

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 differ-



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

ent 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 thing with our education center,” for people with 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 requirements 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, par-

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.

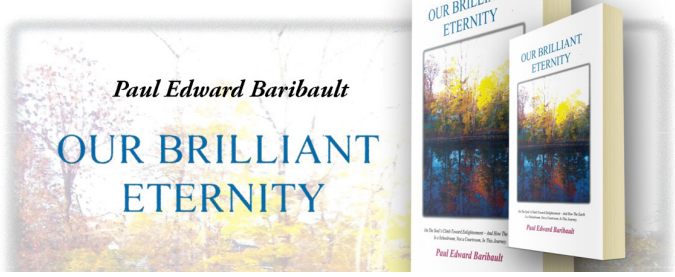
Named to the Dean’s List from Auburn were Willie Blanchette, Taylor Depot, Madison DeRosa, Chloe Dwinell, Corryn Lachance, Olivia Paione, and Kelsey Teegan.

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

Standing firm after an attack on our democratic process



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

By Sen. Nate Libby

Dear Friends,

There are days in our country that will live in infamy. Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2021, will surely be one of them.

A violent mob forced itself into the Capitol building, halting what should have been a routine part of our democratic process. Some members of Congress were forced to flee; others and their staff sheltered in place, barricading doors.

Dozens of police officers were injured. Five people have died.

Like many of you, I am feeling angry and unsettled about what all of this means about our country and our future. I love our country, and

I truly consider myself a patriot. Storming the Capitol, breaking through windows and security barriers, terrorizing everyone from elected officials to janitorial staff, is not, in any reality, an act of patriotism.

President-elect Joe Biden called it “an assault on the citadel of liberty.” Sen. Mitch McConnell called it a “failed insurrection.” This is not who we have told ourselves we are. This is not the country and government we have promised our children.

We must do better, and all people responsible for yesterday’s violence and chaos must be held fully responsible.

One of the defining characteristics of modern

American politics is that we settle our disagreements in a peaceful way. This chaos on the part of a mob in our nation’s capital does not represent how our system of government operates. And the president of the United States, who has been stoking these flames, bears enormous responsibility. He has basically abdicated his role as a president, who has lost an election and who has a responsibility to help bring our country together and to oversee a peaceful transition of power.

I’m sure in the coming days and weeks, there will be more information and discussion about what failures allowed an angry mob to take over what is normally an incredibly secure building. We’ll also have discussions about how America and its people will move forward. There are deep divisions in this country, and it will be up to all of us to help heal them. For now, I want you to know that I’m here for you. You placed your trust in me to represent you in state government, and I will do everything I can to prove worthy of that trust. You can reach me at nathan.libby@legislature.maine.gov or 207-287-1515 any time, whether you have questions or concerns, or if you just want to talk.

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

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Laurie A. Steele
Publisher/CEO
Laurie@TwinCityTimes.com

Lillian Baker
Office Manager
Lillian@TwinCityTimes.com

Nathan Tsukroff
Managing Editor
Editor@TwinCityTimes.com

Lacey Rollins
Outside Rep
Info@TwinCityTimes.com

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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

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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

Auburn Winter Festival 2021

Changing with the Times

From City of Auburn

AUBURN – The City of Auburn’s annual “celebration of all things winter” will look a little different this year.

The Auburn Recreation Department has announced that the city’s annual Winter Festival will take place Jan. 29-31 with a few changes.

Due to current State of Maine guidelines and CDC recommendations, the event has been reimagined, according to Recreation Director Sabrina Best.

“We’ve had to change things up a lit-

tle,” Best said. “We won’t be hosting ‘large group events’ throughout the city this year. Instead, we want to encourage folks to get outside and enjoy Auburn all winter long!”

“The goal of WinterFest is always to kickoff winter-long activities in Auburn,” she said.

City staff plan to produce a listing and map with information on locations and organizations throughout Auburn that offer winter activities. “We want to spotlight snowshoe and cross-country skiing trails, local snowmobile clubs, ice fishing, sledding hills, and more,”

Best said. “There are also lots of local non-profits, community groups and businesses who always enjoy offering fun winter activities.”

The City of Auburn invites local businesses, non-profits, and other community organizations to submit their events, whether in-person or virtual, activities and locations for inclusion in the Winter Festival promotions by visiting: <https://arcg.is/PfSOK>

Questions should be directed to the Auburn Recreation Department at auburnrec@auburnmaine.gov or 333-6611.

Humane Society Raffle Winners



Volunteer Coordinator, Sandy Gaul, and pup Licorice choose the winners from the annual “Cold Paws, Warm Hearts” raffle to raise funds for the Greater Androscoggin Humane Society. (Photo courtesy of GAHS)

From GAHS

LEWISTON – The Greater Androscoggin Humane Society recently announced the winners of their annual “Cold Paws, Warm Heart” Raffle.

With over \$14,000 in tickets sales the winners were: Marianne Wise of Lewiston winning \$500 of home heating assistance and a handmade quilt, Licia Sherwood of Auburn with \$300 of home heating assis-

tance, Tim Harris of Lewiston with \$200 of home heating assistance and Phyllis Benoit of Lewiston with \$100 of home heating assistance. All proceeds from the raffle directly benefit the Humane Society.

The Greater Androscoggin Humane Society provides a safe haven for over 3,500 sick, homeless and abused animals in the greater Androscoggin area per year. The primary support for the shelter comes from fundraising events and donations of concerned citizens.

The Greater Androscoggin Humane Society is located at 55 Strawberry Avenue in Lewiston.

Anyone who is interested in learning more about volunteering at the Shelter or adopting an animal should call 783-2311 or visit the website at www.SavingPetsInMaine.org.

You can also find the Greater Androscoggin humane Society at www.facebook.com/GAHumane.

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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 definition 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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Continued from page 1

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

This is a very popular

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

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.



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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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 Senior-Plus. (Tsukroff Photo)



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

Optometric Associates Home of Healthier Eyes

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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Lewiston Public Library Schedule of Events

From Lewiston Library

Every Tuesday 10:30-11:15 a.m. — 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.

Thursdays in January 5:30-6 p.m. — 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-Friday 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m., through the months of January and February – Lewiston Public Library
Preschool Take and Make kits—new every month
Simple craft kits for developing fine motor skills, ABC’s 123’s, shapes, colors, and more!

Call 207-513-3133 for details about how to get your kit. No library card required—these kits are free to all!

1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 11:30 a.m. - Lewiston Public Library
Virtual Book Chat
Join LPL staff via Facebook Live for a weekly conversation about what we’re reading. Make suggestions, share your thoughts, find resources, and get personalized recommendations from our librarians!

Thursday, Jan. 21,

1 p.m. - Lewiston Public Library
Great Falls Forum, a free, monthly series featuring statewide and regional leaders in public policy, business, academia and the arts. This month’s forum features Dr. Nirav Shah, Director of the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, interviewed by local public health professional Katie Boss of Healthy Androscoggin, on the topic “New Year’s Resolutions for Maine’s Health: COVID-19, Vaccines, Mental Health and Looking Ahead.” This

event takes virtually via Zoom and streamed to the Lewiston Public Library Facebook page. For more information & to register, contact the Lewiston Public Library at 513-3135 or LPLReference@lewistonmaine.gov.

**** Please note that** due to the quickly changing nature of the pandemic, the date and time of this program are subject to change at any time. Check back here for the most current information.

Wednesday, Jan. 27, noon - 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.

January’s featured book is You Are Enough: Your Guide to Body Image and Eating Disorder Recovery by Jen Petro-Roy. Jen will be interviewed by fellow YA author Kim Savage. Our community guest will be nutritionist Amy Taylor-Grimm. Contact hchance@lewistonmaine.gov or call 207-513-3135 to register.

Library programs before 2021 Camden Conference

From Auburn Library

AUBURN - The Auburn Public Library will host a series of virtual events leading up to the 2021 Camden Conference at the end of February.

The Camden Conference was founded in 1987 as a nonprofit, non-partisan educational organization with a mission is to foster informed discourse on world issues. Each year, they offer a conference, with hosting libraries offering community events related to their theme.

The 2021 conference, “The Geopolitics of the Arctic: a Region in Peril,” will be entirely virtual, live-streamed from the Camden Opera House, and will take place February 20 & 21, 2021.

The Auburn Public Library is pleased to participate as one of the hosting libraries. Leading up to this year’s Conference, the Library will host three events. To register for any of these programs, contact the Reference Desk at 207-333-6640, ext. 4, or email dwallace@auburnpubliclibrary.org. All programs will take place via Zoom, and on the day of the program, those who register will be emailed the link for the corresponding program.

Environmental Research in the Norwegian Arctic, presented by Professor Mike Retelle
Thursday, Jan. 21, 4-5 p.m.

Over the last 30 years, the arctic region as a whole has warmed about double the rate of the rest of the planet, and some sectors of the northern polar regions have warmed at even greater rates. Climate models predict this trend to continue into the 21st Century. This phenomenon of an abruptly changing climate, referred to arctic amplification, is the result of interactions or feedback within the atmospheric, marine and terrestrial environments.

Recent anomalous warming in the arctic has caused significant impacts on the cryosphere, or the frozen elements of the earth surface: glaciers, sea ice and permafrost.

This presentation will highlight environmental research in a glacier watershed over the last 15 years at 78o (degrees) North in the Svalbard archipelago, Norwegian high arctic. Warming air surface and ocean temperatures has limited annual sea ice extent, changed seasonal patterns of precipitation, caused deeper melting in permafrost and sustained recession of glaciers and ice caps in the region. While these changes to the cryosphere at face value

seem to be local and regional impacts, they have far-reaching effects in the global system that are experienced in Maine. Loss of sea ice changes the radiation budget of the planet. Permafrost melt releases greenhouse gases to the atmosphere and glacier and ice cap melt is causing a rise in global sea level. It has been recently been stated “What happens in the arctic doesn’t stay in the arctic.”

Mike Retelle is a Professor of Earth and Climate Sciences at Bates College. At Bates, he teaches geoscience courses in earth surface processes and climate change. Mike began working in the arctic 40 years ago as a PhD candi-

date at the UMass Amherst. His dissertation research focused on the glacial and sea level history of Northern Ellesmere Island, in the Canadian High Arctic. Since then, he and his students have taken part in field campaigns almost yearly in the Canadian and Norwegian arctic and high latitude North Atlantic region, investigating glacial and sea level histories and other aspects of high latitude environmental change. He is currently leading a long-term monitoring project focusing on changes in a glacial watershed in Svalbard, an arctic archipelago that has been greatly impacted by the recent warming trend.

Film Discussion:

Melting Ice -- The Future of the Arctic
Thursday, Jan. 28, 4-5 p.m.
The Auburn Public Library will host a discussion on the film “Melting Ice” on Jan. 28.

In a description of the film, the film producers said, “Climate change in the Arctic is fueling not only fear, but also hope. Sea levels will rise and flood many regions. But the melting ice will also expose new land with reserves of oil, gas and minerals. New sea routes are also emerging.

The melting of the ice in the far north has given reason for great optimism, as newly-found mineral resources promise the Inuit a better life. But international

corporations and self-proclaimed ‘partners’ such as China also have their eye on the treasures of the Arctic. Some even dream of a polar Silk Road. As large corporations position themselves to exploit the treasures of the far north, the indigenous people, the Inuit, are fighting for their independence.”

Those who sign up to participate will be sent a link to view the film prior to the discussion on Jan. 28.

For more information on these or other upcoming, virtual programs at the Auburn Public Library, visit our website (auburnpubliclibrary.org), call the Reference Desk (as above), or email dwallace@auburnpubliclibrary.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)

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

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 DuBoise 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.

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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**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-

Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

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.”

Cynthia Chadwick-Granger
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