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# New auto dealership in Brunswick sees employees as best assets



Otis Soohey is General Manager of the new Darling's Ford on Bath Road in Brunswick. Darling's Auto Group purchased the dealership from Yankee Ford in December. Soohey stresses taking care of employees so they will take care of the customers. (Tsukroff photo)

### **By Nathan Tsukroff**

BRUNSWICK – Caring about your customers starts with caring about your employees.

That's the philosophy of Otis Soohey, the general manager of the new Darling's Ford dealership at 262 Bath Road in Brunswick. "Our belief at Darling's is that our employees are our best assets," he said.

Yankee Ford "was very concerned about their employees, as are we," Soohey said. The dealerships worked closely to ensure a smooth transition of ownership. "Whether they've been with us for a day or thirty years, we feel (the employees) are part of the Darling's family right away."

"We know the old adage – if you take care of your employees, they take of your customers. Quite frankly, it works!" Soohey said.

The majority of the approximately 35 employees remained with the dealership, and Soohey said Darling's is actually looking to add employees for its full service department. The dealership has 16 service bays and is looking to hire auto technicians of all levels of ability, from entry-level technicians to change tires and fix brakes tire-changers "all the way up to diesel mechanics."

Modern auto repair requires technical knowledge of automotive electronics in order to diagnose issues, Soohey said. "I've become very impressed with technicians today. They can do both – they can do old-school, but with modern technology, they combine the two together. It's pretty impressive!"

Darling's Ford also sells new and used parts in its parts department.

Darling's Auto Group purchased the dealership from Yankee Ford in Decem-See Darling's, page 8 Dog license renewal options

### From City of Lewiston

LEWISTON – Dog owners in Lewiston have several options for re-licensing their pets for the new year with the Lewiston City Clerk's Department.

In order to license a dog, the dog must have a current rabies vaccination. Dog licensing ensures rabies vaccination which protects the health of the pets and ultimately the community. Rabies is a serious problem in some areas of the state so pet owners are encouraged to keep their dog's rabies vaccinations up to date.

As a convenience, dog owners may obtain a license by mail, using the new red City Hall Drop Box next to the Park St entrance; or online; or in person at City Hall. The dog owner must provide a copy of the current rabies certificate if not already on file, along with the dog's name, the owner's name, address and phone number, and a check payable to the City of Lewiston for the correct amount. Dog license fees are \$11.00 for a male or female dog; \$6.00 for a spayed or neutered animal.

Residents who wish to process their dog's license online can do so at the City's website at www.lewistonmaine.gov/123/ dog-licenses. Once received, the tag for the new year will be mailed to the owner.

The City Clerk's Department has office hours on Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

Many dog owners may not have re-licensed their pet because they may have misplaced the animal's rabies certificate, which is required to be shown at the time of licensing. Pet owners should contact their veterinarian's office to request a duplicate copy of the rabies certificate if they cannot locate their copy.

Questions can be directed to the City Clerk's Department at 513-3124.

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



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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

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 disabilities does not apply with respect to children . . . [aged] 18 through 21 in

until either they receive a 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 local government funding, 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 [] (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 within MaineHealth will start week, the first day Mainevaccinations of people in Health's vaccination call 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

center was fully operational, more than 18,000 individuals called seeking a vaccination, many of them placing multiple calls. As a result, Maine-Health is looking at alternatives to manage the high volume of requests. In the meantime, Maine-Health 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 Maine-Health 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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# **Newsmakers, Names & Faces Guest Column** Legislative committees begin to meet



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

### Sen. Nate Libby

Dear Friends.

This week, Legislative committees have begun to meet, with many holding public hearings on bills next week. The Government Oversight Committee,

which I chair, will convene Friday, Jan. 29. As a reminder, all committee meetings will be streamed live via the Legislature's You-Tube channels and archived for later viewing. The committee meeting schedule is available here. We may not be gathering together in person at the State House, but lawmakers are still doing the jobs you've elected us to do.

As always, if you or your family need anything, I'm here to help. You can reach out to me at nathan. libby@legislature.maine. gov or 207-287-1515 with any questions, concerns or ideas you may have.

### **Applications for PPP** loans

There is no question that the last year has been hard on small businesses grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic. Just like so many other Mainers who have stepped up during this crisis, small-business owners have shown great resilience in the face of this challenge.

Earlier in January, the application period for the second round of the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) opened up to small businesses, certain non-profits, sole proprietors, and the self-employed. The deadline to apply is March 31, and you can apply even if you've received a PPP loan in the past.

If you think your business or non-profit qualifies for a PPP loan, or think that someone you know might be interested, click below to learn more.

Update on

### **COVID-19 vaccines**

I've been getting a lot of questions from people wondering when they'll be able to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. The Maine CDC has put together information about its plans to distribute the vaccine, prioritizing those who are at most risk of contracting COVID-19 or of having severe symptoms. That information is available at http://bitly.ws/borN. The simple fact is that there are a limited number of doses the state is receiving. While the ultimate goal is to make sure everyone who wants or needs a vaccine can get one, we'll need to be patient while production of vaccines ramps up.

Currently, the phases of vaccine distribution are: Phase 1a: Health care,

public safety, and critical COVID-19 infrastructure personnel eligible for vaccination in Phase 1a should contact their employer or their professional associations to learn how to get a vaccine.

Phase 1b: People age 70 and over may begin getting vaccinated now, subject to vaccine availability and health system readiness. A list of COVID-19 vaccination sites for people 70 and over is now available at http://bitly.ws/borN. There is one currently in Lewiston at St. Mary's Regional Medical Center. Additional sites will be added as vaccinations are available.

Phase 1c and Phase 2: Vaccination information for all other people eligible in future phases will be posted here as soon as it is avail-

The state is starting to enter Phase 1b, and the CDC website includes information on where and when you can get vaccinated.

Some things to note: All vaccination sites require an appointment.

Because Maine's supply of vaccines is limited. appointments may not be immediately available and will be scheduled on a rolling basis.

There is no charge for the COVID-19 vaccine, but you should be prepared to provide any insurance information and proof of eligibility at the vaccination site.

**Recognizing busi**nesses that employ

veterans

One of the challenges veterans face when tran-See Libby, page 11



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### Page 4 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 sunny 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 vear. Visit his website at www.ronchaseoutdoors. com or he can be reached ronchaseoutdoors@ at comcast.net.

### What do you think?

We strongly encourage Letters to the Editor, Op/Eds, columns or any other submissions from our readers. Agree with us or another columnist? Disagree? Write to us and let us know! Email all submissions, including name, address





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

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### Local resident presents at symposium

### From Lasell Univ.

NEWTON, MA - Lasell University's Fall Career Readiness Symposium featured presentations of research, visual art, and more in December 2020. The Fall Symposium was made possible in part by a grant from the Davis Educational Foundation.

Naiv Luciano Velez of Auburn was a member of the University's course on Black Psychology, and helped to organize African Diaspora Day educational activities for Symposium. Velez facilitated a panel discussion on Black identities in the African Diaspora, featuring guests who shared their journeys of Black racial identification and the nature of their lived experiences within the Diaspora.

The December 2020 event showcased the work of more than 150 students in a dynamic digital format, a triumph for flexible teaching and learning amid COVID-19. The December 2020 event was reimagined to celebrate and showcase the ties between career preparedness and Connected Learning, thanks to a three-year grant from the Davis Educational Foundation.

All Symposium presentations focused on four of the National Association of Colleges and Employers' (NACE) career-readiness competencies: Global and Intercultural Fluency, Professional and Work Ethic, Leadership, and Career Management.

"The Fall Career Readiness Symposium showcased student work and experiences, especially ways in which students have applied Connected Learning to develop their careers through internships," said Provost Eric Turner. "The event highlighted competencies in leadership and global/intercultural fluency with an emphasis on ways our students lead and serve by example."

### From Lewiston Public Schools

LEWISTON – Winter-Spring 2021 classes at Lewiston Adult Education will kick off in February along with the release of the new brochure.

"To protect the health and safety of our students and staff, we have decided to push the start of our enrichment semester to the end of February," said Lewiston Adult Education Director Bill Grant.

Although the majority of classes will begin in February or later, some classes started in January. Students will be able to register for them on the Lewiston Adult Education website, www.lewiston. maineadulted.org.

The classes include The Reading Hour, a literature discussion group for English Language Learners; My Money Works; Essential Oils & Sleep; Vegetable Gardening; Introduction to Essential Oils; Introduction to Self-Employment; Beautiful You and Color, Living Well with Chronic Pain, the College Transition Program; Tai Chi for Health and Balance; Vegetable Gardening; Introduction to Self-Employment; Be a Hero: Learn About Becoming a Foster Parent as well as Motivation and Behavior Change.

**Adult Ed classes start in February** 

All the January and early February classes will be held online.

The brochure will once again have class information for both Lewiston Adult Education and Auburn Adult & Community Education. One side will list schedules for different programs. Lewiston Adult Education teacher Kelley Rudd will appear on the cover of the February brochure.

The few in-person classes for Lewiston Adult Education will take place at the Adult Learning Center at Longley School on



Lewiston Adult Education teacher Kelley Rudd will appear on the cover of the Winter-Spring 2020 brochure that is scheduled to come out in February. (Photo courtesy of Lewiston Public Schools)

145 Birch St. in Lewiston. Teachers and students will be required to wear masks and be socially distant during lessons to protect against the spread of COVID-19. Anyone with additional questions can contact Mike Reagan at Lewiston Adult Education at 207-795-4141 or email mreagan@lewistonpublicschools.org.





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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.



# <section-header>



### **Darling's** *Continued from page 1*

ber to expand the Darling's Auto Group family of businesses to the southern Maine region.

Darling's has five other dealerships in Bangor, Ellsworth, and Augusta, and represents Ford, Volkswagen, Audi, GMC, Buick, Chrysler, Dodge, Ram, Jeep, Chevrolet, Honda, Nissan, Volvo, and Hyundai brands across these locations.

The Yankee Ford Brunswick acquisition adds a second Ford dealership to their roster. The other Ford dealership is in Bangor.

Darling's has been a Ford dealership for more than 30 years, and has followed other Ford dealers in Maine throughout the years, Soohey said. "We always thought the Yankee Ford in Brunswick showed some promise."

Darling's Auto Group President Jay Darling said, "As the current Yankee Brunswick Ford staff joins the Darling's family, customers can expect we'll all be going above and beyond in their community."

"I'm excited to see how the staff at Yankee Ford has been operating and to learn from their experiences in this region. We've been doing this a long time in Bangor, Ellsworth and Augusta, but southern Maine offers us an opportunity to serve a new demographic which can help us grow our business in both locations as we learn from each other," Darling said.

The acquisition represents a continued investment in profitable growth and community development, two pillars in the vision goals of Darling's Auto Group.

"We think this is a great area and a wonderful market to expand our operations," Darling said. "The Brunswick and Bath area is incredibly vibrant and we are very excited to become a part of this region. With its close proximity to Bath Iron Works, Bowdoin College, and the many other existing businesses in the area, we see a huge potential for growth in this market. We will be sure to do everything we can to make this transition smooth and efficient both for the current employees there as well as their customers."

Soohey said Brunswick "is a new market for us." He said Darling researched the area and sees a lot of promise for growth. The dealership is just down the street from the local Walmart and Lowe's Home Improvement stores. Plus, "We have Bath Iron Works and Bowdoin College" nearby, he said.

Yankee Ford updated the look of the building several years ago, Soohey said, adding the trademark Ford "sail", a standing curved piece at the en-

trance to the building.

A Maine-based family and employee owned company, Darling's has been doing business in Maine for over 100 years with roots going back to 1903. Today, it is one of the largest dealership groups in the state.

With a corporate office in Brewer, Darling's currently has more than 400 full time employees. The company also owns and operates The Darling's Agency, an independent insurance agency that has been in business since 2007 as well as Green Point Auto Parts and Auto Sales in Brewer, Maine.

Soohey said the Yankee dealerships "are solid" and continue to sell cars at their other locations in South Portland and Rockland.



A Ford pickup truck sits under a temporary sign at the new Darling's Ford dealership on Bath Road in Brunswick. Yankee Ford sold the dealership to Darling's Auto Group in December. The trademark Ford "sail" graces the front of the building. (Tsukroff photo)



Darling's Ford Service Manager Shaun Randall steps out to greet a customer at the dealership's service area. The facility has 16 service bays and sells new and used parts from its parts department. Darling's Auto Group purchased the dealership on Bath Road in Brunswick from Yankee Ford in December. (Tsukroff Photo)

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# Out and About Pfizer vaccine given to Schooner Estates tenants



Cindy Roy, a member of the Bangor Drug Pharmacy team, does a final check on paperwork for one of the tenants who received the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine during a clinic at Schooner Estates on Jan. 21. (Rachel Morin photo)

### By Rachel Morin

AUBURN - The tenants and staff at Schooner Estates in Auburn learned a few weeks ago they would have the opportunity to receive the Pfizer Vaccine against the COVID-19 virus.

There would be two clinics, one for the Staff in The Village Green, the main entrance to Schooner, and one for the tenants in the large Camden Dining Room.

Even though tenants were unable to congregate or gather to discuss the welcome news, you could feel the excitement in the air as they walked to the coffee bar or walked the corridors for exercise. They were pleased, yes; but it was the relief I saw in their eyes and heard in their voices that showed me the magnitude of what they felt. They all have appreciated the fact that Schooner Estates has followed the strict guidelines against the world-wide pandemic. We are fortunate. There is no COVID at Schooner.

In the weeks before the clinic, the residents continued their routines. But it was the Staff who were busy reviewing carefully laid plans of what exactly would happen at both locations on Clinic Day. Notices were sent to ten-



Beverley Heath is the first tenant at Schooner Estates in Auburn to receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine at a clinic on Jan. 21. The vaccine was administered by Pharmacist John Hebert from the Bangor Drug Pharmacy. (Rachel Morin photo)

ants to keep them apprised of what would happen. Tenants also tuned in to the Schooner TV Channel 1390 with information on what to expect.

Three pharmacists from Bangor Drug Pharmacy would be administering the vaccine - John Hebert, Charlie Ouellette and Meagan Pelletier.

Cindy Roy, a staff assistant, would help with whatever was needed. Hebert would work upstairs in the Camden Dining Room. The others would work in The Village Green to vaccinate the Schooner Staff.

The Clinic Day arrived on Jan. 21. Each tenant had the appointment notification in hand with the time and message, "Be prompt" as the vaccinations would go quickly.I arrived early as I had asked if I could take a few photos if tenants agreed and everyone did. I was pleased to see many Schooner volunteers busy helping



seat people in the Dining Room. This room was the waiting room before the vaccination and also the waiting room after the vaccination to monitor any reaction. No reactions were

reported. The vaccinations took place in a private alcove off Camden Dining Room. John Hebert was excellent, professional, skilled, had a quiet manner that relaxed the tenant, asking the routine questions about allergies, flu shots and any allergic reaction, all negative.

The shot is ready; the arm exposed, done! It was over in seconds. And....no pain or sting!

Cindy Swift, MS, RN, CPHQ, Director of Nursing, sees that everything runs smoothly in the Camden Alcove. She notes that pharmacists work the hardest at these clinics, being on their feet all day. True, and I notice that Hebert unconsciously performs calisthenics: he stands upright, and quietly goes through the mandated questions; then down on one knee to administer the shot, then upright. And it starts all over again in a minute as the next tenant sits down. He must do this 20-25 times an hour. As





George Fogg was one 109 tenants at Schooner Estates in Auburn who received the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine at a clinic on Jan. 21, administered by Bangor Drug pharmacist John Hebert. (Rachel Morin photo)



John Hebert (left), Cindy Roy, Meagan Pelletier, and Charlie Ouellette from the Bangor Drug Pharmacy Team vaccinated the staff and tenants at Schooner Estates in Auburn. (Photo by John Rice)

the entire visit barely take two minutes. Of course, the tenant has a lot to do with this, being on time, promptly answering the questions, their arm is exposed and ready and they decline a band aid no blood is seen.

Swift also said that a day after the Clinic, the Schooner nursing staff had been randomly checking in with tenants to see how they were doing. Everyone they had spoken with said they were feeling fine with no side effects from the vaccine. Swift said, "It appears 'it is business as usual' for our active tenants." When sitting in Cam-

den after the shot for 15 or more minutes, the Schooner volunteers brought glasses of refreshing water with ice cubes, to the tenants who were told this is "to help the vaccine work better. " It was also announced our second shots would be Feb. 22. Appointment papers would be given out as today's were.

At the end of the Clinic, the results were counted. 109 tenants who were able to be vaccinated, out of 110 tenants. This was an amazing number. The Staff also did well. 64 out of 86. Adding to that number of employees who were vaccinated were 13 contractors/private duty and 1 SMC employee bringing the total number of staff to78 employees who were able to be vaccinated, out of 86.

We read an article in the Bangor Daily News that very day, Jan. 21, that See Vaccine, page 11

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## Page 10 **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 (SFHDLP and SF-HGLP) 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 US-DA'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.

### Re-Forbearance quirements:

Lenders should continue to provide impacted borrowers relief in accordance 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 Mainegrown, -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 long-lasting-\$17.3 be 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, Catholic 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 fulfill 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 wishlist 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 Secu-Network Reimritv bursement 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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### Libby

### Continued from page 3

sitioning from service to civilian life is finding employment. To recognize businesses that make the effort to employ veterans, the U.S. Department of Labor launched the HIRE Vets Medallion Award Program, which is the only federal award program that recognizes employers who recruit. retain, and employ veterans. Over 1,000 employers have been recognized for their commitment to recruiting, employing, and retaining America's veterans.

Applications for the program will open on January 31. The HIRE Vets Medallion Award is based on a variety of criteria, including veteran hiring and retention to providing veteran-specific resources, leadership programming, dedicated human resources, and compensation and tuition assistance programs.

To learn more, and to create an account to apply, go to HireVets.gov

### 11 years of Citizens United

Thursday, Jan. 21 marked the 11th anniversary of the Supreme Court's ruling on Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission, which allowed corporations to spend unlimited amounts of money in campaigns. The decision equates political spending with political speech, which is protected under the First Amendment. This decision fundamentally changed how political campaigns in this country are financed and gave wealthy donors and big corporations greater influence in elections.

In Maine, my colleagues and I have worked to pass campaign finance reform laws and limit the influence of lobbyists and wealthy corporations in government. See a statement about Citizens United at http://bitly.ws/borZ

You deserve a government and elected officials that work for everyday people, not for whoever can write the biggest check.

### Vaccine Continued from page 9

noted "Just over a quarter of long term care facilities surveyed recently in Maine said less than half of staffers are willing to get the coronavirus vaccine, a trend that could hamper efforts to prevent deadly outbreaks as vulnerable residents overwhelmingly accept the shots."

And yes, the vaccinations went quickly and not painful at all. A few routine questions about allergies, the flu shot, any reaction, the shot is ready, the arm exposed, done! Most refused the band aid offered as no tiny droplet of blood appeared. Not a wince, nothing felt. I myself can attest to that. I felt nothing. I noticed earlier when the shots were given. it was a very tiny needle.

At the end of the day, Mark Prevost, Director Residential Services, said, "I could not have been more pleased with everyone. Every Tenant got the vaccine and was patient even though we had four unexpected Breaks to wait for vaccine reconstitution. We started 20 minutes late. took on 14 unscheduled Tenants and still finished 'on time'"

John Rice, Director of Operations at Schoo-

ner Estates, who has done a magnificent job with in forcing the rules and guidelines to keep tenants and staff safe from the coronavirus, said, "When I received word that we were finally going to get the vaccine I felt a sense of relief and anxiety all at the same time. It was great to know the vaccine was finally coming but the thought of getting close to 200 people through the clinic in a quick period of time felt overwhelming. It didn't take long though, to put that aside as the management team drew up our plans. Our gratitude and excitement carried us through. The whole team rallied, stayed nimble, and we tackled each logistical challenge swiftly. I'm so proud of everyone who came in on their day off, who worked hard behind the scenes to complete the paperwork ahead of time, and to all the tenants for being patient and understanding as they waited their turn. I have been in this business over 20 years and I have never experienced a sense of community, family, and purpose as I have working at Schooner Estates. I love and appreciate my team, the tenants, and all the family and friends of Schooner."

### **Dental scholarship for local graduate**



Christian Labonte, a student at the Tufts University School of Dental Medicine, was among 21 students who recently received 2020 Alva S. Appleby Scholarships from the Maine Dental Association. (Photo courtesy of Maine Dental)

### **From Maine Dental**

MANCHESTER - A local graduate was selected to receive the 2020 Alva S. Appleby Scholarship from the Maine Dental Association Charitable Foundation.

graduate of Lewiston High School who attends the Tufts University School of Dental Medicine, was one of 21 students that were selected for the scholarship. Each of the students

was awarded \$2,500. To be considered for the an-Christian Labonte, a nual Appleby Scholarship,

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be currently enrolled in a

dental school accredited by

the American Dental Asso-

Foundation also provided

\$50,000 earlier in 2020 to

the MDA to purchase per-

sonal protective equipment

for dental offices in the

Mark and Lisa-Marie La-

the Maine Dental Associa-

tion is a professional mem-

bership organization. The

MDA works to support

members in achieving ex-

cellence in dentistry and to

be leaders in oral health in

Maine. For more informa-

tion about the MDA, go to

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Laureate praises Amanda Gorman

WMTW Channel 8 spoke with Lewiston Youth Poet Laureate Ryleigh Mae Emmert last week about Youth Poet Laureate Amanda Gorman's poem and performance at the inauguration of President Joe Biden on Wednesday. I'm always so amazed by the talented individuals right here in Lewiston. Join me in wishing Ryleigh Mae the best of luck in her competition next month.

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

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### Page 12

# **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  $46^{th}$  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)



MIKE AND FRANK ARE LOOKING FOR LARGE, RARE COLLECTIONS & THINGS THEY'VE NEVER SEEN BEFORE. TELL US THE INTERESTING STORY BEHIND YOUR STUFF! 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

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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 http://www.lewistonat maine.gov/2021cc

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

# Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

6 p.m.

Council workshop via

Zoom at http://www.lewis-

7 p.m.

vation Commission meet-

WEDNESDAY

Feb. 10

4:30 p.m.

ton-Auburn Transit Com-

6:30 p.m.

Recreation Advisory Board

7 p.m.

MONDAY

Feb. 15

Presidents' Day

TUESDAY

Feb. 16

7:30 a.m.

Public Library Board of

8 a.m.

nance Committee meeting

Trustees meeting.

via Zoom.

AUBURN - Auburn

GORHAM - Ordi-

meeting.

mittee (LATC) meeting.

AUBURN - Lewis-

AUBURN - Parks &

GORHAM - School

GORHAM - Conser-

tonmaine.gov/2021cc

ing via Zoom.

LEWISTON - City

THURSDAY Feb. 4

4 p.m. AUBURN – Cable TV Advisory Board meeting.

> 4-5 p.m. AUBURN - The Au-

burn 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.

iston 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.

6:30 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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4 p.m. AUBURN - Auburn Sewer District Trustees meeting.

6 p.m. AUBURN - Conservation Commission meeting. 6 p.m. LEWISTON - City Council meeting.

Committee meeting via Zoom. LEWISTON - Lew-



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

CATEGORY:

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### LEWISTON SENIOR CITIZENS TRAVEL WASHINGTON, D.C. -TRIPS POSTPONED TIL

FURTHER NOTICE: MACKINAC ISLAND -Trip includes 8 nights lodging and 14 meals, visit to Mackinac Island with a guided Carriage Tour during their Tulip Celebration. Also includes boat ride through Soo Locks, Sault Saint Marie and Makinaw Crossings with a visit to "Michigan's Little Bavaria". A \$75.00 deposit is due when signing up. Price is \$859.00 pp double occupancy.

VIRGINIA BEACH, COLONIAL WILLIAMS-BURG & HISTORIC NORFOLK -

SEPTEMBER 14 - 19, 2020. Trip includes 5 nights lodging, 8 meals. Colonial Williamsburg, free time on the Virginia Beach Boardwalk, dinner cruise with entertainment on the Spirit of Norfolk, admission to Nauticus and Battleship Wisconsin, Virginia Beach Aquarium and Marine Science Center. A \$75.00 deposit is due when signing up. Price is \$775.00 pp double occupancy.

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

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