



Larry Fournier watches his shot reach the goal, along with Myles Kristoffersen, last week on the public skating area behind the Gorham Public Safety building on Main Street. Despite the relatively warm weather in January, the ice was thick enough for skating. Fournier and Kristoffersen are live-in students with the Gorham Fire Department. (Tsukroff photo)

See more skating photos page 9

Vaccination Clinic at former Scarborough Downs

From MaineHealth

SCARBOROUGH – The owners of the former Scarborough Downs harness racing track have donated use of the facility’s grandstand to MaineHealth, the region’s largest integrated health care system, so that it can open a high-volume COVID-19 vaccination clinic.

Crossroad Holdings, the Scarborough-based company that is redeveloping 500-plus acres at Scarborough Downs, has diverted its construction crews to retrofit the grandstand within a two-week period. Staffed with more than 100 MaineHealth employees and volunteers, the 30,000-square-foot clinic is expected to have the capacity to vaccinate at least 1,000 people per day.

“Finding a space that is centrally located and able to accommodate all the needs of a high-volume clinic is vital to our efforts to get as many people vaccinated as quickly as possible,” said Bill Caron, CEO of MaineHealth. “This generous donation from Crossroad Holdings is big step forward in getting this pandemic under control and saving lives here in Maine.”

A 40-member construction team managed by Scarborough’s Maine Properties and Risbara Brothers Construction will work 7-days a week in order to complete the clinic by the end of January. It is expected to be operational for six months. The construction teams will build clinical workspaces, improve access to high-speed broadband and build out refrigeration rooms needed to house the vaccines. The State of Maine will assist with on-site security.

Maine Gov. Janet Mills has authorized the administration of COVID-19 vaccines to people 70 and older, and MaineHealth has worked closely with the state to roll out vaccinations and clinics as quickly as possible.

“With Maine’s limited and inconsistent supply of vaccine, we are distributing what we have to protect the largest number of people as soon as we can, starting with those who are 70 and older because

See Clinic, page 9

Fickett named Chief of Gorham Fire



Ken Fickett was recently named to a permanent position as Chief of the Gorham Fire Department. A 47-year veteran of the department, he had served as acting chief since the retirement of previous chief, Robert Lefebvre, in August. (Photo courtesy of Town of Gorham)

From Town of Gorham

GORHAM – Ken Fickett, a 47-year veteran of the Gorham Fire Department, was recently appointed as Chief of the department by Gorham Town Manager

Ephrem Paraschak.

Fickett served as the acting chief following the August retirement of Robert Lefebvre, who stepped down after 41 years with the department, Fickett will serve as the second full time Fire Chief for the Town of Gorham since 1987.

Chief Fickett’s career in the Fire Service started with the Call Company for Gorham Fire in 1974. He became a full time firefighter/EMT with the department in 1999. He served as Call Company Deputy Chief from 1989 through 2001, and as full time Deputy Chief since 2001.

Raised in Gorham, Chief Fickett completed his post-secondary education at SMCC, SMVTI, the National Fire Academy and additional fire science coursework at numerous schools across Maine and New Hampshire.

He attributes his passion for the Fire Service field to his two older siblings who entered the fire service field early in life, and to the late Westbrook Fire Chief Byron Rogers and retired Gorham Fire Chief Robert Lefebvre.

Among his initial goals, Chief Fickett said he aims to maintain and en-

courage Call Company participation and service through continual professional development and training. He said there is a critical role that the Call service and full time staff play by working together to provide public safety for the Town of approximately 17,978 (2019 U.S. Census population estimates).

Between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020, Gorham Fire and Rescue responded to 2,771 calls through the collaboration of 10 full time personnel and 100 Call Company members.

Fickett said he will work to ensure a smooth transition in new role, to support the first responders wherever possible as the community pushes through the pandemic.

“Chief Fickett brings a wealth of knowledge and dedication to the position,” Town Manager Paraschak said. “He has led the Gorham Fire Department through some of the worst months of the recent pandemic, and I have the utmost faith that he will continue to lead the department through any future challenges.”

Fickett lives in Gorham with his wife and three dogs - two goldendoodles and a poodle.

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Change in the ending age for special education eligibility

From Maine DOE

AUGUSTA - The Maine Department of Education announced last week that it is changing the ending age for special education eligibility.

Effective immediately, Maine will implement the “federal standard” and provide Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to eligible students until their 22nd birthday.

All school administrative units must notify adult students who would have previously “aged out” of special education on June 30, 2021 of their right to receive a free, public education

until either they receive a regular high school diploma or their 22nd birthday, whichever comes first.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires states to provide “[a] free, appropriate public education . . . to all children with disabilities residing in the State between the ages of 3 and 21 inclusive[.]” 20 U.S.C. § 1415(a)(1)(A). IDEA permits an exception to this general age range: “[t]he obligation to make a free, appropriate public education available to all children with a disability does not apply with respect to children . . . [aged] 18 through 21 in

a State to the extent that its application to those children would be inconsistent with State law or practice, or the order of any court, respecting the provision of public education to [such] children[.]” 20 U.S.C. § 1415(a)(1)(B)(i).

Maine’s generally applicable age-eligibility statute states that students are eligible for a pK-12 public education until the end of the school year in which they turn 20 years old. 20-A M.R.S. § 5201(1). As a result, Maine has historically terminated a student with a disability’s eligibility for a free, appropriate public

education (FAPE) at the end of the school year in which they turn 20.

In 2018, the Court of Appeals for the First Circuit held that students are entitled to FAPE until age 22 (the so-called “federal standard”) where the state provides public education in the form of adult education to students who are under age 22 but older than the state “age out” for pK-12 education. *K.L. v. Rhode Island Board of Education*, 907 F.3d 639 (2018). The First Circuit concluded that for purposes of the IDEA, “public education” contains three basic attributes: (1) “a significant level of state or

local government funding, [] (2) the public administration or oversight of the educational services” and (3) the education of students “up to the level of academic proficiency associated with the completion of secondary school.” *Id.* at 642, 644.

Maine’s adult education system meets the First Circuit’s definition of “public education” as it receives significant state and local government funding, is administered by the Department of Education and local public entities (primarily school administrative units either alone or in collaboration), and provides coursework

that allows students to complete and receive their high school diplomas. As such, there is little question that the same result would be reached by the First Circuit if Maine’s statutes were challenged.

After consulting with counsel, the Department has concluded that terminating eligibility to a free, appropriate public education at the end of the school year in which a student turns 20 pursuant to 20-A M.R.S. § 5201(1) years is inconsistent with the IDEA as interpreted by the First Circuit in *K.L. v. Rhode Island Board of Education*, 907 F.3d 639 (2018).

COVID-19 vaccine for Mainers over 70

From MaineHealth

PORTLAND - MaineHealth, the region’s largest integrated health system, began offering limited supplies of COVID-19 vaccines to people 70 and older last week.

Franklin Community Health Network in Farmington and Mid Coast-Parkview Health in Brunswick planned to begin a regular schedule of vaccinations for Maine residents 70 and older immediately. Other local organizations with-

in MaineHealth will start vaccinations of people in that age group over the course of the next week or so.

MaineHealth officials stressed that, for now, there will be limited supplies of the vaccine and that it expects demand to far exceed the amount of vaccine being allotted through the state. The health system also stressed that demand for scheduling so far has been overwhelming, and they ask everyone to be patient as they seek vaccinations.

On Monday of last

week, the first day MaineHealth’s vaccination call center was fully operational, more than 18,000 individuals called seeking a vaccination, many of them placing multiple calls. As a result, MaineHealth is looking at alternatives to manage the high volume of requests. In the meantime, MaineHealth is asking people not to reach out to local MaineHealth practices to try to schedule a vaccination, and check www.mainehealth.org/vaccine for the most up to date information.

Last week, after suggesting there were vaccines being held in reserve for second doses that could be released early, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services said in fact it had no such reserves on hand and distribution would remain largely flat for coming weeks. As a result, MaineHealth’s

weekly allotment of vaccines hasn’t increased significantly over previous weeks. The health system is still working through vaccinations in the so-called Phase 1A group, which includes health care workers both within MaineHealth and the communities it serves. Nursing home residents and staff are also part of Phase 1A and are being vaccinated through commercial pharmacy chains.

Now, with Phase 1A nearing completion, there are vaccines available for the Phase 1B group, which has been defined by Maine officials to include people over the age of 70 while New Hampshire has authorized vaccinations for people 65 and older. However, it is expected that the federal government won’t be able to distribute enough vaccines initially to keep up with demand in those groups.

In addition to vaccinations starting in Farmington and Brunswick, Southern Maine Health Care in Biddeford and Sanford, and Western Maine Health/Stephens Memorial Hospital in Norway expected to begin vaccinating people 70 and older by the end of last week.

LincolnHealth in Damariscotta and Boothbay Harbor and Maine Medical Center/Maine Medical Partners in greater Portland expected to start vaccinating people 70 and older beginning this week.

Pen Bay Medical Center and Waldo County General Hospital in Rockland and Belfast are in the planning stages, with vaccinations of those 70 and older expected to start in Belfast this week while the expectation at Pen Bay is that vaccinations for those 70 and older will start in the coming weeks.

Memorial Hospital in North Conway, N.H., expected to start administering vaccines to New Hampshire residents 65 and older this week. (Memorial patients who reside in Maine must be aged 70 or older to be vaccinated and will be referred to a clinic operating in Maine.)

Both the Pfizer and Moderna versions of the vaccine require cold storage and special handling. Also, vaccine recipients must be observed for a period of time afterwards to monitor against adverse reactions. Because of these requirements, vaccinations will not be done through MaineHealth medical practices, but instead at clinics set up specifically to administer the vaccine.

Vaccinations are by appointment only, and people are urged not to arrive at a vaccination site without one.

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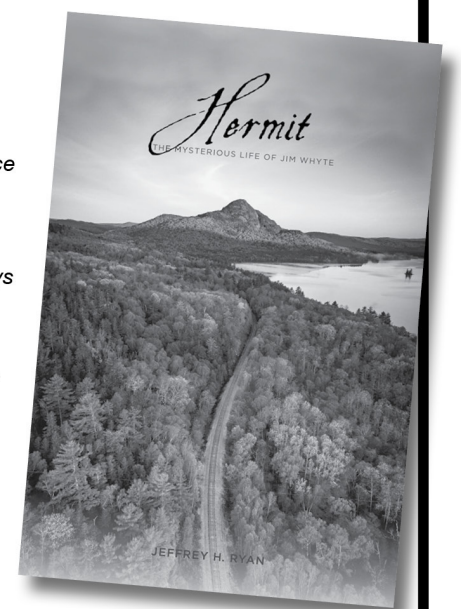
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— Bill Bushnell, *Bushnell on Books*

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— George Smith, *Bangor Daily News*

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Albright earns PhD

From UA

TUSCALOOSA, AL - Amy Albright of Gorham was among some 2,250 students who graduated from the University of Alabama during its fall commencement on Dec. 12.

Albright received a degree as a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD).

The University of Alabama is that state's oldest and largest public institution of higher education, and is a student-centered research university. UA offers its stu-

dents a premier educational, cultural and social experience with more than 200 undergraduate, graduate and professional programs. The campus gives students the opportunity to interact with faculty performing cutting-edge research.

Haddock supper Jan. 30

From Living Waters Church

BUXTON - Living Waters Church, Parker Farm Road, Buxton, is hosting a Haddock Supper

Buffet starting at 5 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 30, 2021.

Suggested donations are \$8 per Adult, \$4 per Child, or \$20 per Family.

Guests may request takeout containers if they

do not wish to come inside for seating.

Social distancing guidelines are in effect, including wearing of face masks and use of hand sanitizer.

Springfield College Dean's List Students

SPRINGFIELD, MA - Springfield College recently recognized Dean's List Students for the 2020 Fall Semester.

Named to the Dean's list from Gorham were Cameron Wright, with a primary major of Business Management; Kyle Ouillette, with a primary major of Exploratory Studies; Bridget Rossignol, with a primary major of Physical Education; and Meghan Perrin with a primary ma-

major of Psychology.

To reach the Dean's List, the student must have completed a minimum of 12 credit hours of graded coursework for the term, exclusive of "P" grades. The student must not have any incompletes or missing grades in the designated term. The student must have a minimum semester grade average of 3.500 for the term.

Springfield College is an independent, nonprofit,

coeducational institution founded in 1885. Approximately 4,100 students, including 2,500 full-time undergraduate students, study at its main campus in Springfield, MA, and at its regional campuses across the country. Springfield College inspires students through the guiding principles of its Humanics philosophy - educating in spirit, mind, and body for leadership in service to others.

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Lasell Students on Dean's List

From Lasell Univ.

NEWTON, MA - Lasell University students were recently named

to the Fall 2020 Dean's List for strong academic performance, with a semester GPA of 3.5 or higher.

Local students named to the list include Narissa Libby and Haley Lowell, both of Gorham.

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Seniors Not Acting Their Age

Winter Hiking Where the Mountains Meet the Sea



A climber ascends cliffs near the summit of Ragged Mountain. (Ron Chase photo)

By Ron Chase

“Where the mountains meet the sea” is an oft-quoted phrase attributed to poet Edna St. Vincent Millay to describe the Camden Hills.

One of the most scenic areas in Maine, the Camden Hills provide some of the most exceptional winter hiking and phenomenal ocean vistas

found anywhere in the state. Approximately fifty miles of hiking trails in Camden Hills State Park and the Georges Highland Path lead to six distinctive peaks. From the barren summits and precipitous cliffs, spectacular Penobscot Bay is revealed in full splendor.

Poet and playwright Edna St. Vincent Millay spent much of her youth

in Camden within sight of the majestic Camden Hills. She is said to have enjoyed hiking its trails, particularly those on nearby Mounts Megunticook and Battie.

In 1912, a young Millay catapulted to fame with her poem “Renascence,” embodying the charm and beauty of those mountains along the rugged shore of Penobscot Bay. She went on to become the first woman to receive the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry and one of the most eminent literary figures of the 20th century.

Contrary to what some suggest, I never hiked with Ms. Millay. My Camden Hills trekking experiences began when I moved to the mid-coast area forty-five years ago. In the intervening decades, I’ve frequented them with friends and family on a regular basis, particularly in winter.

There are no bad hiking choices in the Camden Hills. Mount Megunticook, the highest mainland mountain on the Atlantic coast, offers iconic Ocean Overlook which provides a commanding view of Penobscot Bay from the edge of sheer Megunticook Cliffs. The summit of nearby Mount Battie peers down into picturesque Camden Harbor where Curtis Island Lighthouse guards the entrance. On the northeastern end of the range, a prominence on Bald Rock Mountain offers an expansive vista of Isleboro and eastern Penobscot



A hiker stares down into icy Mirror Lake when descending cliffs on Ragged Mountain. (Ron Chase photo)

Bay. Multiple trails lead to the summit of craggy Ragged Mountain evincing panoramic views of western Penobscot Bay while its consequential south facing cliffs look down into seemingly reflective Mirror Lake. Situated between Ragged and Megunticook, Bald Mountain offers an easy trek with exceptional views of the bay and surrounding mountains. Vertiginous Maiden Cliff on the western terminus of the Mount Megunticook massif overlooks Megunticook

Lake. Ragged Mountain and Mount Megunticook are featured in my mountain guidebook, Mountains for Mortals – New England.

Mounts Megunticook and Battie, Bald Rock Mountain, and Maiden Cliff are located in Camden Hills State Park. Ragged and Bald Mountains are southwest of the park and accessed via Georges Highland Path. They’re all my favorites.

A recent snowstorm followed by a partly sun-

ny day with seasonal temperatures was an excellent motivation to plan a hike in the Camden Hills. My longtime outdoor companion John Stokinger agreed to join me for a trek on Ragged Mountain. Not an unusual decision, the two of us have enjoyed hikes together in the Camden Hills for almost four decades; many with our young families in the early years.

Beginning our outing at the Thorndike Brook

See **Hiking**, next page

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Hiking

Continued from previous page

Trailhead in West Rockport, several inches of packed crusty snow were encountered while negotiating up a gentle incline on the Georges Highland Path. Snow adorned trees embellished the landscape as the trail steepened and weaved easterly to an open ledge with a view of pastoral Grassy Pond.

Proceeding to a trail intersection at about 1.4 miles, we turned right and traversed a prolonged rolling ridge before ascending snow and ice-covered ledges facing northwest. Angling abruptly left, a short spur trail led to the summit where an overlook offered an exceptional panoramic vista of much of western Penobscot Bay. Following Red Diamond Trail for a short distance, an unmarked right turn climbed through drifted snow to a second peak adjacent to a communication tower. More outstanding seascapes were the reward for our efforts.

Descending brief-

ly west, we rejoined the Georges Highland Path where it passes atop an exceptional sector of extensive cliffs. Partially frozen Mirror Lake was observed almost directly below. Maneuvering north along the rim of the elongated escarpment, the narrow perpetually scenic route continued back to the summit trail junction.

Many memories of mountain adventures past were shared on the return trip. Another glorious winter day “Where the mountains meet the sea” had been added to our collective Camden Hills experience.

Author of “The Great Mars Hill Bank Robbery” and “Mountains for Mortals – New England,” Ron Chase lives in Topsham. His latest book, “The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine” is scheduled to be released by North Country Press later this year. Visit his website at www.ronchaseoutdoors.com or he can be reached at ronchaseoutdoors@comcast.net.



A hiker savors the views from ledges on Ragged Mountain. (Ron Chase photo)

What do you think?

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Arts & Entertainment

Maine Community Foundation awards \$206,000 in grants

From Maine CF

PORTLAND & ELLSWORTH—The Maine Community Foundation’s Conservation for All grant program has awarded \$206,000 in grants to 18 nonprofit organizations across the state.

Launched last year, the Conservation for All grant program provides general support grants to organizations and projects that build strong connections between people in Maine and our land and water.

The 2020 grantees include Hearty Roots, Bristol, to connect low-income kids to nature with esteem-building outdoor adventure programming that supports their resilience and personal growth; Portland Parks Conservancy, to develop a plan to make Riverton Trolley Park’s shoreline, trails, woods, and fields more accessible

to an underserved Portland neighborhood lacking in usable park space; and Somerset Woods Trustees, Norridgewock, to partner with Skowhegan Outdoors at Main Street Skowhegan to increase public use of Somerset Woods Trustees conservation lands by a broader spectrum of the community.

The application for the next round of Conservation for All grants opens May 1. The deadline for submission is Aug. 1. Guidelines, application, and a list of recent grants are available at www.maineef.org. For more information about this grant program, contact MaineCF Senior Program Officer Maggie Drummond-Bahl at (877) 700-6800 or by e-mail at mbahl@mainecf.org.

Headquartered in Ellsworth, with additional personnel in Portland,



Snowy trails at Marsh River Preserve in Edgcomb provided Hearty Roots Outing Club participants with perfect conditions for identifying animal tracks. (Photo courtesy of Jess Donohoe, Hearty Roots)

Dover-Foxcroft, Rockport, and Mars Hill, the Maine Community Foundation works with donors and other partners to provide strong investments, personalized service, local expertise, and strategic giving to improve the quality

of life for all Maine people. To learn more about the foundation, visit www.maineef.org.

2020 Conservation for All Grants

Blue Hill Heritage Trust, to continue work to create accessible trails for

people of all abilities living in and visiting the community: \$7,500

Downeast Lakes Land Trust, Grand Lake Stream, to construct two hiking trails: one that is universally-accessible for those with limited mobility and one that promotes literacy and preservation of the Passamaquoddy language: \$15,000

Friends of Katahdin Woods and Waters, Portland, to engage local communities to facilitate access to Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument and realize the impact of its economic, cultural, and ecological potential: \$15,000

Friends of L. C. Bates Museum, Hinckley, to develop and distribute engaging “Kid’s Kits” and offer outdoor experiences that connect students and families to the environment and its stewardship in collaboration with teachers:

\$3,500

Friends of Messalonskee, Oakland, to create more access to the Messalonskee Lake Watershed through conservation activities, including an Invasive Plant Paddle program encouraging underserved members of the community: \$12,500

Hearty Roots, Bristol, to connect low-income kids to nature with esteem-building outdoor adventure programming that supports their resilience and personal growth: \$15,000

Hills to Sea Trail Coalition, Belfast, for general operations to maintain programs, volunteers, part-time staff person and improvements to the Hills to Sea Trail: \$10,000

Kennebec Estuary Land Trust, Bath, to improve visitor diversity to safely and sustainably access Lilly Pond Com-

See Grants, page 11

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New cooking webinars in February

From U. of Maine

ORONO - University of Maine Cooperative Extension will offer two new webinars about cooking with Maine foods from 2-2:45 p.m. on Feb. 9 and Feb. 23.

"Cooking with the Maine Harvest" opens with

a webinar about how to use an electric pressure cooker, followed two weeks later with another webinar about reducing food waste in the home kitchen. Instructors share recipes and techniques in an interactive format in this webinar series, which continues through the spring.

Registration is required; a \$5 donation is optional. Register on the program webpage at <http://bitly.ws/boZ6> to receive the link and resources.

For more information or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact Kate McCarty at 207.781.6099 or kate.mccarty@maine.edu.



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Skating
Continued from page 1



Myles Kristoffersen, one of the live-in students at the Gorham Fire Department, works a puck up the ice at the public skating area behind the Gorham Public Safety building on Main Street last week. (Tsukroff photo)



Gorham Fire Department live-in student Larry Fournier takes a shot on goal last week on the public skating area behind the Gorham Public Safety building on Main Street. (Tsukroff photo)

Pellerin named All-Conference

From Becker College

WORCESTER, MA - Robert Pellerin of Gorham, a Pre-Physical Therapy major at Becker College in Worcester, MA, and a member of the baseball and football teams at the school, recently earned the NECC 2019-20 Winter/Spring Academic All-Conference Team Award.

To be named to the New England Collegiate Conference Academic

All-Conference Team a student-athlete must be a sophomore in academic standing and hold a cumulative GPA of 3.40 or higher.

To access more information on Hawk's athletics, please go to <https://www.beckerhawks.com/>

Becker College is an undergraduate and graduate, career-focused private college, providing a supportive and inclusive learning community that

prepares graduates for their first to last careers. Nearly 1,800 students from the United States and around the world live and learn on the College's Worcester and Leicester, MA, campuses.

With nationally recognized programs in nursing, game design and animal studies, Becker has been consistently ranked as a "Best College" for undergraduate education by The Princeton Review.

Students on RWU Dean's List

From RW Univ.

BRISTOL, RI - Select students have been named to the Fall 2020 Dean's List at Roger Williams University in Bristol, R.I.

Full-time students

who complete 12 or more credits per semester and earn a GPA of 3.4 or higher are placed on the Dean's List that semester.

Local students earning this achievement include Ryan Desanctis and Kate Gilbert, both of Gor-

ham. With campuses on the coast of Bristol and in the heart of Providence, R.I., Roger Williams University is a private university committed to strengthening society through engaged teaching and learning.

Clinic
Continued from page 1

they are most at risk of suffering or dying if they contract COVID-19," said Mills. "Sites like Scarborough Downs, where a large number of people can safely and efficiently be vaccinated, will be critical to saving the lives of Maine people, keeping them healthy, putting an end to this pandemic and getting back to normal. We will continue to examine and plan for additional sites across the state."

"Our State's front-line healthcare workers are the true heroes and we are proud to support them," said Peter Michaud, Managing Partner at Crossroads Holdings and Maine Properties, a property management and construction company. "Our employees and business partners have really stepped up to meet these critical deadlines because we all know that this work will save lives," Michaud added.

Town leaders in Scarborough have been extraordinarily supportive of the project. They have worked quickly to secure all needed permits for the grandstand's new, temporary use. The Town Council was to conduct an emergency meeting to approve and finalize plans on Tuesday, Jan. 26.

MaineHealth is establishing clinics across its service area in the 11 southernmost counties in

Maine, as well as in Carroll County, N.H. The Scarborough clinic will be a key vaccination resource for people in Cumberland County and northern York County.

MaineHealth began offering vaccines to people 70 and older in accordance with guidelines from the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention on Jan. 18, and it is in the process of setting up its clinics and establishing a system for making appointments. Demand for the vaccine has been high - much greater than the weekly supply of vaccines being distributed to the states from the federal government. On the first day that MaineHealth's call center was fully operational, the phone line received calls from more than 18,000 individuals seeking vaccination, far exceeding the capacity of available appointments.

MaineHealth is a not-for-profit integrated health system consisting of nine local hospital systems, including Franklin Memorial Hospital/Franklin Community Health Network in Farmington, LincolnHealth in Damariscotta and Boothbay Harbor, Maine Behavioral Healthcare in South Portland, MaineHealth Care at Home in Saco, Maine Medical Center in Portland, Memorial Hospital in North Conway, N.H., Mid Coast-Parkview Health in Brunswick, NorDx in

Scarborough, Pen Bay Medical Center and Waldo County Hospital in Rockport and Belfast, Southern Maine Health Care in Biddeford and Sanford, Spring Harbor Hospital in Westbrook and Stephens Memorial Hospital/Western Maine Health Care in Norway.

MaineHealth Affiliates include Maine General Health in Augusta and Waterville, New England Rehabilitation Hospital in Portland and St. Mary's Regional Medical Center in Lewiston. It is also a significant stakeholder in the MaineHealth Accountable Care Organization in Portland.

The Downs is a 525-acre planned community being built on the grounds of the former Scarborough Downs harness racing track. It will offer three distinct components to 'live, work and play,' which earned the project a tagline of "A Community Trifecta." The property will be home to a 150-acre innovative business park, a walkable Town Center, 200 acres of greenspace, 10-miles of recreational trails and several mixed-use housing neighborhoods.

At full buildout, the entire project is estimated to create over \$615M in new value; over \$10M in new tax revenue; nearly 2M square feet of commercial space and as many as 3,000 new jobs.

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Eviction, foreclosure moratoriums extended

From USDA

WASHINGTON, D.C. - In one of his first acts in office, President Joe Biden requested federal agencies to extend eviction and foreclosure moratoriums for millions of Americans.

In response, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced an extension of eviction and foreclosure moratoriums on USDA Single Family Housing Direct and Guaranteed loans (SFHDL and SFHGLP) through March 31, 2021. The actions announced today will bring relief to residents in rural America who have housing loans through USDA.

USDA recognizes that the COVID-19 pandemic has triggered an al-

most unprecedented housing affordability crisis in the United States. Today, 1 in 10 homeowners with a mortgage are behind on payments. In addition to the actions taken, the Biden Administration looks forward to working with Congress to take more robust and aggressive actions to bring additional relief to American families and individuals impacted by the pandemic.

Visit www.rd.usda.gov/coronavirus for additional information on USDA's Rural Development COVID-19 relief efforts application deadline extensions and more. USDA Rural Development will keep our customers, partners and stakeholders continuously updated as additional actions are taken to

bring relief and development to rural America.

Foreclosure Moratorium Extension:

The actions announced last week make it possible for the foreclosure and eviction moratorium announced by USDA, Single Family Housing Direct Loan Program (SFHGLP) and the Single Family Housing Guaranteed Loan Program (SFHGLP) on August 28, 2020, to be extended until March 31, 2021. The moratorium does not apply in cases where USDA or the servicing lender has documented the property is vacant or abandoned.

Forbearance Requirements:

Lenders should continue to provide impacted borrowers relief in accor-

dance with the CARES Act by offering forbearance of the borrower guaranteed loan payment for up to 180 days. In addition, the initial forbearance period may be extended up to an additional 180 days at the borrower's request. Lenders should outline potential solutions that may be available at the end of the forbearance payment and explain to borrowers that a lump sum payment of the arrearage will not be required.

During the forbearance options outlined above, no accrual of fees, penalties or interest may be charged to the borrower beyond the amounts calculated as if the borrower had made all contractual payments in a timely fashion.

Lenders may approve the initial 180-day COVID-19 Forbearance no later than the earlier of the termination date of the national emergency declared by the President on March 13, 2020 or March 31, 2021.

Post Forbearance Options:

Upon completion of the forbearance, the lender shall work with the borrower to determine if they can resume making regular payments and, if so, either offer an affordable repayment plan or term extension to defer any missed payments to the end of the loan. If the borrower is unable to resume making regular payments, the lender should evaluate the borrower for all available loss mitigation

options outlined in HB-1-3555. The special relief measured that are outlined in Chapter 18 Section 5 "Assistance in Natural Disasters" will apply. These options include Term Extensions, Capitalization and Term Extensions, and a Mortgage Recovery Advance.

USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities and create jobs in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural areas. For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov.

Maine awards \$18 Million in CARES Act Relief Grants

From Maine DACF

AUGUSTA - The Mills Administration announced last week that it has awarded more than \$18 million in federal CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Funding (CRF) to reimburse Maine farmers, food processors and producers, and food banks and pantries for investments and unplanned expenses associated with business interruptions in 2020 due to COVID-19.

The funds were awarded through three CARES Act Relief Grant Programs: the CARES Act Agriculture and Food Processing Infrastructure Reimbursement Program, the CARES Act E-Commerce Reimbursement Program, and the CARES Act Food Security Network Reimbursement Program.

"At the outset of the pandemic and as more people sought Maine-grown, -raised, and -made products, our farms, food

processors, and food suppliers adapted to create safe environments for both employees and customers," Governor Mills said. "I am grateful for the ways our agricultural community has responded during the pandemic to serve the people of Maine and my administration will continue to deploy every available resource to ensure their success in these challenging times."

Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Commissioner Amanda Beal said, "As markets were disrupted and food insecurity grew significantly over the past year, many businesses and nonprofits in the food sector pivoted their production and distribution models to continue operations and keep employees, volunteers, and customers safe. Our ability to offer reimbursements for some unanticipated expenses enhances their stability and allows them to stay

focused on the important work that they do."

"We were honored to partner with DACF to stand up these CARES Act grant programs," said Gray Harris, Senior Vice President, Food Systems, CEI. "It was an opportunity to serve Maine's agriculture and food sector that we could not pass up. The impact is profound and will be long-lasting—\$17.3 million is now circulating in the Maine farm and food economy, in the communities where Maine's farmers and food producers live and work. It's been extremely satisfying to be a part of this collaborative, rapid response team."

"Catholic Charities Maine was proud to be able to respond quickly and assist the State of Maine with the distribution of critical funds at a time when more people than ever before are experiencing hunger and food insecurity in our state," said Steve Letourneau, CEO, Catho-

lic Charities Maine. "We processed and ultimately awarded 89 grants to food pantries, food banks and other groups involved with the distribution of food to those in need. I have no doubt that this program had a positive impact on thousands of lives."

Created in collaboration with the Maine Economic and Community Development Department (DECD) and administered by Coastal Enterprises, Inc. (CEI), the Agriculture and Food Processing Infrastructure Reimbursement Program awarded \$17.3 million in grants to 437 farms, processors, and other food supply chain businesses for COVID-19 related infrastructure investments, spanning major processing upgrades to obtaining necessary PPE. The Program was initially announced as providing \$10 million in CRF. However, given high application demand, additional funds were made available to ful-

fill all eligible applications.

"When we harvest, we need people to inspect our potatoes before they go into storage. We invested in equipment, primarily conveyors, to create the space needed for our employees to work safely and stay healthy," said Dan Blackstone, Owner, Blackstone Seed Growers LLC (Caribou)

"The reimbursement we received from the state was tremendously helpful in keeping our operations running smoothly, and helping our employees stay connected while still staying safe. We invested in an onsite Liquid Nitrogen tank as an alternative to liquid Co2. This has enabled us to have more assurance that we will not have disruptions to our production process due to Co2 shortages during the pandemic. In addition, we invested in headsets for our production team to enable effective distancing, while still allowing communication. We also purchased additional laptops/hardware to support remote working, as many of our employees have been working from home since March," said Craig Frey, Director of Finance at Allagash Brewing Company in Portland.

"This grant saved our business essentially; we lost 80% of our foodservice market as soon as the state of emergency took effect. We went back to the drawing board and invested in slicing and packing equipment to access the retail sales channel. We also invested in becoming a licensed co-packer for the small producers who needed to find ways to get their products to market," said Oliver Perkins, owner of A Small Good in Rockport.

The E-commerce Reimbursement Program, also administered by CEI, awarded \$247,000 to 84 farmers for unplanned e-commerce investments, including online sales management and payment processing platforms, order processing and fulfillment software, and website customization.

"When it was clear we needed to find a way to reach a bigger audience of customers, we invested in our website. We added new photos and implemented software to improve our ability to manage pre-orders. Our farmers' market transactions went contactless. We added ecards for our CSA customers. We hired people to help us find the right platforms, take photos, do the writing, and more. All of this was done to create more awareness, share our story, and help people buy our food safely," said Jan Goranson, owner of Goranson Farm in Dresden.

"Curbside and pre-ordering are here to stay. Before the pandemic, we were contemplating ways to improve our website, but we knew we had to set up online ordering when it hit. We invested in creating databases necessary to display our products online and added a wish-list tool for our customers. This investment has gotten us a lot closer to a more sophisticated POS system with real-time inventory," said Wendy Reinemann, owner of Guini Ridge Farm in Rockport.

The Food Security Network Reimbursement Program, administered by Catholic Charities of Maine, provided \$621,000 in grants to 88 food banks and

See CARES, page 12

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Grants

Continued from page 6

munity Forest in Bath by constructing a parking area and improving trailhead facilities: \$15,000

Loon Echo Land Trust, Bridgton, to connect communities to conservation through land protection and stewardship, outreach, education, and universal access improvements, and to increase organizational equity, diversity, and inclusion through board training: \$7,500

Mahoosuc Pathways, Inc., Bethel, to add connecting lands to the Bethel Community Forest as part of the Chadbourne Tree Farms purchase: \$15,000

Portland Parks Conservancy, to develop a plan to make Riverton Trolley Park's shoreline, trails, woods, and fields more accessible to an underserved Portland neighborhood lacking usable park space: \$10,000.00

Presumpscot Regional Land Trust, Gorham, to apply an equity lens to the development of conservation and trails in Westbrook to engage more youth and families in the outdoors: \$12,500

Sanford Springvale Mousam Way Land Trust, Sanford, to support the creation of safe and easily accessible trails for healthful recreation and outdoor learning adventures: \$6,000

Somerset Woods Trustees, Norridgewock, to partner with Skowhegan Outdoors at Main Street Skowhegan to increase public use of Somerset Woods Trustees conservation lands by a broader spectrum of community: \$15,000

Southern Maine Conservation Collaborative, Portland, to demonstrate ground-breaking conservation that addresses social equity, climate change, organizational efficiency, and collective impact: \$15,000

Teens to Trails, Brunswick, to help connect high-school students with "nearby nature" by building connections between schools and their local land trusts and public lands: \$10,000

Tree Street Youth, Lewiston, to provide outdoor exposure and enrichment experiences for at-risk and immigrant/refugee youth: \$6,500

Women for Healthy Rural Living, Milbridge, to support OWLette, a summer camp for girls that teaches outdoor and naturalist skills and is designed to foster confidence in the outdoors: \$15,000

Road trips with your pooch

From Trips With Pets

WAKE FOREST, NC - Planning to hit the open road with your four-legged sidekick? Road tripping is definitely more fun when shared with your pup -- especially if it's just the two of you.

Taking a solo road trip with your pet does require a little extra preparation, but if you plan wisely and keep your pet's needs in mind, you and your furkid will have an enjoyable, stress-free adventure. To get you started, here are our tips to ensure your trip goes smoothly and safely.

Stay Safe

To keep both you and your pup safe and minimize driving distractions, be sure your pet is properly secured in the back seat or cargo area. It's best to get your dog used to the restraint in advance, so that he is comfortable with it before you start your trip.

We also recommend sharing your trip details and schedule with a friend

or family member. Frequently check-in with your current location, where you're staying, and any changes you've made to your original plans.

Plan and Prioritize

Before heading out on your trip, double-check that your pet's tags, vaccinations, and microchip information are up-to-date. Talk with your dog's vet to make sure your pooch is in top shape for travel, and get a copy of his vaccine records to bring with you.

These should be the most essential items on your trip checklist. Accurate tag and microchip information will help identify your pet if he gets lost. Checking in with your vet can prevent you from dealing with a sad and sick pet when you're alone and far from home. Current vaccines will keep him safe, and bringing along his vaccination records can help keep your travel plans on track; several states require proof of vaccinations for any pet crossing state lines.

Pick Your Path

When planning a trip alone with your pet, it's even more important to ensure that "essentials" can be found on your travel route. You don't want to spend time stranded with no gas, food, or rest stops, with an anxious, unhappy pet. Plan a route that has plenty of places for your pup to potty; the standard is three to four hours between potty breaks, but some dogs need to go more often. You know your pet best, so if you think more frequent stops are needed for him to stretch his legs...be sure to make that part of your plan.

Meeting your pooch's potty needs simply requires heading to the nearest rest stop, and making sure you have waste bags and supplies on hand to clean up after him. Managing your own potty breaks, however, is a bit more complicated. We do not recommend ever leaving a pet alone in a car, so what can you do when nature calls? Find a pet-friendly business

and use their restroom. Pet stores like Petco and PetSmart, and pet-friendly hotel chains, like Red Roof Inn and Motel 6 will let you use their facilities with your pet.

Reserve Pet-Friendly Accommodations

Pet-friendly hotels are plentiful, but that doesn't mean it will be easy to find one right when you need one. Some hotels have a limited number of pet-friendly rooms, while others sell out their rooms quickly, and require booking way in advance. In addition, most hotels have restrictions -- such as pet weight limit, and number of pets allowed. Some even have breed restrictions. So, when it comes to finding a pet-friendly hotel while you're already on the road, "winging it" may not work out so well. Fortunately, you can find and book pet-friendly accommodations easily on TripsWithPets.com, leaving you one less thing to worry about on your solo expedition.

Pack Up With Convenience in Mind

When you're on your trip, you won't have anyone to leave your pooch with while you pop into a grocery store or gas station. And, since pets shouldn't be left alone in a vehicle, you need to make sure to stock up on provisions for your trip.

Make a thoughtful list of everything you'll need, keeping in mind that stopping for new snacks or supplies with your pet will be a challenge. Arrange the space in your car so everything is easy to access when he needs it, including pet travel bowls, treats, waste bags, medication, leashes, first aid kit, toys, and blankets.

TripsWithPets has been helping pet parents find and book pet-friendly accommodations since 2003. TripsWithPets provides online reservations at over 30,000 pet friendly hotels & accommodations across the U.S. and Canada. See TripsWithPets.com

\$3.4 Million to Upgrade Traffic Signals

From U.S. Sen. Collins

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Senator Susan Collins (R-ME), Chairman of the Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee, announced that the Maine Department of

Transportation has been awarded \$3,471,651 to replace 43 traffic signal controllers.

This funding was awarded through the Federal Highway Administration's Advanced Transportation and Congestion

Management Technologies Deployment (ATCMDT) grant program. Senator Collins wrote a letter to the Secretary of the Department of Transportation in support of the project.

"Improving Maine's transportation infrastruc-

ture is one of my top priorities. I am delighted to announce this \$3.4 million investment that will benefit communities across our state," said Senator Collins. "This funding will help to enhance the safety and efficiency

of Maine's transportation network while growing our economy and helping Mainers reach their homes and jobs more quickly."

"We remain grateful for the ongoing support and dedication to Maine's *See Traffic, page 13*



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

Collins attends inauguration

From U.S. Sen. Collins

WASHINGTON, D.C.— U.S. Senator Susan Collins (R-Maine) attended the inauguration last week of Joseph Biden, the 46th President of the United States.

“Today marks the start of a new chapter in our history. In his inaugural address, I was pleased to hear President Biden emphasize that unity is the path forward for our country,” Collins said. “The ceremony brought together our three branches of government, showcased extraordinary American artists and spiritual leaders, and was conducted safely thanks to our outstanding law enforcement and military personnel.

Today’s inauguration was a timely reminder about what makes America such a special country. I was truly honored to be on the platform today to represent Maine and witness the American tradition of the peaceful transition of our government.”

This is the seventh consecutive inauguration Senator Collins has attended since her first election to the Senate in 1996. Steve Abbott, Senator Collins’ Chief of Staff, accompanied her as her guest.

Senator Collins has worked with Biden for more than two decades, serving alongside him in the Senate from 1997 to 2009 and while he was Vice President from 2009 to 2017.



U.S. Senator Susan Collins (R-Maine) at the inauguration of President Joseph Biden last week with Steve Abbott, her chief of staff. (Photo courtesy of U.S. Sen. Collins)

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

CARES

Continued from page 10

pantries for unanticipated expenses associated with overcoming food supply and distribution challenges caused by COVID-19.

“Our reimbursement is for the purchases we made of culturally appropriate foods to support new Mainers. Items like fufu powder, cassava leaves and dried fish and other food items not readily available through TE-FAP,” said Mary Zwolinski, Executive Director of Wayside Food Programs in Portland.

“The Food Security Network Reimbursement Program is a great fit for us for several reasons, but mostly because it allowed us to what we do. Our reimbursement is for the PPE investment required in December to continue our staff’s food preparation and distribution to clients across Aroostook County,” said Sherry Locke, Development and Communications Manager at the Aroostook County Action Program in Presque Isle.

DACF’s third-party administrative partners are currently focused on processing payments associated with the three programs. All CRF grant funds are expected to be distributed by the end of the first quarter of 2021.

Visit the Bureau of Agriculture’s website at <http://bitly.ws/bpa7> for complete COVID-19 resources available to agriculture and food businesses.

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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.

5:30 p.m.

AUBURN – Age-Friendly Community Committee

6 p.m.

LEWISTON – City Council meeting via Zoom at <http://www.lewiston-maine.gov/2021cc>

6:30 p.m.

GORHAM – Regular Town Council meeting via Zoom

Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

THURSDAY

Feb. 4

4 p.m.

AUBURN – Cable TV Advisory Board meeting.

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.

MONDAY

Feb. 8

5:30 p.m.

LEWISTON – Planning Board meeting via Zoom.

5:30-6:30 p.m.

LEWISTON – Finance Committee meeting at City Hall Administrator’s Conference Room.

TUESDAY

Feb. 9

6 p.m.

AUBURN – Planning Board Meeting.

6 p.m.

LEWISTON – City Council workshop via Zoom at <http://www.lewistonmaine.gov/2021cc>

7 p.m.

GORHAM – Conservation Commission meeting via Zoom.

WEDNESDAY

Feb. 10

4:30 p.m.

AUBURN – Lewiston-Auburn Transit Committee (LATC) meeting.

6:30 p.m.

AUBURN – Parks & Recreation Advisory Board meeting.

7 p.m.

GORHAM – School Committee meeting via Zoom.

MONDAY

Feb. 15

Presidents’ Day

TUESDAY

Feb. 16

7:30 a.m.

AUBURN – Auburn Public Library Board of Trustees meeting.

8 a.m.

GORHAM – Ordinance Committee meeting via Zoom.

4 p.m.

AUBURN – Auburn Sewer District Trustees meeting.

6 p.m.

AUBURN – Conservation Commission meeting.

6 p.m.

LEWISTON – City Council meeting.

6:30 p.m.

GORHAM – Tentative recurring Town Council workshop via Zoom.

WEDNESDAY

Feb. 17

8 a.m.

GORHAM – Gorham Economic Development Corporation meeting via Zoom.

4 p.m.

AUBURN – Auburn Water District Trustees meeting.

THURSDAY

Feb. 18

8 a.m.

AUBURN – 9-1-1 Committee meeting.

6:30 p.m.

GORHAM – Board of Appeals meeting via Zoom.

MONDAY

Feb. 22

5:30 p.m.

LEWISTON – Planning Board meeting via Zoom.

5:30-6:30 p.m.

LEWISTON – Finance Committee meeting at City Hall Administrator’s Conference Room.

TUESDAY

Feb. 23

5:30 p.m.

AUBURN – Agriculture Committee meeting.

WEDNESDAY

Feb. 24

7:30 a.m.

AUBURN – Auburn Housing Authority Board of Commissioners meeting.

6 p.m.

AUBURN – Complete Streets Committee meeting.

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FOR SHOWTIMES

Send all items for Names & Faces to the editor. Deadline is Friday by five pm.

Traffic

Continued from page 11

transportation infrastructure from Senator Collins and the rest of our Congressional delegation,” said Maine DOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note. “This funding will play an integral part in upgrading 43 traffic signal controllers throughout Maine with new advanced technology. These upgrades will assist in minimizing the impacts of traffic signal control malfunction and allow motorists to travel more efficiently and safely through Maine.”

Many current traffic detection systems in Maine are outdated. New Advanced Traffic Controller (ATC) devices will have the capability to deliver

real-time traffic and signal data, eliminating delays caused by malfunctioning signal equipment. This updated software will facilitate the instantaneous monitoring of all 43 intersections via broadband technology. With this technology in place, MaineDOT will be able to quickly detect problems and dispatch personnel. New software will also capture valuable comprehensive data about traffic patterns and infrastructure usage.

Since 2009, when Senator Collins became a member of the Appropriations Committee, she has secured more than \$751 million in competitive transportation grants for the State of Maine.

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Big Blowout sale at House of Lady Debra's Our: Old Goat + His Lady. Gourmet 21 soups, 20 dips, 4 cheesecakes sale. Buy 3 dips, get 2 free. Buy 2 soups, get 1 free. Going fast, call now. Lady Debra -207-891-1968.

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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.

Classified Ads

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