.ly.co/53Dh>.

These recommendations are aimed at completing Phase 1a by February and promoting public health by protecting Maine's health care workforce against COVID-19. Vaccinating at this velocity means that some individuals within Phase 1a are vaccinated before others even if those individuals face less exposure to COVID-19.

Maine is also participating in the retail pharmacy program operated by the U.S. CDC. Maine DHHS allocates doses to the program but does not play a direct role in distribution of those vaccines to long-term care facilities.

Maine's planning for COVID-19 vaccine distribution began in spring 2020. The vaccine distribution framework will continue to evolve with the changing vaccine supply and continued input from health care providers and various communities throughout Maine.

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For questions and detailed information on these trips, please call: Claire - 207-784-0302 or Cindy- 207-345-9569.

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