

SeniorsPlus very busy during pandemic

By Nathan Tsukroff

LEWISTON - The COVID-19 pandemic has phones “ringing off the hook” at SeniorsPlus in Lewiston.

Phone calls to the agency are half-again higher under the pandemic than they were a year ago, jumping from 120,000 a year previously to about 196,000 calls this past year.

SeniorsPlus is the designated Area Agency on Aging for Western Maine, and works to enrich the lives of older people and adults with disabilities. The agency’s goal is to assist adults to remain at home safely for as long as possible.

Much of the agency’s work is concentrated on community services for older and disabled adults in Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford counties, but SeniorsPlus is also tasked with providing care coordination for adults all across Maine under a contract with the state.

“That’s why our call volume is so high,” Betsy Sawyer-Manter, President and CEO, said. “People are calling a lot . . . I don’t know if it’s because of the pandemic.” Calls are often direct-dial to one of the 125 staff members, rather than a central switchboard, so callers don’t have to deal with menus.

Calls to the main phone number for SeniorsPlus are returned as quickly as possible by staff, but a return call may not be until the following day, Sawyer-Manter said. Clients will often call back multiple times if they don’t reach someone in person, increasing the perceived volume of calls.

“People are calling for a variety of reasons. Right now, the two hot topics are, ‘Where’s my stimulus payment?’, and ‘Where am I going to get the vaccine?’, she said. “So some of our calls are sort of driven by the news cycle.”

SeniorsPlus just finished assisting older adults with the Medicare open enrollment, which led to a lot of phone calls. And the agency continues to help adults with questions about Medicare throughout the year, Sawyer-Manter said.

SeniorsPlus has four main phone numbers for adults to call for different topics. “So somebody can call about Medicare. We have a Medicare hotline. So people leave their messages there, and we have somebody who’s an expert in Medicare call them back,” she said. “Same



John Piper mixes beans into chili for Meals on Wheels at the Robert D. Ouellette Kitchen operated by SeniorsPlus in Lewiston. (Tsukroff photo)

thing with our education center,” for people who questions about educational offerings from SeniorsPlus, which are now virtual.

Meals on Wheels is another major program administered by SeniorsPlus in the three-country area. The staff at Meals on Wheels’ Roger D. Ouellette Kitchen off the Alfred Plourde Parkway on the east side of Lewiston serves upwards of 1200 meals a day.

Meals had been delivered daily in the past, with a delivery of multiple meals on Thursday or Friday to carry the recipient through the weekend.

Adults who want to find out if they are eligible for Meals on Wheels can call the hotline for answers, Sawyer-Manter said.

“We have a lot of people who are looking for Meals on Wheels,” she said. “Food insecurity seems to be a real issue right now.” SeniorsPlus has some flexibility during the pandemic under the CARES Act to provide meals for adults who might not have qualified previously. Meals on Wheels was traditionally for people over 60 who did not have the ability to make meals for themselves or to acquire meals, such as someone disabled or homebound.

“The intent of Meals of Wheels is to give people who are qualified, one third of their daily recommended dietary require-

ments for an adult,” Sawyer-Manter said. “So they get one meal a day. Sometimes we deliver extra meals and they eat more than one a day, but typically, it’s one a day.”

With funds from the CARES Act, SeniorsPlus has expanded delivery of meals during the pandemic. Adults of any age who may not be able to leave their home to shop for food because of their medical needs or conditions may now qualify for the meals. “So we’ve been able to open the program up to more people as a result of that funding,” she said.

Funding for this expanded program was provided when the CARES Act was first put into place, and Sawyer-Manter said she believes SeniorsPlus has enough money left to allow delivery of these meals through “late-winter or early-spring.”

Part of the impact from the pandemic means that meal deliveries may not be face-to-face. Meals may be left on a doorstep or on the porch, and the delivery person doesn’t get to chat with the person receiving the meals as they have in the past. To make up for this lost interaction, SeniorsPlus volunteers call the adults receiving the meals at least once a week to check on their well-being.

Homecare

SeniorsPlus holds a contract with the State of Maine to run the homebased-care

program for adults who aren’t eligible for other government assistance such as MaineCare (Maine’s version of Medicaid), but still need homecare, Sawyer-Manter said. They might need help with such “activities of daily living” as bathing, dressing, help with toileting, or cooking.

This is homecare, not healthcare, she said. “All of these things that maybe you and I take for granted – we can put on our own clothes, we can take our own shower – these are people who need assistance with that, so they don’t end up in a nursing home. They want to live at home, and with a little bit assistance, they can stay at home.”

SeniorsPlus pays providers to hire personal-care workers who provide the homecare for adults across Maine, Sawyer-Manter said. “We coordinate all their care,” by authorizing the providers to go into a home and choosing how many hours of homecare will be provided. The provider then hires the homecare worker and is paid by the State of Maine through SeniorsPlus.

“We monitor the work as well . . . whatever they need for services, we are the coordinating agency,” she said.

Homebased-care is a state-funded program. For adults who qualify for MaineCare, SeniorsPlus may coordinate care, but payment comes directly from MaineCare.

Other Programs

Besides the Meals on Wheels and homebased-care programs, “We do a lot around caregiver support. So we help people who are caring for a loved one, particularly people who have Alzheimer’s or another dementia,” Sawyer-Manter said. “We support them through one-on-one support, support groups,” and respite care.

For respite care, although with a limited amount of money available, SeniorsPlus is able to provide some money for people caring for another family member to occasionally hire temporary help and take some personal time. “Say you were taking care of your mother with dementia, and you needed to go to the doctor and get some errands done. You might arrange for once a week to have someone come in that’s going to stay with your mother, supervise her care, so that you can get out and do your own thing,” she said.

As more people in Maine are caring

See **Seniors**, page 8



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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

A life-changing weight loss for Steep Falls woman

By Nathan Tsukroff

STEEP FALLS - Losing weight has been life-changing for Tammy Snow of Steep Falls, ME.

She lost over 63 pounds in 13 months, and was named the TOPS Maine Queen for 2019. She continues to share her story with others to inspire them to make changes in their own lives.

"Little did I know how this group would change my life," Snow said. She originally joined the group, Take Off Pounds Sensibly, in 2006.

TOPS is a non-profit weight loss program, similar to Weight Watchers. The group has been around since 1948 and has about 200,000 members in 10,000 chapters around the world. The chapters have weekly meetings where members are weighed-in and share their success stories.

After a disability caused her to lose her job, she became inactive and dropped out of the program in 2014. "I basically sat in a recliner all day and ate mindlessly without exercising," she said. "I lost my ability to move around without joint pain." She was also diagnosed with low-thyroid disease and high cholesterol.

Snow had worked as a phlebotomist at a research lab in Windham,



Tammy Snow of Steep Falls with her father in 2018. Snow said this photograph of her at 276 pounds was a wakeup call that her set on a journey that has seen her lose over 73 pounds since then. (Photo courtesy of Tammy Snow)

drawing blood from animals at the lab.

She rejoined her local chapter of TOPS in 2016, and has not missed a weekly meeting since then, she said. "Meetings are an important part of the TOPS program. The friendships are supportive, and the meetings informative. It was a positive approach to weight loss that

kept me motivated to keep going."

Snow said that re-joining TOPS set her on a "journey of health and fitness and wellness."

In 2018, "I realized that my friends and family were moving on, and that my life was not in the right place. I was missing out on the good things." A picture of Snow and her father



A recent portrait of Tammy Snow of Steep Falls, who lost more than 73 pounds over two years with support from the TOPS weight loss program. (Photo courtesy of Tammy Snow)

that year showed her at 263 pounds, the "heaviest I've ever been in my life," and was her wakeup call, she said.

"I realized I needed to buckle down and regain what I had lost. Something inside me clicked, and I was engaged!" Snow said. "I was learning tough love, and I wanted to make change for the good."

Snow said 2018 was also the year that the TOPS group revised its health magazine called My Day One, which taught her portion control and how to eat a balanced meal. "This would be the tool that would set me on my path." The magazine is given to new members when they join the group.

The revision includ-

ed visual tools and examples. "I am a visual learner, and everything just clicked," she said. "I could visually see what a portion was supposed to look like, what a meal was supposed to look like. And, of course, I was motivated to learn the program."

She attended her first state recognition in 2018. "I heard a lot of inspiring stories of others" at the event at Jeff's Catering in Brewer. While still only halfway to her goal, "I left inspired . . . eager to continue my journey of health and wellness and fitness."

Snow changed her diet and now eats "a lot of low-fat, low-salt, low-sodium and low-carb food" and drinks "plenty of water," she said. Her daily diet is about 1200 to 1500 calories.

She has been married for 35 years to her husband, Bill, who "has been my rock," she said. Her 31-year-old son, Billy, and 29-year-old daughter, Lauren, also "have been so supportive," she said.

Lauren rides horses, and encouraged her mother to get back in the saddle after years of being inactive, Snow said.

She had the highest weight loss in Maine in 2019, and has continued to lose weight for a total of over 73 pounds to date. "I'm back! I'm me again!" she said.

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Students named to UNE Dean's List

From UNE

BIDDEFORD AND PORTLAND - Several local students have been named to the Dean's List for the 2020 fall semester at the University of New England.

Dean's List students have attained a grade point

average of 3.3 or better out of a possible 4.0 at the end of the semester.

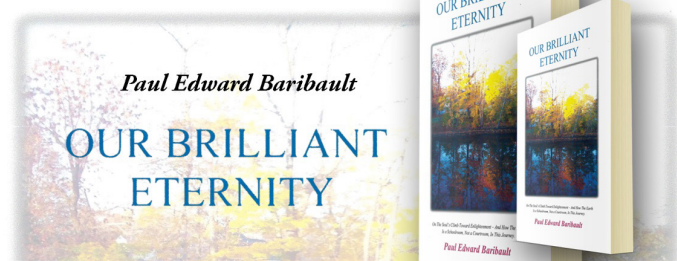
Named to the Dean's List from Auburn were Willie Blanchette, Taylor Depot, Madison DeRosa, Chloe Dwinell, Corryn Lachance, Olivia Paione, and Kelsey Teegan.

Named to the Dean's List from Lewiston were Mason Lagasse and Kaylyn Ritchie.

The University of New England is Maine's largest private university, featuring two distinctive campuses in Maine, a vibrant campus in Tangier, Morocco, and an

array of innovative offerings online. The university's hands-on experiential approach empowers students to join the next generation of leaders in their chosen fields.

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Guest Column

Home Country

By Slim Randles

“Well,” said Steve, polishing off the last of his coffee, “what should we discuss this fine morning?”

“I’m awful glad you asked, ol’ pard,” came the cheerful voice of Windy Wilson, emerging through the swinging doors that came from the kitchen of the Mule Barn truck stop. “Yessir. Awful glad.”

Steve and the other members of the world dilemma think tank looked in amazement as this old camp cook and cowboy came over with the coffee pot and topped off their coffee mugs. Windy had found a dish towel and wrapped it around his waist, too.

“Windy?” said Doc. “Mighty fine-looking dish towel you’re wearing.”

“Thanks, Doc. I consider it the apex of dining room fashion for a volunteer coffee guy. Took me a while to talk Loretta into lettin’ me wear it, howsomever. I guess she ain’t up on dining room fashions.”

“Let me guess,” said Doc. “This must be your helping day, right?”

“Right as grain, Doc,” Windy said, cheerfully. “I thought about it and decided I’d devote my helpin’ day to the good ol’ Mule Barn.”

We all knew Windy dedicated one day each week to helping others. This sometimes meant helping them when they really didn’t need it, but hey, the older folks in our town get some trash picked up in the yard and some kindling split. You know.

“So fer a conser-

ational subject this spar- klin’ a.m.,” Windy said, “I believe I’d meanderate through the mystericals of ancient history, beginnin’ with them Egypt guys. Whadda ya think?”

“Might just do that, Windy,” said Steve. “But if you don’t mind me asking, why are you helping out with the coffee in here rather than cleaning up somebody’s yard.”

Windy looked around to see if the other 43 people in the café could hear, then leaned down toward Steve. “Lot warmer in here than it is in somebody’s yard, and thassa fact.”

Brought to you by Slim’s latest novel “Cock-a-Doodle Death” What happens when a chicken’s ghost haunts Home Country. Not yet available, but start saving up.

Newest political party in Maine

From The Yankee Party

AUGUSTA – The Yankee Party received enrollment status from the Maine Secretary of State last week.

The group had submitted a list of signatures from voters around the state to the Secretary of State at the end of December. It becomes the newest political party in Maine.

Voters interested in enrolling in a new political party must read and complete both sides of a Maine Voter Registration Application, a hard copy of which can be obtained at any local Town Hall or it can be downloaded and printed from the State’s website. The voter must check the box next to “other qualifying party,” and write in “Yankee” or “Yankee Party”.

After ensuring the back of the form is signed, new Maine voters choosing to mail their card directly to the state must also include a photocopy of a Maine driver’s license, Maine state ID, or a current utility bill, bank statement, or government document that shows a legal name and Maine address.

The completed application can be returned to the Town Hall in the municipality in which you the voter lives, or mailed to: Division of Elections, #101 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333-0101.

Maine’s laws create two major hurdles that new political parties have to jump before they are allowed to enjoy the same rights and benefits that are granted to major political parties like the Democratic and Republican

parties. The first is to gain Enrollment Status, which the Yankee Party has now completed, and the second is to register 5,000 voters into the party over the course of a two-year period from the day on which Enrollment Status is filed. This gives the Yankee Party until December 29, 2022 to enroll 5,000 voters in the party in order to be granted equal footing with the standard two parties.

The Yankee Party is a regional political party that seeks to reenergize citizen engagement with local and state governments and to unify the voice of the northeast and advocate for northeastern values in Washington D.C.

The new political party hopes to break the endless two-party gridlock that has arisen across the

See political, page 11

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Bishop Deeley of the Portland Diocese. (Photo courtesy of Portland Diocese)

Letter to the Editor A New Year's Message from Bishop Deeley

Happy New Year!
For many of us, the changing of the calendar this year will be very welcome. All the same, I would be remiss if I did not give thanks for the gifts of 2020. It was a year which will be remembered for a pandemic, tragedy, and division, but the gift was in the response of service and sacrifice by many people that sustained us through a difficult time and, ultimately, set us on a path to recovery.

I think of the dedicated commitment shown by our clergy, parish staffs, and volunteers who worked tirelessly to ensure our churches and our many important ministries such as food pantries and soup kitchens would carry on. I think of the devotion to duty of medical personnel, first responders, storekeepers and supermarket workers, school teachers, cleaning personnel, transport workers and others who have kept our communities operating and safe. These

are the people who brought blessing to the year. They met the moment generously by answering the call given to each of us: to share God's love and mercy with those we encounter to preserve the common good. I think of the sacrifices of parishioners and community members, many in uncertain financial situations, who continued to offer needed assistance to the Church, recognizing the importance of our common mission and the support in hope it offers to so many people in so many ways. The courage, perseverance, and faith we see in the acts of these people are things to carry with us into the new year.

So as we enter into 2021 on the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, who better to guide us? We can learn a great deal from Mary, a woman who knew that only in prayer and in conversation with the God who had asked her to be the mother of his child, would

she be able to be faithful to what she had been called. We are told in the Gospel that "she kept all these things in her heart." We would do well to follow her. In her heart was where she would meet God, and seek his will for her as she carried out her mission to be the Mother of God.

As the new year begins, let us resolve to enter it mindful of the good we have received. Like Mary, in humble prayer, let us ask God to guide us in witnessing to the Good News of Jesus in our world seeking the good in others, and striving where we can to help make the lives of others better.

God is with us. That is our hope; that is what we celebrate at Christmas. As the calendar changes, may this truth rest in your hearts bringing you peace and blessing.

Bishop Robert P. Deeley, J.C.D.
Bishop of the Diocese of Portland, ME

Proposed budget invests in pandemic response

From Maine DHHS

AUGUSTA – Last week, Governor Mills proposed a supplemental budget for Fiscal Year 2021 and a biennial budget for Fiscal Years 2022-2023 that invests in pandemic response and is intended to protect Maine people's safety and wellbeing.

The proposed biennial budget will also continue to rebuild public health infrastructure, and preserve life-saving health care and safety net services.

Despite the challenges of the nearly yearlong pandemic response and current fiscal climate, the Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) budget, a central component of the Governor's proposals, bolsters the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC), continues critical reforms, maintains access to vital programs and services such as MaineCare, and reduces costs through efficiencies and accessing federal funding.

"Over the last year, COVID-19 has altered the lives and livelihoods of Maine people in innumerable ways," said DHHS

Commissioner Jeanne Lambrew. "These budget proposals are a measure of our dedication to containing the pandemic as well as our objectives beyond the pandemic -- advancing public health, improving the safety and wellbeing of our most vulnerable residents, and making sure Maine people have affordable, high-quality health care."

The funding priorities Governor Mills has identified for DHHS include an additional \$5 million for Maine CDC for COVID-19 testing, vaccines, and support services for people who need to stay in isolation and quarantine (supplemental)

Also included is \$3 million for the Maine CDC for additional capacity at the Health and Environmental Testing Lab, the Health Inspection Program, the Maine Immunization Program, and the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program (biennial);

The governor is requesting \$6 million to fund Section 29 services for adults with developmental disabilities in their homes and commu-

nities by an additional 30 slots per month (biennial);

A budget proposal is included for \$45 million for MaineCare rate increases for nursing facilities, residential facilities for children and older Mainers, Section 21 and 29 services for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and other providers per state and federal requirements (biennial);

The budget looks for \$7.5 million for community mental health and substance use disorder services, including funds for new crisis services in Cumberland County, helping individuals get appropriate treatment in the community; new MaineCare coverage for mental health intensive outpatient treatment; to promote the OPTIONS (Overdose Prevention Through Intensive Outreach, Naloxone and Safety) Initiative to dispatch mobile response teams to communities with high rates of drug overdoses and connect Mainers to local treatment; and a new Justice and Health team of intensive case managers around

See **Budget**, page 12

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Out and About

New Year's surprise



Robin, Jerrica, Sarah and Alana go door-to-door to greet each tenant at Schooner Estates with festive New Year's Eve box lunches with cascading ribbons. The retirement community in Auburn was celebrating the arrival of the new year. (Rachel Morin photo)

By Rachel Morin

The Tenants at Schooner Estates Retirement Community in Auburn had another surprise on the last day of the year 2020.

Answering a knock at the door in the late afternoon of New Year's Eve, each resident was presented with a box lunch in a pretty box with cascading ribbons and offered a choice of beverage to toast the New Year in.

The young women from the Diet Kitchen, Alana, Jerrica, Robin and Sarah made their way with rolling carts to the tenants on all the floors wishing everyone a Happy New Year, compliments of the House.

The contents included fancy mixed nuts, roasted red pepper and three cheese dip with crackers, Cavatappi pasta salad, crudite in cups with ranch dip, seafood, egg

salad and chicken salad finger rolls, mini dessert bars and petit fours.

These boxes could be eaten at any time the tenant chose to eat. with an opportunity to eat the lunch and toast the New Year at the stroke of midnight! I know of at least one person who has observed this ritual for some 20 plus years with a granddaughter!

Unfortunately, 2020 and 2021 were exceptions due to the Covid-19 restrictions! So this tenant, last year and this year, quietly watched the somewhat smaller crowd (in 2020) in Times Square celebrating the New Year. This tenant walked quietly around the apartment whispering "Happy New Year!"

I will say this about Schooner Estates: The Housekeeping Staff observes every Holiday

throughout the year with appropriate festive and colorful decorations at every possible place they can find in all the hallways and corridors, the dining rooms, the Village Green, and the entry ways. The outside grounds are also decorated and possibly by The Maintenance Staff.

The remainder of the year, fresh green potted plants of every kind are placed throughout the buildings and many beautiful hand-crafted flowers of every color are placed here and there for residents to enjoy.



Alana, Jerrica, Sarah and Robin from the Schooner Estates diet kitchen at the end of their New Year's Eve visits to all the Schooner Estate Retirement Community residents. (Rachel Morin photo)

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Arts & Entertainment

McDonald's celebrates teachers with free 'Thank You Treats'

From McDonald's

MAINE – To acknowledge and celebrate teachers for their tireless commitment towards students and the community, local McDonald's in Maine have been showing their appreciation with free unlimited "Thank You Treats" from Jan. 6-15.

The treats are redeemable any time of day with a valid school I.D. and at participating restaurants.

This new initiative shares McDonald's expression of gratitude and underscores our commitment to the education community as teachers manage an unusual school year.

Teachers are working harder than ever and over-extending themselves to navigate an unfolding landscape brought by the pandemic. Throughout the pandemic local McDonald's have been committed to finding ways to continue being good neighbors and

supporting its communities. Today, McDonald's would like to say "thank you" with this small expression of our immense gratitude for their contributions to educating one student at a time.

"We are honored to support our local teachers who have overcome many challenges amid the pandemic and have continued to adapt their teaching models to educate the students in the community," says Mark McBee, a McDonald's owner/operator. "These educators are truly the backbone of our community and we are proud to show our appreciation any way we can."

For many years, McDonald's and its owner operators have been supporters of education through partnerships with local schools and Archways to Opportunity, an initiative that offers educational programs to eligible employees at participating

restaurants. Archways to Opportunity provides increased access to education for nearly 55,000 people annually. Of those, 39,000 plus restaurant employees are awarded College Tuition Assistance each year.

The "Thank You Treats" spotlights the new trio of Bakery Sweets – Apple Fritter, Blueberry Muffin and Cinnamon Roll – and the offer free of charge is complete with an any size hot coffee. These new menu items are available all day long and whether teachers are looking for a sweet complement to their morning coffee, an afternoon pick-me-up following a long day in the classroom, or just deserving of a sweet treat, this new lineup offers them a self-indulgent break.

This breakfast trio is the latest innovation for McDonald's, which has been a leader in breakfast for almost 50 years, serv-

ing delicious fan favorites like the Egg McMuffin, sausage burritos and McGriddles. These craveable options will be offered alongside our beloved McCafé cookies and pies, marking the first addition of bakery items to McDonald's core menu in over eight years.

McDonald's continues its focus to help the communities we serve continue to recover since the COVID-19 pandemic began.

McDonald's USA, LLC, serves a variety of menu options made with quality ingredients to nearly 25 million customers every day. Ninety-five percent of McDonald's 14,000 U.S. restaurants are independently owned and operated by businessmen and women. For more information, visit www.mcdonalds.com, or follow us on Twitter @McDonalds and Facebook. www.facebook.com/mcdonalds.

Nurse's art on display at CMMC

From WHA

LEWISTON – A nurse at Central Maine Medical Center in Lewiston is currently the featured artist for the hospital's art gallery.

The Woman's Hospital Association (WHA) Rotating Art Gallery at CMMC is displaying the photographs of Lindsay White during the months of January and February.

White is a registered nurse who works on the Special Delivery Unit at CMMC. When she isn't working with new parents welcoming their children into the world, she is the proud mother of two daughters, ages 8 and 12.

In spite of her busy schedule, she spends time with her camera whenever she can. The subjects of her work vary but she enjoys focusing on the beauty of Maine whether it's an Atlantic Puffin off the coast, the Milky Way Galaxy visible from a quiet road in He-



Photo courtesy of WHA

bron or a snowflake in her yard.

The works on display may be purchased through the WHA Gift Shop located adjacent to the main lobby at the medical center.

Due to safety precautions at the hospital during the pandemic, the art gallery is currently only available for viewing by staff, patients, and their designated visitors.

A percentage of sale proceeds benefits patients of CMMC.

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Maine Orders vaccine for 17,175 people

From Maine DHHS

AUGUSTA— The Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) announced last week that the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) has placed another order for doses of COVID-19 vaccine.

The order was placed with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Operation Warp Speed to provide vaccine for 17,175 people.

This order for the fifth week of vaccine distribution represents the latest 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 8,400 doses from

Moderna for the fifth week of distribution. The total is 100 more doses than last week's allocation. Additionally, vaccination sites have begun to receive and administer the second dose of the Pfizer vaccine for individuals vaccinated in the first weeks of distribution, starting on December 14.

Combined with the previous orders, Maine expects to have enough to vaccinate approximately 99,025 people in the first five weeks of distribution.

Since COVID-19 vaccination began in Maine on December 15, 46,633 doses of COVID-19 vaccine have been given to health care workers and long-term care residents, including 43,362 first doses and 3,271 second doses. This means 40,091 people in Maine have received the vaccine to date.

Maine has vaccinated the eighth highest percent of its population of all states to date, according to the U.S. CDC.

"We encourage all eligible health care workers to get a vaccine when you

have the opportunity to do so," said DHHS Commissioner Jeanne Lambrew. "Today's order, while less than we hoped for, allows even more health care personnel to get protected against this contagious disease."

"Maine Immunization Program staff, supported by others at the Maine CDC, are working tirelessly to make doses available as soon as they arrive in Maine," said Dr. Nirav D. Shah, Director of the Maine CDC. "Velocity and equity continue to guide the state's vaccination plan."

Maine's vaccine planning generally 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. The goal remains to provide vaccine by February to all health care personnel and long-term care residents in Phase 1a.

Physicians, nurses, and similar health care providers who practice outside of hospitals and provide acute care are now being vaccinated. In coordination with Maine CDC and DHHS, professional associations in Maine, including the Maine Medical Association (MMA) and Maine Osteopathic Association (MOA), have engaged independent member practices to assess the number and location of patient-facing clinicians and staff to vaccinate. In addition, a number of health systems, community hospitals, federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), and larger independent physician locations have begun to reach out to community physicians. With this needs assessment, the MMA and MOA can help connect patient-facing personnel with sites able to vaccinate them.

This process should provide access to COVID-19 vaccines for ambulatory physicians, nurses, and their patient-facing staff over the coming weeks, recognizing that this will depend on the supply of vaccine Maine receives from the federal government as well as the rate of immunizations at vaccination sites.

In the fifth week of distribution, shipments of 17,175 doses of vaccine will be sent to hospitals (7,700), outpatient groups (1,500), emergency medical services (400), the retail pharmacy long-term care program (4,875), organizations helping to vaccinate people in long-term care facilities not in the retail pharmacy program (2,500), and home health and hospice agencies (200).

The retail pharmacy program is operated 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.

The Department has adopted ACIP's defini-

tion of "health care personnel." 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. 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. Information on how health care personnel can find out about when and how they can be vaccinated is posted at www.maine.gov/covid19/vaccines.

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.

A seal's journey

From Auburn Library

AUBURN - Join Marine Mammals of Maine (MMoME) as they take you through a seal's journey, from stranding to release, and all of the obstacles in between.

The program will present seal basics such as:

whether it's normal for them to be out of the water and why someone might see a baby on its own. It will then dive into when and why seals may need our help.

Viewers will learn what MMoME is, what they do, the animals they care for, and how to help.

This program is for adults and families, and will be presented via Zoom from 7-8 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 19. Please call the Reference Department at 207-333-6640, ext. 4, to register. The Zoom link will be sent to you on the day of the program.

For more information

on this or other upcoming, virtual programs offered by Auburn Public Library, visit our website (auburnpubliclibrary.org), our Facebook page (Auburn Public Library Advocates), call the Reference Desk, or email dwallace@auburnpubliclibrary.org.






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Seniors
Continued from page 1

for aging family members, this is becoming more of a need, she said.

SeniorsPlus also helps adults in Maine with a program called Money Minders, a program that helps people manage their finances. The agency has volunteers that trained and insured to work one-on-one with adults who may need help with balancing their checkbook, may have Parkinson's Disease and have trouble writing, or might never have needed to handle finances until their spouse died.

The volunteers will help make sure bills are paid and checkbooks are balanced, Sawyer-Manter said. And they also review the bank accounts to ensure the adult is not being taken advantage of by another family member or someone outside the household.

This is a very popular program, Sawyer-Manter said, and more volunteers are needed.

And SeniorsPlus is also the go-to agency for older adults with questions about fuel assistance, help with rent, and other issues, she said. "We do a lot of just information and assistance. That's probably the biggest number of calls we get, is simply answering peoples' questions" and help them to find needed resources.

At this point in the



Mary Knight prepares food for breakfast meals for Meals on Wheels, one of the programs administrated by SeniorsPlus as the designated Area Agency on Aging for Western Maine. Meals on Wheels serves upwards of 1200 meals a day. (Tsukroff photo)

pandemic, the majority of phone calls to SeniorsPlus is about Meals on Wheels, people looking for caregiver support, questions about heating assistance, and questions about stimulus checks and the COVID-19 vaccine.

Loss of volunteers

Providing these services has been a challenge

under pandemic conditions with the loss of almost all their volunteers. SeniorsPlus had help from some 575 volunteers at the start of last year and now has only about 45. Many agencies had to pull out of volunteering, and many of the volunteers were concerned about their personal health, Sawyer-Manter said.

Now, instead of providing support services and classes in-person at it's Lewiston office, SeniorsPlus offers virtual classes and support groups.

"We offer a Zoom-101 class once a month," to teach people how to get online and participate.

Some of the volunteers were adults with in-

tellectual disabilities who helped deliver Meals on Wheels as part of they own care programs. "It was part of their living in the com-

See Seniors, next page



Doris Gorey assembles lunches for Meals on Wheels at the Robert D. Ouellette Kitchen operated by SeniorsPlus in Lewiston. (Tsukroff photo)

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Seniors

Continued from previous page community, giving back to the community,” Sawyer-Manter said. While these volunteers are often high-risk themselves and had to stop volunteering under the pandemic, “we hope to resume that, once things are safe.”

A hybrid future

Going forward, Sawyer-Manter sees her agen-

cy offering services in a hybrid of both in-person and online methods.

Even after pandemic restrictions are eased, “I think we’ve learned that it’s probably going to be the use of technology combined with in-person” services, she said. “A lot of our clients are just itching to get back to the Education Center and their support groups.”

“We want human contact. We’re social animals. What we’ve found is that a lot of people who can’t get out – if they’ve got broadband (internet connection) we can get to them!”

SeniorsPlus is open 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, and can be reached at 800-427-1241 or 207-795-4010, or by email at info@seniorsplus.org.



Lunch meals packaged individually and ready for packing into coolers for delivery by the Meals on Wheels program operated by SeniorsPlus (Tsukroff photo)



David Goyette of New Gloucester delivers meals to Barbara Gayton of Sabattus for her and her disabled husband, as part of the Meals on Wheels program administered by SeniorsPlus. (Tsukroff Photo)



Kari Dwinal, left, and Pat Saucier fill coolers with meals and milk for delivery by the Meals on Wheels program. (Tsukroff photo)

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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.

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Dr. Abigail Heroth, O.D.

Seniors Not Acting Their Age

Climbing Mount Charles Thomas Jackson

By Ron Chase

Distinctive Mount Jackson is located on the southwestern end of the Presidential Range in the New Hampshire White Mountains, New England's most consequential mountaineering environment.

Situated between less illustrious Mounts Pierce and Webster, I suspect most people assume Mount Jackson is named for the seventh president, Andrew Jackson. To quote one of the most intelligent people I've met, "Never assume anything." Unlike the more prestigious Mounts Washington, Adams, and Jefferson, Mount Jackson is not named for a president, but rather controversial 19th Century geologist, Charles Thomas Jackson.

Curious about who chose to name Mount Jackson for Charles Jackson and why, I've completed just enough research to be dangerous. While unsuccessful in finding answers to either of those questions, I did acquire information that many of his contemporaries considered him a fraud and a failure. Appointed United States Geologist for Lake Superior in 1847, he was dismissed due to poor leadership, disastrous according to one source. Scandals punctuated much of his life as a result of multiple false claims that he discovered guncotton, the telegraph, the anesthetic effects of ether, and others. In 1873, Charles apparently went mad and was institutionalized in an asylum for the remainder of his life. Some thought it was the result of viewing William Morton's tombstone. Morton is believed to be the actual discoverer of the narcotic benefits of ether.

Maybe it's time to reconsider the moniker for impressive Mount Jack-

son. I can think of several suitable presidential selections. On second thought, I don't want responsibility for yet another politically divisive controversy. Let's stick with Mount Charles Thomas Jackson; after all he did discover it.

Regardless of the designation, 4,052 foot Mount Jackson is an excellent mountain hike. A five mile out and back trek with about 2,300 feet of elevation gain, it is one of the easiest four thousand footers in the White Mountains to climb. Possessing an open summit with exceptional views, Jackson is included in my mountain guidebook, Mountains for Mortals – New England.

When my friend Suzanne Cole called to inform me that she and her husband, Gary, were attempting a December ascent of Mount Jackson the following day, I rearranged my plans to join my retired friends. Astonishingly, my schedule didn't include any of the seemingly endless dental or doctor appointments we older folks endure.

We met at a small parking area located on the west side of Route 302 in Crawford Notch. A cool, clear sunny morning, brisk winds were forecast for the summit so cold weather gear was packed. Due to heavy rain the previous day, wet icy conditions were anticipated.

After crossing Route 302, our climb began with a moderate gradient on the Webster-Jackson Trail in a mixed hardwood and conifer forest. A steady flow of water rippled down the rocky trail for the first half mile resulting in slick footing. The moisture turned to patchy ice and a thin layer of snow while passing under and to the right of a huge stone overhang before joining the junction

for a spur trail leading to Bugle Cliff Overlook.

Shortly after, imposing Flume Cascade was encountered. An attenuated stream that tumbles dramatically down a succession of sloping ledges, icy rocks on both sides made crossing treacherous. A cautious team effort resulted in a successful traverse.

At the halfway point, the trail diverged with Jackson Branch bearing left. Climbing steadily on a boulder-strewn path, increased snow and ice accumulation necessitated use of micro spikes. Completing an easy passage of Silver Cascade, a hungry Canada jay joined us. Gary quickly had the feathered moocher eating out of his hand. A character flaw, I hoard my food supply.

After entering stunted spruce growth, the trail turned abruptly left, narrowed, and steepened. A series of precipitous icy scrambles followed. Angling left and emerging above tree line, we scaled a huge, oblique boulder to the top.

Contrary to the forecast, winds were almost nonexistent on the exposed summit. Views were phenomenal with an expansive vista of the southern Presidential Range northeast and forested Willey Range looming on the west side of the notch with prominent snow-capped Franconia Ridge beyond.

Following an extended respite, we guardedly began our slippery descent. After choosing a more conservative route over Cascade Flume farther upstream, a visit to scenic Bugle Cliff Overlook ensued. Micro spikes, reportedly invented by Charles Thomas Jackson, were invaluable during the return.

Author of "The Great Mars Hill Bank Robbery" and "Mountains for Mor-



Hikers negotiate icy Cascade Flume on the Webster-Jackson Trail in New Hampshire. (Photo courtesy of Ron Chase)



A hiker completes an icy scramble up a precipitous section of trail on Mount Jackson. (Photo courtesy of Ron Chase)



A hungry Canada jay joins hikers during a climb of Mount Jackson. (Photo courtesy of Ron Chase)



Maine hikers Suzanne and Gary Cole enjoy the views on the summit of Mount Jackson. (Photo courtesy of Ron Chase)

rons – New England," Ron Chase resides in Topsham. His latest book, "The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine" is scheduled to be released by North Country Press in 2021. Visit his website at www.ronchaseoutdoors.com or he can be reached at ronchaseoutdoors@comcast.net.

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Guest Column

From ‘adorkable’ to ‘zhuzh’ - surprising words found in the dictionary

By Grammar Guy

The twenty-first century is an uncharted landscape of post-postmodernism. Truth can be whatever we want it to be at any given moment — or whatever. It’s up to you.

After consulting with a handful of the top dictionaries (including Merriam-Webster, the Oxford English Dictionary, the Macmillan Dictionary, dictionary.com and Oxford Dictionaries), I have found the following word entries in at least one of them. After all, dictionaries

don’t decide which words are words — they simply report on which words are being used out in the wild. Here’s the unbelievable list.

Adorkable.

This word made it into the OED’s latest addition of words in December 2020. It’s an adjective that means “unfashionable or socially awkward in a way regarded as appealing or endearing.” You could rightly call this column “adorkable.”

Adulging.

This means “to behave like an adult” or “to do adult things.” We have this word because, beginning in

the early 1990s, the parents of my fellow millennials gave us participation trophies in first-grade tee-ball leagues.

Ain’t.

Ain’t is a versatile word. Somehow it can be a contraction meaning “am not,” “are not,” “is not,” “have not” or “has not.” Although it is still considered nonstandard English, the word “ain’t” is like the Swiss Army knife of Southern slang.

Bro hug.

A “bro hug” is a hug between two dudes. I know it’s a specific type of hug

where guys join their right hands together and then move their bodies closer together and pat each other on the back with their left hands, but it seems dumb to me for everything to get a gendered label. We don’t call two women hugging a “chick hug,” do we?

Jerkface.

This word is an impolite way to refer to an annoying person. When I hear someone yell, “Hey jerkface!” in public, I assume they are trying to get my attention.

Selfie.

The “selfie” isn’t any-

thing new, but it’s in the dictionary. It is a noun that means “the photo someone takes of themselves.” Be on the lookout for “vaxxie” in a dictionary near you in the coming months. A vaxxie is, of course, a selfie taken while getting a Covid-19 vaccine.

Zhuzh.

To “zhuzh” something is to make something more stylish or appealing. I first heard the word from the Netflix version of “Queer Eye” when Jonathan Van Ness is making someone’s hair look more attractive. You can also use the word

as a noun, as in “I’m going to give your hair a quick zhuzh.”

Like it or not, these words (and more) are in our dictionaries. It’s up to you whether or not you use them. If you’re not happy about it, please don’t unfriend me (“unfriend” is totes in the dictionary, by the way).

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.

Funding protected for nearly 200 rural school districts

From U.S. Sen. Collins

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) and Maggie Hassan (D-NH) announced that they successfully reversed a Department of Education decision that jeopardized funding for nearly 200 rural, low-income school districts.

A provision they negotiated that was included in the year-end government funding bill that was signed into law prevents a funding cliff for the Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP), the only dedicated federal funding stream to support rural schools.

“The Department of Education’s abrupt change in eligibility for REAP funding would have forced many rural schools in Maine and throughout the country to forgo essential activities and services,” said Senator Collins. “REAP helps deliver an equitable and enriching

education to thousands of students living in rural America. This bipartisan provision I pushed for will ensure that students in rural communities continue to have access to these critical programs.”

“Rural schools in New Hampshire rely on this critical funding coming every year so that they can serve their students, and the bipartisan provision that Senator Collins and I worked on will help ensure that these resources aren’t pulled out from under them,” said Senator Hassan. “This funding is particularly important now amid the COVID-19 pan-

demic that has presented unprecedented challenges to remote and in-person learning.”

REAP was created in 2002 by Senator Collins and former Senator Kent Conrad to help rural schools overcome the increased expenses caused by geographic isolation. It consists of two programs – the Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) program and the Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) program.

Many states have qualified for RLIS because the Department of Education has allowed school districts to measure pov-

erty by the percentage of students receiving free lunch. Earlier this year, however, the Department abruptly announced that it would no longer accept the poverty measurements it had received from participating states in years past, threatening the eligibility and funding for schools without any notification to Congress. This change would have excluded nearly 200 school districts from the RLIS program, creating a funding cliff for rural schools already balancing tight budgets.

In Maine alone, more than 100 of the 149 schools were eligible for RLIS pro-

gram funding last year. Without this provision, they could have lost a total of \$1.2 million in RLIS funding due to the Department of Education’s decision. In New Hampshire, 43 school districts received funding this year. Without this provision, more than 30 districts would have lost funding – a nearly \$600,000 funding loss statewide.

Senator Collins first raised this problem with Secretary DeVos in February. Additionally, Senator Collins and members of the Maine Delegation sent a follow-up letter to Secretary DeVos urging her to

restore this vital funding. In March, Senators Collins and Hassan led a letter to Secretary DeVos that was signed by 19 of their colleagues, expressing their strong opposition to this abrupt decision. Following that effort, the Department announced it would delay the change and prevent these cuts from taking effect this year. Earlier this month, Senators Collins and Hassan led a bipartisan letter urging the Appropriations Committee to support their request to protect state and school district participation in REAP in the government funding bill.

Political

Continued from page 3

country, and force all sides to remember the importance of listening, respecting others, and making common-sense compromises that can help to benefit all citizens. The party’s platform is centered on six items: Local Focus, Natural Rights, 21st Century Democracy, People-Centered Economics, Environmental Preservation, and Innovation & Ingenuity.

The Yankee Party is actively seeking and recruiting organizers and impassioned citizens to join it across Maine and all north-eastern states.

Those interested in learning more information can visit <https://www.theyankee-party.org/>.



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Donation to Greater Androscoggin Humane Society



Brian DuBois and Marnie DuBois of DuBois Realty Group present a donation in the amount of \$2,300 to Greater Androscoggin Humane Society Executive Director Katie Lisnik and GAHS Development Directory Donna Kincer. The realty group made the donation as it wrapped up its 2020 Give Where You Live charitable giving campaign. (Photo courtesy of DuBois Realty Group)

community members and their animal companions.

“This has been a challenging year, filled with uncertainty, for non-profits including the GAHS,” said Katie Lisnik, the group’s executive director. “Having the support of amazing local businesses like the DuBois Realty Group’s ‘Give Where You Live Campaign’ means so much to us- helping us to help animals in need in so many ways- through adoption for homeless pets and medical care, food support, and behavioral guidance to keep pets in homes where they are loved.”

Brian DuBois of the DuBois Realty Group said, “It’s simple for us, really. We were raised to tithe and give back to our community. When

people choose to do business with the DuBois Realty Group, they are also choosing to support local charities who contribute so much to improving the quality of life in our region. After closing every transaction, we donate \$100 in our clients’ name to a local charity of their choice.”

“Like most charities, Greater Androscoggin Humane Society rises to meet the needs of the community when they are needed most. With the unprecedented challenges of today, these funds are needed now more than ever,” he said. “We give because we feel it’s the right thing to do...and because our mothers said so!”

Building community is a core value at DuBois Realty Group. Since 2016,

the DuBois Realty Group has donated over \$85,000 to local non-profit organizations in the greater Lewiston/Auburn area.

The Greater Androscoggin Humane Society provides a safe haven and other forms of support for over 4,000 sick, homeless, needy and abused animals in the greater Androscoggin area each year. The primary support for the shelter comes from fundraising events and donations of generous supporters.

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


From DuBois Realty

AUBURN - The DuBois Realty Group of Keller Williams Realty

recently presented Greater Androscoggin Humane Society with a donation for \$2,300 as it wrapped up its “Give Where You

Live” campaign for 2020. Greater Androscoggin Humane Society is a safe space for animals in need and a resource for

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Budget
Continued from page 4

the state who help prevent incarceration (biennial);

And \$6.8 million is requested for continued child welfare improvements focused on preventing abuse and neglect and modernizing the core information technology system (supplemental; biennial).

DHHS additionally limits the impact of potential future shortfalls and ensures access to health care for Maine people by:

Dedicating \$25.5 million to the Medicaid Stabilization Fund to plan responsibly for potential MaineCare expenses, such as higher enrollment and costs due to persistent unemployment, federal restrictions on a nearly two decades-old funding source, and implementation of recommendations from the MaineCare rate system evaluation.

At a time when affordable and comprehensive health coverage has never been more important, Maine has reached a milestone in MaineCare enrollment. As of today, 70,689 Maine people now have coverage through the MaineCare expansion initiated by Governor Mills on her first day in office, surpassing initial enrollment estimates and representing an increase of more than 60% since February 2020.

While economic realities mean additional savings and reductions were necessary, DHHS’s proposal maximizes available funding sources including federal Medicaid match and prescription drug rebates, zeroes in on efficiencies that preserve services and programs, ensures compliance with federal requirements, and standardizes MaineCare rates for some similar services.

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CONTACT US TODAY FOR POSSIBLE OPENINGS FOR YOUR AD IN OUR BUSINESS DIRECTORY!

Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

MONDAY

Jan. 18

GORHAM - Town offices and Baxter Memorial Library will be closed in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

TUESDAY

Jan. 19

8 a.m.
GORHAM - Ordinance Committee meeting via Zoom.

10:30-11:15 a.m.

LEWISTON - Lewiston Public Library. Virtual Preschool Babytime & Storytime. Children 0-5 are welcome to join the fun on Zoom as Ms. Jackie uses interactive songs and stories to introduce children to the world of books, learning, and the library. Call 207-513-3133 for details and registration.

7 p.m.

LEWISTON - City Council meeting, via Zoom from City Council chambers.

WEDNESDAY

Jan. 20

8 a.m.
GORHAM - Gorham Economic Development Corporation meeting via Zoom.

THURSDAY

Jan. 21

1 p.m.
LEWISTON - Lewiston Public Library. Great Falls Forum, a free, monthly series featuring statewide and regional leaders in public policy, business, academia and the arts. For more information & to register, contact the Lewiston Public Library at 513-3135 or LPLReference@lewis-tonmaine.gov.

4-5 p.m.

AUBURN - Auburn Public Library. Environ-

mental Research in the Norwegian Arctic, presented by Professor Mike Retelle, online. For more information on this or other upcoming, virtual programs at the Auburn Public Library, visit auburnpubliclibrary.org, call the Reference Desk at 207-333-6640, or email dwallace@auburnpubliclibrary.org.

5:30-6 p.m.

LEWISTON - Lewiston Public Library. Virtual Read Aloud. Join Krista on Facebook Live as she reads from the exciting middle grade fantasy adventure: Maya and the Rising Dark. No registration required.

6:30 p.m.

GORHAM - Board of Appeals meeting. Zoom webinar: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83618869640>

Monday

Jan. 25

5:30 p.m.
LEWISTON - Planning Board meeting via Zoom.

5:30 p.m.

GORHAM - Finance Committee meeting. Zoom webinar: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89288915185>

TUESDAY

Jan. 26

10:30-11:15 a.m.
LEWISTON - Lewiston Public Library. Virtual Preschool Babytime & Storytime. Children 0-5 are welcome to join the fun on Zoom as Ms. Jackie uses interactive songs and stories to introduce children to the world of books, learning, and the library. Call 207-513-3133 for de-

tails and registration.

5:30 p.m.

AUBURN - Agriculture Committee meeting at Auburn Senior Community Center in Pettengill Park.

WEDNESDAY

Jan. 27

Noon

LEWISTON - Lewiston Public Library. Read Your Mind: Exploring Mental Health in Teen Books - a monthly, virtual series focusing on teen mental health & wellness with YA authors and community health experts. Contact hchance@lewis-tonmaine.gov or call 207-513-3135 to register.

7 p.m.

GORHAM - Comprehensive Plan Amendment Committee meeting via Zoom.

THURSDAY

Jan. 28

4-5 p.m.

AUBURN - Auburn Public Library. Film discussion: Melting Ice - The Future of the Arctic, online. For more information on this or other upcoming, virtual programs at the Auburn Public Library, visit auburnpubliclibrary.org, call the Reference Desk at 207-333-6640, or email dwallace@auburnpubliclibrary.org.

5:30-6 p.m.

LEWISTON - Lewiston Public Library. Virtual Read Aloud. Join Krista on Facebook Live as she reads from the exciting middle grade fantasy adventure: Maya and the Rising Dark. No registration required.

MONDAY

Feb. 1

7 p.m.

GORHAM - Planning Board meeting via Zoom.

TUESDAY

Feb. 2

10:30-11:15 a.m.

LEWISTON - Lewiston Public Library. Virtual Preschool Babytime & Storytime. Children 0-5 are welcome to join the fun on Zoom as Ms. Jackie uses interactive songs and stories to introduce children to the world of books, learning, and the library. Call 207-513-3133 for details and registration.

6:30 p.m.

GORHAM - Regular Town Council meeting via Zoom

THURSDAY

Feb. 4

4-5 p.m.

AUBURN - The Auburn Public Library will host a book discussion - "The Hidden Life of Ice: Dispatches from a Disappearing World" by Marco Tedesco with Alberto Flores d'Arcais; translated by Denise Muir; foreword by Elizabeth Kolbert. For more information on this or other upcoming, virtual programs at the Auburn Public Library, visit auburnpubliclibrary.org, call the Reference Desk at 207-333-6640, or email dwallace@auburnpubliclibrary.org.

5:30-6 p.m.

LEWISTON - Lewiston Public Library. Virtual Read Aloud. Join Krista on Facebook Live as she reads from the exciting middle grade fantasy adventure: Maya and the Rising Dark. No registration required.

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\$500 donation to senior center

From LRSC

GORHAM - Lakes Region Senior Center recently received a donation to help its members.

The center has been unable to meet since last March, due to COVID-19, and has tried to keep members involved with outreach like drive-thru barbecues, telephone calls and

a monthly newsletter.

At the end of last year, the center was awarded \$500 through the Season of Giving Gift Program from Mechanics Savings Bank's Windham Branch.

The center will use this gift to further keep members involved as they wait patiently to renew friendships and activities.

Letter to the editor

"There is light at the end of the tunnel"

My Perception:

2021 brings us "Hope" because it is a new year, and we can only hope that the worst is behind us.

How did our grandparents and parents survive Smallpox, Scarlet fever and the Deep Depression?

Well, my parents did, and they lived into their nineties.

I remember the stories! They would talk about tough times, struggling to survive.

They had much less then, but a strong will to survive.

This past year we were hit hard and unexpectedly with a terrible pandemic.

Lots of loss and sad-

ness surrounded us. But one thing remains the same . . . we have a strong will to survive!

Generation after generation, we have never given up, no matter what has been thrown in front of us.

That saying "What doesn't kill us makes us stronger". Wow! That should be the statement of the year for 2020!

So, here we are 2021 . . . Yes we have one another. And better days are coming - I promise!

Stay strong, keep the faith, and always know that "There is light at the end of the tunnel."

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"To College or Not to College" is the question and this book has the answers. Check it out: www.authorcaseybell.com.

Book lovers and bookstores: looking for unique and eclectic books? Check out author Casey Bell: www.authorcaseybell.com.

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LEWISTON SENIOR CITIZENS TRAVEL WASHINGTON, D.C. - TRIPS POSTPONED TIL FURTHER NOTICE: MACKINAC ISLAND - Trip includes 8 nights lodging and 14 meals, visit to Mackinac Island with a guided Carriage Tour during their Tulip Celebration. Also includes boat ride through Soo Locks, Sault Saint Marie and Makinaw Crossings with a visit to "Michigan's

Little Bavaria". A \$75.00 deposit is due when signing up. Price is \$859.00 pp double occupancy. VIRGINIA BEACH, COLONIAL WILLIAMS-BURG & HISTORIC NORFOLK - SEPTEMBER 14 - 19, 2020. Trip includes 5 nights lodging, 8 meals, Colonial Williamsburg, free time on the Virginia Beach Boardwalk, dinner cruise with entertainment on the Spirit of Norfolk, admission to Nauticus and Battleship Wisconsin, Virginia Beach Aquarium and Marine Science Center. A \$75.00 deposit is due when signing up. Price is \$775.00 pp double occupancy. For questions and detailed information on these trips, please call: Claire - 207-784-0302 or Cindy- 207-345-9569.

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