

## Guest Column: Updates from Gorham Superintendent, Heather Perry



A collage of Gorham students.

By Gorham Superintendent Heather Perry, December 22, 2021

Do you know what I find AMAZING? THIS COMMUNITY. With all that continues to go on in this world, the community of Gorham sticks together. We remain focused on our children. Supporting them, teaching them, and most of all loving them.

I know many of you are concerned about your children and what this pandemic is doing to them. You are asking questions like:

- Will my child be prepared for middle school, high school, college or beyond?

- Is my child getting what they need? Not just academically but socially and emotionally as well?

- Are they happy? Will they be happy?

- Am I doing enough as a parent/teacher/leader/caregiver to support them?

I want you to know that when I walk around our schools, what I see represents

all that is RIGHT in this world. I cannot answer the questions above 100% accurately for each and every student, but what I can say is that for the vast majority of the students the answer is YES down the line!

What I see in our schools, classrooms, playgrounds and cafeterias are smiling students (yes - even behind those masks). I hear laughter. I hear joy. I hear curiosity. I hear friendship. I see our code of conduct values come to life (Respect, Honesty, Courage, Compassion, Responsibility) and I hear the “buzz” that can only be created in classrooms full of engaged and curious minds.

I hear and see some struggles too. Learning does not come without struggle. But I see patience, compassion, and learning driving all that we do. Focused not on punishment, but on restoration and repair.

I see what these pictures show. That for all the negatives this pandemic world is throwing at us, our children are safe, they are supported, and they continue to remain curious and learn. I hope you can

see that in the pictures too and know that each of YOU as parents contribute to these things as much, if not more, than we do.

When I say I am amazed at this community...I am telling the truth. It takes a true “village” to raise a child and that old saying is all that more important as we continue to navigate our way TOGETHER through our pandemic challenges.

### A REMINDER OF OUR CRISIS RESPONSE PLANS

As I have said many times now, the events of Friday, Dec. 17 are not ones any of us wish to repeat anytime soon. However, these events also remind us that our schools are fully prepared to meet the varying challenges that come to us in today’s complex world. Whether it be Tik Tok threats, or gas leaks, or bomb threats, and most anything in between, it is important to know that our schools “have a plan for that” because we do.

Our public facing Crisis Plan can be found on our website for review by parents and community members. Please know, however that there is A LOT more that goes into our plans than what is seen here. We keep this more detailed information confidential purposefully for reasons I hope you can understand.

Additionally, I want folks to be aware that we update all of our full school plans annually and we provide a report to the Gorham School Committee in executive session each year to ensure our plans are kept up to date and maintain all needed information. These plans are also shared with key town entities such as the Gorham PD and Gorham Fire Department.

After each planned or unplanned practice of these procedures, we also meet to debrief what worked well, what didn’t and how we can “tweak” our plans to ensure they remain strong. Folks that sent feedback over the past several days, please know that each has been read and will be used in our debrief process to improve our overall practices moving forward.

### RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES REGARDING SOCIAL MEDIA

As we continue to debrief the experiences of the past week regarding the role that social media may have played in intensifying fears of violence in our schools, I thought it might be helpful to share some

See Superintendent, page 8

## New Year Gorham 2021 Program Information



GORHAM—Gorham Parks and Recreation is excited to announce that New Year Gorham is ON! Over the past several months, the NYG committee has been planning, adjusting, recruiting volunteers, and inviting top-notch entertainment to welcome 2022 with hopeful anticipation!

The committee is planning in-person activities for kids and performances geared for young families, for seniors and for in betweens! Here’s a preview of what to expect:

GHS Cafeteria: New Year Gorham Café 5-8 p.m.

Shaw Gym: Wild Life Encounters (three shows beginning at 3 p.m.); Mad Science (three shows beginning at 3 p.m.); Gail Strattard; and other surprises.

GHS Gym: Dance Studio of Maine 4 p.m.

GHS Performing Arts Stage: Don Roy (Acadian Fiddling) beginning at 5 p.m.; GHS Music performances beginning at 6 p.m.; Antonio Rocha (storyteller extraordinaire) beginning at 7 p.m.; Matt Roberts (magic and more) beginning at 8 p.m.

GHS Athletic Field: Fireworks at 9 p.m.

We are committed to providing a safe and fun event, so all activities will follow CDC guidelines.

Where to buy \$5 admission wristbands: Hannaford in Gorham (99 Main Street); Baxter Memorial Library (71 South Street); Gorham Recreation Department (75 South Street - packages available for families of five or more @ \$25). For More information please visit: <https://www.gorham-me.org/new-year-gorham-committee/pages/2021-program-information>

## GORHAM SCHOOLS

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<https://gorham.maineadulted.org/>  
(You must enroll to attend)



Class full? Sign up to join a wait list for another session!

Questions? Email: [lori.frederick@gorhamschools.org](mailto:lori.frederick@gorhamschools.org)

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# Newsmakers, Names & Faces

## Nearly 60,000 Mainers Signed Up Through CoverME.gov During First Month of Open Enrollment

**AUGUSTA** — The Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Office of the Health Insurance Marketplace (OHIM) announced today that 59,880 Mainers selected plans for affordable health coverage in 2022 through CoverME.gov, Maine's new Health Insurance Marketplace, during the first month of open enrollment. These figures, which were included in a release by the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), for the first time include consumers whose coverage has been automatically renewed for 2022, in addition to consumers who proactively visited CoverME.gov to choose a new plan or renew their existing plan.

The number of people with CoverME.gov plan selections from November 1 through November 27 for the 2022

Open Enrollment Period already exceeds the total of 59,738 plan selections for the 2021 Open Enrollment Period that ended December 15, 2020, when Maine used the federal HealthCare.gov platform.

Mainers have until December 15 to apply and enroll in a plan that takes effect on January 1, 2022. The transition to the State-based Marketplace, CoverME.gov, allowed Maine to extend the Open Enrollment Period, so this year consumers have until January 15, 2022, to enroll in a plan that takes effect on February 1, 2022.

"Four weeks into open enrollment, tens of thousands of Maine people are already signed up for high-quality, affordable health coverage in 2022," said DHHS Commissioner Jeanne Lam-brew. "As open enrollment continues, we urge anyone in need of health

insurance to visit CoverME.gov to check out their options and encourage consumers to come back to complete their applications by December 15 to start the new year with coverage."

CMS reported that nationwide, nearly 4.6 million Americans signed up for 2022 individual health insurance coverage through the federal Marketplace, HealthCare.gov, and state-based Marketplaces including CoverME.gov, from the start of the 2022 open enrollment period on November 1, 2021 through November 27, 2021. In Maine, 13,820 people actively selected a plan during this period, while coverage for 46,060 consumers was automatically renewed.

Plan selections provide a snapshot of activity by new and returning consumers who have selected a plan for 2022. "Plan selections" become "en-

rollments" once consumers have paid their first monthly premium to begin coverage. These numbers are subject to change as consumers may modify or cancel plans after their initial selection. OHIM is reporting plan selections every two weeks during open enrollment. The most recent snapshot, released December 2, is available on the Maine DHHS blog and on CoverME.gov.

This year, additional federal financial assistance makes coverage more affordable than ever. With extra assistance from the American Rescue Plan, nearly 25 percent of consumers in Maine enrolled in a plan in 2021 with a monthly premium of \$10 or less. This assistance will continue to be available in 2022. Even those who were not eligible in the past can likely get assistance to lower monthly premiums and other out-of-pocket costs.

OHIM has launched a comprehensive marketing campaign to raise awareness of Maine consumers' options for coverage through the Marketplace, including social and digital media, ads on buses, bus shelters, diner placemats, TV and radio, and outreach to previously underserved populations including Maine's immigrant communities. This engagement also includes an Outreach and Enrollment Toolkit for community partners, which is now available and translated into nine languages.

Health plans offered on CoverME.gov provide quality, comprehensive private coverage that will protect consumers if they have an accident or major illness, and support preventive screenings and visits. This year, 71 health plans are being offered through CoverME.gov. Free enrollment help is available to help con-

sumers find the plan that meets their needs and budget. For information, visit [coverme.gov/local-help](http://coverme.gov/local-help) or call (866) 636-0355/TTY 711 (for languages other than English, choose option 4).

As in previous years, those who already have a Marketplace plan are automatically re-enrolled in their current plan or the most similar offering from their health insurance carrier. However, consumers are encouraged to visit CoverME.gov to check out new plans and update their family and income information, as new financial assistance is available that may offer more affordable coverage that best meets their needs.

People who apply through CoverME.gov who are eligible for MaineCare will have their application sent to MaineCare for review. Eligible Maine people can enroll in MaineCare at any time of year.

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### Red Cross Provides Support to Veterans and Caregivers

This past Veterans Day, November 11th, 2021, the American Red Cross honored veterans and recognized the special role that caregivers play in their care. Serving more than 8,200 caregivers worldwide, the Military Veteran Caregiver Network (MVCN) offers caregivers peer mentors, peer support groups, an online community as well as mental health, wellness and resiliency workshops. The network seeks to decrease feelings of isolation and increase feelings of connection, hope and well-being.

"Between COVID-19, international conflict and

even the impact to communities and livelihoods from repeated natural disasters, mental health has been a struggle for so many of us in the military community," said Celeste Stimpson, Red Cross Service to the Armed Forces Regional Director. "Our caregivers are serving a vital role on the front lines of this battle, needing more support and resources now than ever."

The MVCN provides caregivers the ability to connect in a confidential environment that's best for them. Their peer mentor program helps meet the specific needs of caregivers one-on-one, while peer support groups connect caregivers facing similar challenges. They offer secure online caregiver only communities to create a

supportive network that is accessible without having to leave home. Here in Maine, veterans and their caregivers report that the compounding effects of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the recent withdrawal from Afghanistan have created additional stressors. In recent months, MVCN saw an increase in the use of our Hero Care Resource Directory, which provides access to over 800 resources in every zip code in America specifically designed for veterans, service members, caregivers and their families.

Many Red Cross volunteers are veterans who continue to support their communities after their active-duty service ends. Also, about 6% of Red Cross employees include

transitioning military or veterans—from nurses to logisticians, emergency management experts, project managers and preparedness experts, as well as a number of veterans in leadership roles at local Red Cross chapters across the country. Tens of thousands of Red Cross volunteers also serve in Veterans Administration (VA) and military hospitals across the nation and around the world. These volunteers support such areas as rehabilitation, recreation, administration, and personal services to the men and women who are now cared for each day in these facilities. To learn more about how you can give back in your community this Veterans Day, visit [redcross.org/volunteer](http://redcross.org/volunteer).

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# Newsmakers, Names & Faces

## Veterans Targeted by Scams

Maine's 126,842 military veterans and active-duty service members are at risk of being targeted by scammers. According to a new AARP report, veterans, military, and their families are nearly 40% more likely to lose money to scams and fraud than the civilian population. Additionally, 4 out of 5 military/veteran adults were targeted by scams directly related to their military service or the benefits they receive.

"Our research stresses the need for Maine's veterans and their families to stay up-to-date on the latest scams and how to avoid them," said Jane

Margesson, AARP Maine Communications Director. "AARP Maine continues to fight for those who proudly served our state by arming them with information and resources to avoid the financial and emotional impact of scams and fraud."

Scammers often use military jargon and specific government guidelines to craft an effective pitch to steal money from military members and veterans. One in three military/veteran adults reported losing money to these types of service-related scams. Of those who lost money, the top scams reported include the following:

**Benefit Buyouts:** Turning over U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) pension and/or disability benefits for a supposed lump-sum payment that never materializes (47%).  
**Fraudulent records scam:** Paying for updated personal military records (32%).  
**The fake charitable giving request:** Donating to fake veteran charities (32%).

Other key findings include military/veteran adults reported losing more money than civilians on the grandparent-impostor scam (more than twice as often) and financial phishing schemes (nearly twice as

often). Nearly half of military/veteran adults reported they are not using a robo-call blocking service and over 1 in 4 have not registered their phone numbers on the National Do Not Call Registry. 81% of military/veteran adults have not placed a security freeze on their credit report.

To make scams easier to spot, AARP's Fraud Watch Network recommends signing up for the National Do Not Call Registry and using a call-blocking service. Additional measures include using strong and unique passwords for each online account; using two-factor

authentication when available; and placing a free security freeze on credit reports at each of the three major credit bureaus. Also, veterans never have to pay for their service records or earned benefits—if told otherwise, it's a scam.

**Operation Protect Veterans**—a joint program of the AARP Fraud Watch Network and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service—helps Maine's veterans, service members and their families to protect against fraud. The Fraud Watch Network also offers biweekly fraud alerts and a free helpline (877-908-3360) through which veter-

ans, military, and the public can report suspected scams. The AARP Watchdog Alert Handbook: Veterans' Edition explains 10 ways that con artists target veterans. For more information and resources for veterans on the latest fraud and scams, visit [www.aarp.org/veterans](http://www.aarp.org/veterans).

The survey was administered in August 2021 to a total of 1,660 people: 851 active or former U.S. military respondents and 809 non-military (civilian) adults ages 18 and older using NORC's AmeriSpeak Internet Panel. The margin of error is 4.40% at the 90% confidence level.

## Senators Collins, King Announce \$4 Million to Bolster Health Services in Maine

Washington, D.C. — U.S. Senators Susan Collins and Angus King announced that two organizations in the State of Maine have received a total of \$4,047,727 to strengthen health care services. This funding

was awarded through the Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Health Center Cluster Program.

"Access to affordable care is key to protecting the health and well-being of Mainers,

particularly amid the ongoing pandemic," said Senators Collins and King in a joint statement. "We welcome this funding to support health centers in Lubeck and Portland as they work to serve members of their

communities. We will continue to advocate for necessary resources to help Mainers stay healthy through this public health emergency and beyond."

The funding was allocated as follows:

Lubeck Regional Medical Center received \$1,176,208.

Portland Community Health Center received \$2,871,519.

The health centers will use the funding to improve access to health

care by building healthy communities, strengthening the health care workforce, and achieving health equity. The program targets the economic and medically vulnerable as well as the geographically isolated.

## Treasurer Beck Checking List Twice To See Who Has Unclaimed Property

Augusta, ME -- Maine Treasurer, Henry Beck wants YOU to help us spread some holiday cheer!

The Office of the State Treasurer is currently holding over \$292 million in unclaimed property that could fill your stocking ... or the stocking of your loved ones ... this holiday season.

In Treasurer Beck's search of the list of over 4 million accounts, he noted many holiday-themed first and last names that currently have thousands and thousands in unclaimed property. Rudolph, Santa, Frosty, Holly, Sabbath and Emmanuel ALL have un-

claimed property awaiting them. How about Peace, Joy and Love? Jack Frost? How about Claus, Noel, Carol or Holiday? Is YOUR name among the 4 million?

According to Beck, "We even show the name Scrooge among those who have unclaimed property." Going to the unclaimed property website could be the best gift you could give yourself and those you love this holiday season.

Don't wait a moment longer. Get into the holiday spirit and go to [www.maineunclaimedproperty.gov](http://www.maineunclaimedproperty.gov) and look for your name and the names of the people on YOUR list. It's easy and

it's free! Our average claim size this year has been \$585. Our largest claim this year so far has been for over \$377,000 and in November, one claim yielded \$203,000!

What is unclaimed property?

Unclaimed property consists of money and other financial assets that are considered lost or abandoned when an owner cannot be located after a specified period of time of inactivity. It includes items such as bank accounts, uncashed checks, life insurance policies, unpaid wages, stocks and dividends, refunds, and safe deposit

box contents. Unclaimed property does not include real estate, animals or vehicles.

Each and every year, tens of millions of dollars go unclaimed by Maine residents. These financial assets are turned over by thousands of national and local businesses and organizations by a law called MRSA Title 33, Chapter 45: Maine Revised Unclaimed Property Act. For more information, see: <http://legislature.maine.gov/statutes/33/title33ch45sec0.html>. The Treasurer's office holds these assets, free of charge, until claimed by the owner or heir. The State

is currently holding over \$292,000,000 in unclaimed property. In the month of November, 1,397 claims were made against unclaimed property totaling \$842,384.83 in payments to Maine people. The highest single claim paid in the month of November was for \$203,000.

The Office of the Treasurer of State is established in Article V, Part Third of

*the Constitution of the State of Maine. The core duties of the Treasurer's Office are debt management, cash management, trust fund administration and unclaimed property administration. Other major tasks assigned to the Treasurer are directorships on many of Maine's quasi-governmental debt issuing agencies and distributions under the Municipal Revenue Sharing Program.*

# Gorham WEEKLY

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# Seniors Not Acting Their Age

## A Mountain Less Traveled



Two climbers ascend Perpendicular Trail on Mansell Mountain

By Ron Chase  
For many years the Penobscot Paddle and Chowder Society has held its annual fall supper and outdoor festival on Mount Desert Island over a three-day October weekend. Chowderheads were back again this year. The adventure menu consisted of hiking, biking, sea kayaking, canoe racing, and various other escapades.

While many of us arrived the Friday before the formal festivities commenced to enjoy biking or hiking, the first full day of scheduled events began Saturday morning. Several

members decided on a sea kayak trip to Baker Island, and club president, Helen Hess, led a hike on Mansell and Bernard Mountains in Acadia National Park on the west side of the island.

Since the two peaks, collectively known as Western Mountain, are infrequently hiked, an enthusiastic group of nine Chowderheads signed on. The outing was particularly appealing as participants were able to avoid the crowds found on the more popular park mountains during leaf peeping season. Yet, the quest would still provide a challenging

mountaineering experience in a very scenic area.

There are several routes that lead to the Western Mountain peaks in a hodgepodge of paths known as the West Side Trails. Helen chose to begin our excursion at the south end of Long Pond on a trail of the same name. Her intent was to complete a loop hike over Mansell and Bernard Mountains.

Ours was decidedly a senior group since six of us were retired or otherwise over-the-hill. Recuperating from hip surgery, I was the weak link. Fortunately, considerate companions encouraged my participation.

We began our trek with a short walk along the shore of Long Pond to a left turn onto the most stimulating trail in the network, Perpendicular Trail. While rated difficult, it was not as precipitous as the name implies. We initially progressed steeply up stone steps in a boulder field on the east side of Mansell. Iron rungs and ladder were easily negotiated by our intrepid group. An overlook on the right, a little

short of the Mansell summit provided exceptional views of Beech Mountain, Long Pond, and the islands of eastern Penobscot Bay beyond. After savoring the panorama from the overlook, the wooded summit was a bit of a disappointment.

From the top, we followed the Mansell Mountain Trail for a short distance to Razorback Trail junction on the right. Another right turn led us down to Great Notch prior to beginning a steep ascent negotiating over cliffs on a rough heavily rooted path. The incline moderated as we passed Knight Nubble before descending to Little Notch.

In the notch, it was decision-making time. One alternative was to climb to the summit of Bernard and return to Little Notch for a shorter descent on Sluiceway Trail. Another was to continue over Bernard Mountain and follow the markedly longer Bernard Mountain Trail downward. Both concluded at Mill Field Trailhead. Our undaunted group unanimously chose the extended trek.

According to park literature, Bernard Mountain is the most remote and least traveled peak in Acadia National Park. We selected the summit for a lunch break despite limited views. However, a nearby spur trail led us to a viewpoint that offered partial vistas.

Gradually descending south and then east on the heavily forested Bernard Mountain Trail, loquacious Chowderheads found easy hiking provided an excellent opportunity for spirited conversation. Shared past adventures were popular topics.

The Mill Field Trail-

head provided us with more trail options. After some discussion, we decided to follow a dirt road for a short distance to Gilley Trail which continued to the Gilley Field Trailhead. From there, we proceeded on the pleasant Cold Brook Trail back to our original point of departure.

While one participant's GPS measured the entire loop to be 5.6 miles, park maps calculate the distance to be 4.6 miles. Mansell has an elevation of 949 feet and Bernard is 1,071. The total elevation gain on the trek is 1,236 feet.

We found the excursion to be a great way to enjoy our first full day in the outdoor paradise. Although I slowed the group

considerably, I think they appreciated the opportunity for additional camaraderie. At least that's my rationalization.

After a convivial outdoor supper that evening on a club member's property, we had more island exploits to look forward to during the following two days.

The author of "The Great Mars Hill Bank Robbery" and "Mountains for Mortals - New England," Ron Chase resides in Topsham. His latest book, "The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine" will soon be released by North Country Press. Visit his website at [www.ronchase-outdoors.com](http://www.ronchase-outdoors.com) or he can be reached at [ronchaseoutdoors@comcast.net](mailto:ronchaseoutdoors@comcast.net).



A hiker enjoys the view from Mansell Mountain Overlook



A group descends ledges on Bernard Mountain

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# Beware of Puppy Scams

Better Business Bureau (BBB) serving Upstate South Carolina warns of ongoing puppy scams with recent complaints regarding "Divine Frenchies Home," located in Spartanburg, SC and Waltham, MA. One consumer reported a total loss of \$4,300 and another lost \$1,350. The website of the supposed French bulldog breeder, divinefrenchieshome.com, contains pictures of puppies claiming to be American Kennel Club registered and boasts positive customer reviews. However, a major red flag can be found in the shipping and delivery information.

Complaints and BBB Scam Tracker details state that the breeder requires a specified amount of money (often \$1,000, \$1,350 or \$1,750) through Zelle, Venmo, Google Pay, Apple

Pay or PayPal to a "Harry Jones." On some occasions, the breeder or shipping/delivery company messages again regarding additional fees for crate, shipping, insurance, etc. After payment is made, no further notifications are received.

Upon further investigation, BBB of the Upstate discovered the website matches another puppy website, poeticfrenchbulldogshome.com, with a business address in Alexandria, VA. The About Us section matches, and all available puppy photos are identical. These two sites also share the same phone number. Greenfield Bulldogs is another breeder name that appeared in customer reviews.

Also, Google Reviews were posted by Lawson Barry and Matthew Kucinski, who own the

Spartanburg location, stating it's a scam and urging people to stop showing up at this address as it is a private residence and not a business. Another Google Review was posted by Sandra Sousa in Waltham, MA, stating to stop using her address as there are no dogs or business at the address.

BBB has provided several ways to avoid becoming a victim of a pet scam. First, do your research by checking BBB Business Profiles on BBB.org for complaints and customer reviews before you make the purchase. Next, do not buy a pet without seeing it in person. If that is not possible, request a live video call to view the animal, meet the breeder, and evaluate the facility. In addition, conduct a reverse image search of the



Considering a darling dog as an addition to your home? Remember to do your research and check BBB.org to ensure you are purchasing your pup from a verified business.

picture of the pet you are considering. If the same picture appears on multiple websites, it is likely a fraud. Further, avoid wiring money, using a cash app, or gift card as payment methods. These payment methods

offer no way to get your money back if you are the victim of fraud. Remember to always get a sense of a fair price for the breed you are considering.

Visit BBB.org/pet-scams for more red flags

and scam prevention tips. Always look for businesses that follow BBB Accreditation Standards and BBB Standards for Trust. If you encounter suspicious activity, you can report scams to BBB Scam Tracker.

## Senator Collins Co-Sponsors Bill Tackling Critical Doctor Shortage

In order to address the shortage of medical professionals in Maine and across the United States, which has been underscored most recently by the COVID-19 pandemic, U.S. Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) co-sponsored the Rural Physician Workforce Production Act to attract more doctors to rural areas.

"This legislation would extend an important program to address the shortage of primary care

doctors, which has been exacerbated in rural and underserved communities by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic," said Senator Collins. "I urge all of my colleagues to support this important legislation to help train the next generation of physicians and ensure all Americans have access to quality health services."

One of the greatest indicators of where a doctor will practice is the loca-

tion of their residency, but some rural hospitals cannot afford to take on new residents, despite the need for more physicians. The Rural Physician Workforce Production Act addresses the geographic maldistribution of physicians across the U.S. stemming from the current structure of Medicare-funded graduate medical education (GME). The bill lifts the current caps on Medicare reimbursement payments to ru-

ral hospitals that cover the cost of taking on residents, eliminating the serious disadvantage that rural hospitals face when recruiting new medical professionals.

The bill also allows Medicare to reimburse urban hospitals that send residents to train at rural health care facilities during a resident rotation, and it establishes a per resident

payment initiative to ensure rural hospitals have the resources to bring on additional residents.

The Rural Physician Workforce Production Act is supported by the Council of Academic Family Medicine, the American Academy of Family Physicians, the National Rural Health Association, and the American Association

of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine.

In addition to Senator Collins, the legislation was co-sponsored by Senators Jon Tester (D-MT), John Barrasso (R-WY), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Kevin Cramer (R-ND), Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-MS), Jacky Rosen (D-NV), John Boozman (R-AR), and Shelley Capito (R-WV).

### 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!

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# Arts & Entertainment

## Maine-ly Harmony Invites Women and Girls to Participate in Online Rehearsals



Maine-ly Harmony Chorus

Maine-ly Harmony is an a cappella women's chorus directed by Kathy Greason. Members hail from several counties around the state, singing the barber-shop style of four-part harmony. In the past, we have performed for a Portland Sea Dogs game, as well as being honored to open the Legislative session at the State House in Augusta with the National Anthem. We have enthusiastically helped numerous organizations to fundraise, including

the Maine Autism Society, the Westport Fire Department and Lisbon Area Christian Outreach food pantry, and have contributed to special events such as Senior Spectrum's Lifestyle Expo at the Augusta Civic Center and the Togus Veterans Administration's 9/11 commemorative services. We have performed at the Marsh River Summer Theater in Brooks, the Waterville Opera House, Jewett Hall on the UMA campus, and the Sawyer Foundation

in Greene. We offer our musical programs to church and civic group organizations, and for the residents of retirement, veterans' and nursing homes throughout the state.

Due to the pandemic, we currently hold our weekly Wednesday evening rehearsals on Zoom. We invite women and girls of all ages to join us at a Zoom rehearsal to learn more about us. Call Lea at 207-622-1273 or Nancy at 207-293-4779 for more information.

## New Ventures Maine Executive Director of 43 Years To Retire

AUGUSTA, ME—University of Maine at Augusta (UMA) Vice President of Enrollment Management and Marketing Jonathan Henry announced that New Ventures Maine (NVME) Western Region Manager and Statewide Asset Manager Janet Smith was chosen through an extensive search to succeed Gilda Nardone as she retires after 43 years of service as NVME's executive director.

"Gilda has lifted up thousands of people across our state and beyond over a lifetime of dedication to her work," said Henry. "She

has also mentored her staff to take on leadership roles, and Janet is an excellent example of that guidance manifested professionally. Janet has the expertise, experience, and passion to lead New Ventures Maine into the future."

In her 43 years as executive director, Nardone guided the organization in its establishment as Displaced Homemakers beginning in 1978, as it grew into Maine Centers for Women, Work, and Community in the mid-1990s, and as it became New Ventures Maine in 2015. Throughout her tenure, Nardone has been

an advocate for women pursuing career changes, entrepreneurial opportunities, and financial literacy.

"I've worked with so many people who have followed their aspirations and dreams, and they've accomplished amazing things," said Nardone. "I look forward to staying connected and continuing to champion the organization," she said.

Smith joined New Ventures Maine in 2001 as the Farmington Center Coordinator, and in 2004, she became the Regional Manager for the Western Region, including Franklin, Androscoggin, and

Oxford Counties. She has helped develop and teaches NVME's comprehensive money-management and career-planning classes, along with teaching other workshops for twenty-plus years. She also designed, developed, and implemented NVME's Rainy Day Savings Program and has spent seven years leading CASH Maine statewide activities. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Plant Science from the University of Maine and a Master of Science in Adult Education from the University of Southern Maine. Smith is a Gorman Fellow (Cohort

3) and a graduate of Leadership Maine 2014-15, Chi Class, as well as a member of several state and local boards, committees and networks.

"As Gilda leaves New Ventures Maine, we have a tremendous legacy to build upon," Smith said. "I am passionate about people working toward economic security and I believe education, empowerment, and access to financial assets are critical tools for strengthening families and communities."

Smith started her new role on Monday, November 1 and Nardone will assist

with the transition through December 31, 2021.

*New Ventures Maine is a statewide education and economic development program administered through UMA/University of Maine System. The mission of NVME is to help Maine people succeed in the changing economy and achieve economic security for themselves and their families. NVME achieves its mission by providing training and individual coaching in planning careers, starting businesses, managing money and building assets, and developing leaders.*

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# UMaine Extension Market Gardener and Farmer Training Begins Jan. 11



Soil health and crop planning, no-till production, vegetable and fruit production, food safety, integrated pest management, tools and equipment, and marketing and farm economics are topics to be covered in this program.

University of Maine Cooperative Extension Maine AgrAbility is offering a nine-month hybrid training program for all beginning farmers of all abilities interested in growing and selling their own farm produce. The program begins online January 11<sup>th</sup> and continues twice monthly through September 6<sup>th</sup>, including farm field days.

“Boots-2-Bushels: Boot Camp for Market Gardeners and Farmers” topics include soil health and crop planning, no-till production, vegetable and fruit production, food safety, integrated pest management, tools and equipment, and marketing and farm economics. Instructors include UMaine Extension, MOFGA and local farmer subject matter experts.

The \$100 fee includes course materials. Registration is open through November 17<sup>th</sup> to veterans, family members, and beginning farmers with disabilities. It is open to all thereafter. Space is limited for this program. Registra-

tion may be completed on the program webpage. For more information or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact Anne Devin, 207.505.0722; anne.devin@maine.edu. More details and a course schedule are available on the Boots-2-Bushels webpage.

As a trusted resource for over 100 years, University of Maine Cooperative Extension has supported UMaine’s land and sea grant public education role by conducting community-driven, research-based programs in every Maine county. UMaine Extension helps support, sustain and grow the food-based economy. It is the only entity in the state that touches every aspect of the Maine Food System, where policy, research, production, processing, commerce, nutrition, and food security and safety are integral and interrelated. UMaine Extension also conducts the most successful out-of-school youth educational program in Maine through 4-H.

*The University of Maine, founded in Orono in 1865, is the state’s land grant, sea grant and space grant university, with a regional campus at the University of Maine at Machias. UMaine is located on Marsh Island in the homeland of the Penobscot Nation. UMaine Machias is located in the homeland of the Passamaquoddy Nation. As Maine’s flagship public university, UMaine has a statewide mission of teaching, research and economic development, and community service. UMaine is the state’s only public research university and among the most comprehensive higher education institutions in the Northeast. It attracts students from all 50 states and 81 countries. UMaine currently enrolls 11,989 undergraduate and graduate students, and UMaine Machias enrolls 747 undergraduates. Their students have opportunities to participate in groundbreaking research with world-class scholars. UMaine offers more than 100 degree pro-*

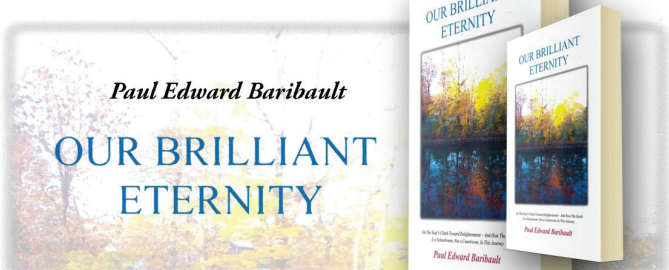
grams through which students can earn master’s, doctoral or professional science master’s degrees, as well as graduate certificates. UMaine Machias

offers 18 degree programs. The university promotes environmental stewardship, with substantial efforts campus-wide to conserve energy, recycle and adhere

to green building standards in new construction. For more information about UMaine and UMaine Machias, visit [umaine.edu](http://umaine.edu) and [machias.edu](http://machias.edu).



UMaine is excited to launch this educational program to the benefit of farmers at all skill levels.



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## Superintendent

*Continued from page 1*

resources with families to talk about social media and its role in our lives. Please know we continue to provide strong instruction on this topic with students while at school...but with this one, "tag-teaming" is likely the best approach! If we're all sending the same messages, it is definitely harder for students to ignore us!

As we all know, social media can have many positive benefits. It can keep us connected and help us to celebrate each other and the great things that we do. Unfortunately, it can also be a place where hateful messages and words can be shared, and fear induced. Social media is, in itself, a very human creation and with it comes the reflection of all humans. Good and bad. It is important that we constantly

talk with our children and remind them about how these incredibly powerful communication tools can be used for "good" and "pure" purposes or also used for more nefarious reasons and how to ensure they themselves are using this digital medium in alignment with our code of conduct.

First, and foremost - in particular reference to threats of violence towards our schools or anyone/thing in our community, it is important for children to know that the very first thing they should do if/when they come across this is to take a screen shot of the image or post. Then, **AND THIS IS IMPORTANT**, as tempting as it may be to forward it on to a friend to make sure they know about it or have seen it please **DO NOT** do that. It only adds to the spread of fear. Instead, what stu-

dents should do is take that screen shot and send that along to a trusted adult immediately. That could be their parents, trusted adult family members, a teacher, school admin. or even a trusted law enforcement officer. Bottom line, it's important to let an adult know what the threat may be so that we can appropriately respond, but it is equally important not to accidentally create additional fear by spreading it around.

That advice and more can be found in some of the incredible resources I've posted on my blog for families. Please check these resources out and talk with your child about their use of social media often:

See <https://gorham-superintendent.blogspot.com/2021/12/december-22-blog-post.html?m=1> for resources.

**CONTACT TRAC-**

## ING OVER THE HOLIDAY BREAK

Similar to what we did over the Thanksgiving Break, we will not be conducting contact tracing protocols over holiday break.

If you become aware of a positive case of COVID 19 between Dec. 24 - Jan. 2 that impacts our schools, we would ask you to please email the building principal and cc the school nurse with all pertinent information such as name and grade of child, test date, symptoms date, etc. School admin. and nurses will review this information and then follow up as needed on Monday, Jan. 3, 2022 when we return to school. Contact information for emails is below:

Great Falls:

- Becky Fortier,  
Principal - becky.fortier@gorhamschools.org

- Melissa Tringali,  
Nurse - melissa.tringali@gorhamschools.org

Narragansett:  
- Cynthia Remick,  
Principal - cynthia.remick@gorhamschools.org

- Collette Andreasen,  
Nurse - collette.andreasen@gorhamschools.org

Village:  
- Jodi Mezzanotte,  
Principal - jodi.mezzanotte@gorhamschools.org

- Carrie Chasse,  
Nurse - carrie.chasse@gorhamschools.org

GMS:  
- Quinton Donahue,  
Principal - quinton.donahue@gorhamschools.org

- Alicia Murry,  
Nurse - alicia.murry@gorhamschools.org

GHS:  
- Brian Jandreau,  
Principal - brian.jandreau@gorhamschools.org  
- Joyce LaRou,  
Nurse - joyce.larou@gorhamschools.org

**CHANGES TO SCHOOL CONTACT TRACING PROTOCOLS TO BE IMPLEMENTED AFTER THE HOLIDAY BREAK (EFFECTIVE JAN. 3, 2022)**

After conducting research regarding contact tracing protocols in other Regional Cumberland County Schools, we are making adjustments to our contact tracing protocols in an effort to make the long-term viability of conducting these protocols more sustainable for our staff, particularly our nurses and administrative teams. These changes are geared towards continuing to provide for the major purpose of contact tracing (which is to keep positive, symptomatic students out of school in order to prevent/mitigate the spread of COVID 19 within our schools) while balancing the need for our staff not to have to work 24/7.

Therefore, beginning on Monday, January 3, 2021 the Gorham Schools will utilize these new Contact Tracing timelines and communication protocols.

These changes DO NOT impact how close contacts are identified. The Gorham Schools continue to follow the Maine CDC and DHHS Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the identification of close contacts. These changes only impact the timeline for contact tracing protocols and changes in communication of close contacts.

If you have any questions, please contact your school's principal or school nurse. **THANK YOU.**

**Purpose of Contact Tracing:**

The role of contact tracing in the Gorham

schools is to keep positive, symptomatic students out of school in order to mitigate/prevent the spread of COVID 19 in our schools.

Contact tracing processes will only be conducted Monday through Friday during regular operating hours of our schools. There will be no contact tracing over the weekends or during school holidays. If you become aware of a positive case of COVID 19 during a weekend, or over a school Holiday, please email your school's principal and school nurse (list above) but know that contact tracing will not occur until the next regular school day.

Identified close contacts who remain asymptomatic may remain in school to complete their school day. If close contacts CAN go home, they will go home. Parents will be afforded the opportunity to make that decision.

Identified close contacts who become symptomatic during the school day will be sent home. BinaxNOW testing will be provided if approved by the parent/guardian. Symptomatic students will remain in the isolation room until parents are able to pick up.

Communications of close contact by the schools will change. Schools will now follow the protocols below to notify parents that their children are close contacts:

An email will be sent to the parent/guardians of each identified close contact. This email will include all important information such as the date of exposure, dates of quarantine (if needed) and clear guidelines for how to return to school and contact information for who to contact with any questions parents may have.

A text message will be sent to the parent/guardians of each identified close contact as well to ask them to check their email for more information.

The school will follow up with parents via phone to ensure students who need to be picked up are picked up as needed.

We realize many folks may be thinking... hang on - with the state's numbers where they are, with the new Omicron Variant, and with all the frenzy that still seems to exist out there regarding COVID 19, is now really the time to be making these changes? Valid question for sure. In our thorough review, and when weighing all factors, the answer for us is a resounding YES. Below is an outline of the key rationale:

1. First and foremost, without being able to sustain our school admin.

See Superintendent, next page

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**Superintendent**

*Continued from previous page*  
 teams and school nursing staff we can't operate our schools safely - PERIOD. We need to make their jobs and associated responsibilities sustainable over the longer term. It's one thing to ask additional responsibilities of staff in an emergency, but 2+ years is a very long emergency. Our staff have been doing a tremendous job, and they have not asked for anything in return, but the bottom line - contact tracing 24/7 is not sustainable for our people, nor should it have to be in order to maintain safety for our students.

2. Our schools have very high vaccination rates (approx. 90% for 12+ students and 97% for all staff), and parents of 5-11-year-olds who want their children vaccinated will have had the opportunity to be fully vaccinated by the time students return to school on Jan. 3. The best way to make sure we stay safe has been and continues to be vaccination!

3. Our schools will maintain all existing safety protocols to prevent the spread of COVID 19 which data has strongly demonstrated over time work to mitigate the transmission of COVID 19 within our schools. Masking will still be with us, physical distancing when possible, and frequent hand washing/sanitization practices. These three core safety practices have shown their worth and will continue to be the focal point of our prevention strategies while students are at school.

4. Last, but certainly not least - contact tracing WILL STILL OCCUR in a very timely and effective manner in order to perform its purpose. It just won't be 24/7 as it has been for almost two years now.

We hope that these changes allow us to remain responsive to the very real pandemic conditions we find ourselves continuing to operate within while also working towards sustainability of these important services.

Once again, I would be remiss if I didn't also

take the opportunity at the end of this COVID information to encourage folks to first: Get vaccinated (or boosted if you are already vaccinated) and then to wear your masks while indoors, encourage social distancing when possible, and wash/sanitize those hands frequently. I know, been saying that for two years...but important information should be repeated often!

**NEW BINAX NOW TESTING COMING AFTER THE HOLIDAYS**

We've been talking about this for a while now, but just had too many other "irons in the fire" to move forward until now. Beginning after the holidays, we will be offering BINAX NOW testing for students who become symptomatic during the course of the school day. Here's what to expect:

Step 1: A broad parent permission letter will go home to all students K-12. Parents that wish for their children to participate will complete the form and return it to their child's school office.

Step 2: IF the general form is completed, a specific consent form will be sent home for parent to complete and return to the child's school office to be filed.

Step 3: Student who becomes symptomatic while at school is identified.

Step 4: Nurse will verify via files that there is parent permission to provide BINAX NOW test. If time allows, parent permission will also be verified via phone.

Step 5: Student is tested using BINAX NOW test.

Step 6: Results of test are communicated to parent. A Dismissal Form will be completed and shared with parent at pick up.

If you are a parent who is interested in having their child be able to utilize this new tool, please keep your eyes open for these important forms to be sent home when we return from the break.

It is important to emphasize one more

time, this testing is NOT FOR BROAD USE. It is only for use with students who become symptomatic during the school day. We still need families to complete their daily health screener (see handbook) and keep students home if they present with symptoms.

**APPROVED ADDITIONAL EARLY RELEASE DAYS FOR 2022**

I sent a video message out on this last week explaining the rationale for these additional days. Basically, I just wanted to make sure folks had these dates in their calendars for planning purposes. Below is a list of all Early Release days for the remainder of the school year. I have marked the "new" ones vs. the "old" ones so you know which ones were recently approved by the School Committee.

- \* January 12 (new)
- \* January 19 (already existing)
- \* January 26 (new)
- \* February 2 (new)
- \* February 16 (already existing)

The School Committee will be reviewing substitute fill rate data at their January workshop and will then discuss the possibility of whether or not additional ER days will be added to the March/April/May calendar. The additional days they will be considering (so not yet approved) are:

- \* March 9
- \* March 23
- \* April 13
- \* April 27
- \* May 11
- \* May 18.

Again, these decisions will be based primarily on how we are doing with substitute coverages for our classrooms. If we have increased our substitute fill rates to 80% or more, we likely will not consider additional ER dates. If we remain below that rate, we may need to consider these additional days.

**MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES**

We have been working hard to maintain our focus on supporting students and staff during this challenging year with

mental health and social/emotional needs. The Holidays, while a joyful time of year for many, can also be some of the most challenging times of the year for many too.

We are working hard to increase our partnerships with local community-based providers such as the Opportunity Alliance. Just this past week, we worked together to create a poster to remind folks that YOU ARE NEVER ALONE. Just reach out and there is someone to help provide caring and loving support.

Please share as broadly as you can.

I also thought some families might like a resource to better understand how to cope with feelings of anxiety, especially during this continued Pandemic. I've included an article that I think is particularly helpful as a resource to those that might be interested. I hope you find it helpful (see [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Qgeb-dBnAvnKB6Mw1hK\\_fuTlxSi6tIj/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Qgeb-dBnAvnKB6Mw1hK_fuTlxSi6tIj/view?usp=sharing)).

Also, as a reminder to families, the Maine Department of Education has created an incredible resource on the topic of Social Emotional Learning that is free and open to all parents.

**NEW LEARNING FACILITATOR PRO-**

**GRAM ANNOUNCED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SMCC**

The Gorham Schools, in partnership with Southern Maine Community College (SMCC) is announcing a new and exciting program for folks that may have always been interested in working in schools, but perhaps felt they weren't qualified.

Our new "Learning Facilitator" to Educational Technician Training program will begin January 19 and run through June 8, 2022. You can check out the flyer here (and please spread broadly).

Generally speaking, this program will allow individuals who meet min. requirements outlined on the flyer to work full time with benefits as a learning facilitator in the Gorham Schools. This pilot program will be broadened to partner with other area school systems hopefully this fall. Individuals who sign up will be employed by the Gorham Schools Monday - Friday 7 hours each day at a rate of \$17.25/hour with full benefits. This apprenticeship like program will allow individuals to work in our schools and then be "released" each M,W,F to attend specific courses offered by SMCC from 1:00 - 3:30 p.m. onsite at the Gorham Schools. These courses will total 9 credits

of college level coursework - FOR FREE. That's right, no cost to participants! So you will be able to work, get paid to go to school and get free tuition for 9 college credits - all while making a positive difference for the children you serve each day in our schools! AWESOME!

Once the course is completed, individuals receive an emergency certificate from Maine Department of Education to work as educational technicians in our schools in a broad range of programs.

Interested? Well, here's what you need to do to take the next step:

1. Use contact information on the flyer above to reach out to SMCC and apply.

2. Once SMCC has helped you through their process, you then need to apply to be a learning facilitator on our website. [CLICK HERE](#) for that link. If you have any questions, please call Rhonda Warren at 222-1012.

3. Once you have applied, we will conduct interviews during the week of January 3 and Jan. 10. You will then be "onboarded" to work in the Gorham Schools by participating in required trainings - all in time to officially begin work Jan. 19, 2022.

In this initial pilot program we are seeking

*See Superintendent, page 16*



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# Virtual Nonviolent Communication in the Classroom Starts Jan. 11



Gina Simm, experienced early childhood educator, looks forward to hosting this online course through the University of Maine.

website.

Instructor Gina Simm has taught in early childhood education for over 30 years. Her background in Montessori education and children's theater launched her into the world of public schools, where she spent most of her career as a first grade teacher (including a year spent teaching English in China). Simm worked closely with Miki Kashtan, a co-founder of Bay Area Nonviolent Communication. Simm's knowledge of Nonviolent Communication has transformed her classroom into a place where systems of the heart create a child-centered environment for moving through conflict. Simm lives in the Pioneer Valley Cohousing Community in Amherst, Massachusetts. More information about her work is online.

Participants in the Hutchinson Center online course will learn how to manage classrooms and learning environments with a practical, simple curriculum based on Simm's book, "Heart to Heart: Three Systems for Staying Connected (A Manual for Parents

and Teachers)." Skills that help maintain the heart-to-heart connections that support children's ability to self-regulate and improve their emotional intelligence are at the core of this course. Participants will also learn how to use children's literature to implement Nonviolent Communication.

The ongoing implications of the COVID-19 pandemic require teachers to think in new ways in order to support their students. The reliable systems taught by Simm will provide participants with training to help children in the

classroom and beyond.

Lorrie Heard, a recent participant, says, "I would recommend this course to anyone who wants to build community in their classroom, especially, after all of the disruptions to students' lives and learning this past year. A lot of feelings are coming up and many students lack the skills to talk about them and express their truest feelings and needs. They need a program like this that teaches them the language and communication skills to deal with conflict and allow them to feel comfortable and safe in their learning community."

Participants will receive a certificate of completion, and 0.6 CEUs/6 contact hours are available.

For information or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact Michelle Patten, [um.fhc.pd@maine.edu](mailto:um.fhc.pd@maine.edu); 207.338.8002. A limited number of need-based scholarships are available for people who live or work in Knox or Waldo counties. For more information about upcoming professional development programs, scholarships or to register, go online. Early registration is recommended as spots are limited.

Registration is open for an online professional development program, Teaching From the Heart: Nonviolent Communication in the Classroom, through the University of Maine Hutchinson Center in Belfast. This three-day professional development program for educators, teachers and those working with preschool-third grade children will be held January 11-13<sup>th</sup> from 3:30-5:30 p.m. The cost is \$125. More information is available on the Hutchinson Center

## Cabin fever got you down?

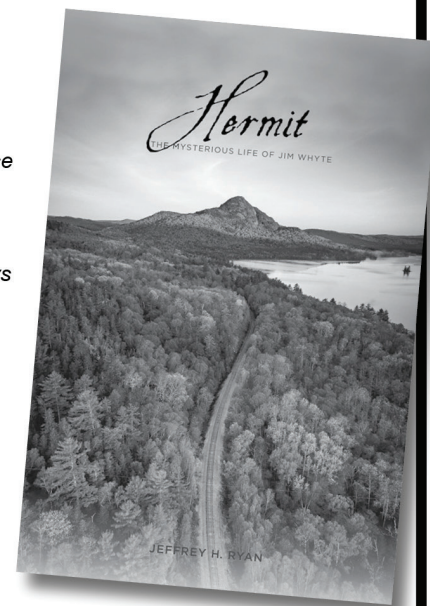
Escape with Maine's most intriguing Hermit.

*"Ryan is an excellent storyteller, and this tale is as good as any novel, especially since it's based on real people and real events."*

— Bill Bushnell, *Bushnell on Books*

*"I can tell you it will not take you many days to read, because you won't be able to put it down. I wasn't surprised when Hermit was named a top pick for 2019 on a December Maine Calling show on Maine Public Radio."*

— George Smith, *Bangor Daily News*



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# GORHAM LITTLE LEAGUE Field Funding Campaign



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# ACS Announces 6th Annual Real Men Wear Pink Campaign

In its 6th year in Maine, community and business leaders will unite to fight breast cancer with the American Cancer Society through participation in the Real Men Wear Pink campaign. Throughout October, Real Men Wear Pink participants encouraged community members to take action in the fight against breast cancer.

“In addition to wearing pink and raising awareness about breast cancer in their communities, these men will be fundraising to help the American Cancer Society attack cancer from every angle and save more lives from breast cancer,” said Maitri Chittidi, Sr.

Development Manager for the American Cancer Society. “Funds raised help us save lives from breast cancer through early detection and prevention, innovative breast cancer research, and patient support.”

Each Real Men Wear Pink participant accepted a fundraising challenge and competed to be the top fundraiser among his peers by the end of the campaign.

“As a survivor of both breast cancer and prostate cancer, I am grateful for the American Cancer Society and its resources,” said John Fecteau, co-owner of Portland Safe. “My wife and I stayed at the American Cancer Society’s Bos-

ton Hope Lodge for free when I sought treatment for my cancer a few years ago. I joined Real Men Wear Pink of Maine because it’s an opportunity to give back to an organization that has meant so much to so many families.”

Among the 2021 Real Men Wear Pink candidates are John Spain, Owner of Maine Art Hill, Jim Donnelly, EVP and Chief Commercial Officer of Bangor Savings Bank, Blake Hayes, Host of The Blake Show on Maine’s Coast 93.1, Jonathan Sahrbeck, Cumberland County District Attorney, Peter Steenstra, Head Rowing Coach at Bates College,

Adam Parent, Mainstream Real Estate Company, John Fecteau, Co-Owner of Portland Safe, Tim Forte, Clark Insurance, Rob Marquis, Bath Iron Works, Alex Brown, Fore River Management, Foley’s Fitness Center, Sheriff Kevin Joyce and the Cumberland County Sheriff’s Office, Scarborough Police Department, Brunswick Police Department, Cape Elizabeth Police Department, Augusta Police Department and Westbrook Police Department.

The fundraising campaign officially kicked off October 1st and the competition is always intense in the State of Maine.



Carol Fecteau and John Fecteau of Portland Safe.

According to the American Cancer Society, an estimated 281,500 women and 2,800 men in the United States will be diagnosed with breast cancer, and an estimated 44,100 will die from the disease this year. In Maine, 1,430 women will be diagnosed this year, and 190 will die from the disease. For the first time ever, breast cancer has surpassed lung cancer as the most diagnosed cancer worldwide among women.

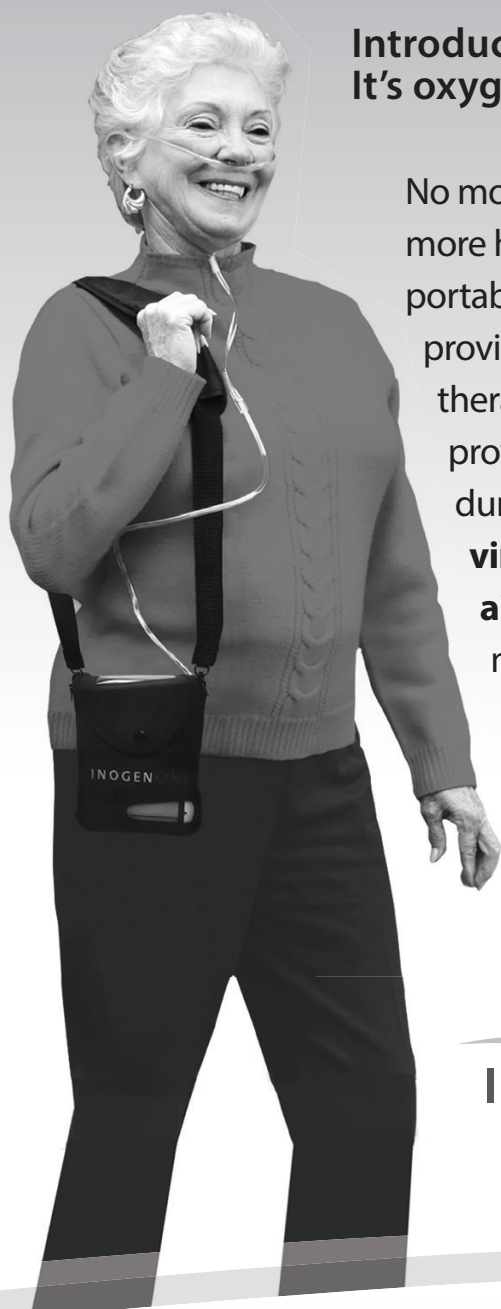
“Our community can make a huge impact in the breast cancer cause,” said Chelsea Paradore, Associate Director of Development for the American Cancer Society. “We are grateful to our Real Men Wear Pink participants for lending their voices to this cause and fighting for everyone affected by breast

cancer.” For more information about breast cancer call 1-800-227-2345. To nominate a candidate for Real Men Wear Pink of Maine or learn more about the campaign, please contact [MaineRealMenWearPink@cancer.org](mailto:MaineRealMenWearPink@cancer.org) or 207-888-3930.

*The American Cancer Society is a global grassroots force of nearly 1.5 million volunteers dedicated to saving lives, celebrating lives, and leading the fight for a world without cancer. From breakthrough research to free lodging near treatment, a 24/7/365 live helpline, free rides to treatment, and convening powerful activists to create awareness and impact, the American Cancer Society is attacking cancer from every angle. Visit [cancer.org](http://cancer.org) for more information.*

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# Pilot Program to Combat Opioid Epidemic in Maine

An innovative program expanding low-barrier treatment for opiate use disorder—potentially serving thousands of people across Maine—launches this month at six of the state’s community health centers. This pilot project—training community-based providers to build and maintain medically assisted treatment clinics—will increase access to this critically needed treatment in areas most affected by the opiate crisis, including the hard-hit rural areas of Maine.

Project ECHO, led by Penobscot Community Health Care (PCHC) and the Maine Primary Care Association (MPCA), will train six community health centers (representing nearly 65% of Maine community health center’s total patient population) to build programs modeled after PCHC’s Bridge Clinic in Bangor. Through the 12-month ECHO model, teams from each health center will learn to build, evaluate and improve their own programs.

“Low-barrier treatment for opioid use dis-

order means that people can access life-saving, evidence-based care more easily and more quickly, at a time when they are most motivated to get that care,” said Noah Nesin, M.D., the Chief Medical Officer at PCHC and an original planner of the Bridge Clinic. “That care is delivered in a manner that addresses the practical realities of their life, including issues like transportation, food, housing, and social supports. This is the way we treat all other chronic diseases in primary care: by working first to engage with people on their terms, doing all that we can to initially stabilize their disease and then to collaborate in progressing toward a more comprehensive treatment plan.”

The successful launch of the project is the result of more than three years of work by health centers, legislative leaders, and the Mills Administration to develop strategies to address OUD. PCHC providers and operations experts will act as faculty, coaching and supporting the participating health centers as they

create their own programs.

Dr. Christopher Pezzullo, Clinical Director at Maine Primary Care Association, said, “This low-barrier model, coupled with the access afforded by community health centers in the most rural of states, has the potential to be a game-changer. As we work to make MAT available to all patients at all stages of their disease, community health centers will provide evidence that this low-barrier model is the key to addressing disparities in access to care for opiate use disorder.”

What is low-barrier Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT)? MAT is a proven effective method of addressing substance use/opioid use disorder. Low-barrier treatment puts as few hurdles as possible in front of people seeking treatment and recovery. Unlike other modes of treatment, low-barrier means greater access with fewer requirements. Low-barrier MAT connects with people who are not currently able to access treatment as well as provide access to other

supports in the community. Community health centers are integral parts of their communities and thus uniquely positioned to support long-term healthcare relationships, especially with people who may not have had success with other treatment models.

The six participating health centers in this program include: Bucksport Regional Health Center, Community Clinical Services DFD Russell Medical Centers, Health Access Network, HealthReach Community Health Centers, Hometown Health Center. In addition to the health centers participating in this pilot, 100% of Maine’s community health centers have signed an opioid pledge, committing to continuous action as a network to address this epidemic.

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

## Sebago’s Slick Season



Slick Nick Wicked Winter Ale is back! You’ve been so patient all year, and now the wait is over at last.

Sebago’s classic seasonal, Slick Nick, has been rocking us through long Maine winters since 1998. It features a full body with toasty, malty warmth, and a touch of hop character. Slick Nick is available at all Sebago Brewing locations in 16oz cans, on draft, and growlers to go. You can also find 4-packs at Hannaford and other stores.

The Sebago Brewing pilot system exists to boldly go where no one has gone before. Replicator Error, created by Cel-

larperson Erik White, is no exception. Replicator Error is available at the Tasting Room in Gorham while provisions last.

In addition, Barleywine is now on draft and in 12oz cans at all Sebago Brewing locations. Inspired by Captain Jean-Luc Picard of the Starship Enterprise, the Saison-style beer was made with French Saison yeast, Noble hops, and low IBUs, a.k.a. not many bittering compounds. And the secret ingredient? Four pounds of Earl Grey tea.



Barleywine, another fan favorite, is back on tap and in 12 oz cans. Our brewers aged this limited batch for 11 months in a selection of bourbon barrels. The result is a higher ABV than in past years and a rich chocolate and bourbon flavor that’s perfect for sipping and sitting by a wood stove.

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Facebook /Gorham White Rock Grange #380 Web/ mainestategrange.org The White Rock is called Subordinate grange. Use right column to locate.

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## POEM 2 BY ANGEL STARCHILD

Jesus is Lord. It's the cry of the Christian. It all began, with a miraculous mission. We are his servants, and he is our Lord. To all of the world, we are preaching his word.

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*Continued from page 9*

6-8 individuals to participate so space is limited. If you have questions, please reach out today! My email address is heather.perry@gorhamschools.org.

*Please note: This is a pilot program with a pretty aggressive timeline to begin. We may need to push back start dates to a little later in January, but the process outlined above will be the same. So please - reach out today if interested!*

**SECOND ROUND: SUBSTITUTE TRAINING CLASS**

Just a quick reminder we will be holding another round of FREE professional development for substitutes. This time, the class will be taught by me so it ought to be interesting for sure! Would love to see folks there!

**NEW YEAR'S GORHAM FLYER**

Just wanted to make sure folks were aware of these incredible activities sponsored by New Year's Gorham Committee! Looks like great, safe fun for the whole family! Let's celebrate the new year as only the community of Gorham can! GO RAMS!

**IN CLOSING - HAPPY HOLIDAYS & OPTIMISM FOR 2022!**

It's been a long stretch of time for everyone since March, 2020. Parents, educators, students. We're all still getting used to this new pandemic world. Many of us (myself included) do NOT want to "get used to" our

new reality and still long for Pre-COVID days. The reality is, however, that those days are gone and we need to face it. We are creating our new normal every day in how we interact with one another, how we support one another, how we keep each other safe, and how we be kind to one another. Of course, we can also choose to create a new normal that isn't as "nice" as what I just described. I suppose the bottom line is that we all have the power to define this new normal. It will become what we, collectively, make it.

The image below is of me laying on the floor at Great Falls with their giant air snowman seemingly having just attacked me and in my exhaustion having given up. It was a staged photo of course. I had recently been asked for the 100th time whether or not we were going to cancel school the next day (which we wound up doing)...and a staff member suggested we have a little fun. I very willingly obliged.

I share this image in jest...but in reality...with a very real purpose. My point is, that even when we are tired and exhausted and when the pressures of whatever job we have is getting to us (Superintendent, teacher, ed. tech, support staff, student, parent, etc. etc.) we create our own realities. We do so through our actions, sometimes big and sometimes small. More often than not, it is our small actions that matter most. We build these new realities through

our willingness to still have fun and "play" with each other or through our choices to always assume the best in one another or through our willingness to support a peer or friend when they are having a bad day so that you can in turn have their support when you need it.

We create our own realities. It is our choice. Those realities can be negative and heavy or those can be positive and up-lifting. I have made a promise to myself and to those I work with that I will bring my best self to all that I do each day and in turn, assume that each person is doing the same. With that attitude, we won't let the "snowmen" of this world get us down for long!

I encourage each of us to use the time provided to us through this break to reflect on that. Ask yourselves, what "little actions" are you taking to build a more positive reality for yourself and others you care about? We really do create our own realities. I believe that very strongly. Having worked in the community of Gorham now for 7+ years...I remain thoroughly optimistic about our future!

On behalf of the Gorham Schools, I wish you each the absolute best as you embark upon the Holiday season. Rest, Relax, Recharge. I look forward to seeing everyone back again after the new year as we collectively continue to build our new reality in 2022 positively TOGETHER!

GO RAMS!

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