

Out and About with Rachel Morin

New Pastor joins High Street Congregational Church



Rev. Deborah Rogers Duval is the new Pastor at the High Street Congregational Church in Auburn and stands at the Church's welcoming sign. (Submitted Photo)

A few weeks ago, Don Miville, my friend from USM Lewiston Auburn Senior College, emailed me with exciting news. We have a new Pastor at my church. I wonder if you would be interested in meeting with her?

Don is a prominent and very active member of the High Street Congregational Church in Auburn. I could "feel" his excitement and I was thrilled with his invitation. "Yes, yes, I am very interested and thank you for the invitation!" I emailed back promptly.

Rev. Deborah Rogers Duval is the new Pastor of the High Street Congregational Church in Auburn! She was born in Boston to parents, Richard and Marjorie Rogers. Her father died five years ago and her mother lives on her own in the family home in Boston. The Pastor has two brothers, Rick and Scott, who live in Massachusetts.

Rev. Duval is married to Duncan Duval, a retired Framingham Firefighter. Duncan was an active FF and an EMTI for 32 years. They have three children, Jasmine Laffin in Framingham, Jessica Towne in Lincolnville, Maine, and Cameron Duval in Jamaica Plain, MA. The Duvals are the proud grandparents of five grandchildren, Derek, Piper, Tripp, Scotia and Felix.

Rev. Duval is busily learning the different activities and programs at the church, but she is especially enjoying meeting and chatting with the parishioners and their children at the social events held in the parish hall.

I would be meeting with her soon. Don suggested we meet at The Food Pantry as it would be an opportunity for me to see her working with the church volunteers and greeting their clients, about 65 families, who come weekly to pick up boxes of food that they had personally ordered.

Food Pantry Day came, cold and wet. The Pastor and I met outside just before the Food Pantry opened in the back parking lot. Before the Pandemic hit, clients were served inside the church. Rev. Duval had been working outside helping with the food boxes. My first impression was a down to earth woman, friendly and outgoing, suitably attired in raingear and wearing big mittens.

We exchanged names and in a warm and welcoming manner, her mit-

tens encircled my bare hands briefly. Oh my, the mittens were very damp as she had been working outside. We shared a good laugh on that encounter. I liked her immediately!

Debbie requested right away that I call her by her first name. She prefers the friendly informality and the warm feeling it gives. I noticed the parishioners are very comfortable and natural in calling Debbie by her first name. It is clear the parishioners enjoy a special friendship and Debbie is well loved as their Pastor.

The volunteers gathered around Debbie and she led the group in prayer before The Pantry opened.

Debbie was at the Front Table of The Pantry dispensing the numbered boxes which had been filled with a list of food items and sometimes soap and cleaning material had been added to the list by the families. She greeted each family with friendly remarks, as by now, she had become familiar and knew them.

I stood aside and observed how Debbie has a warm, friendly and down to earth manner, greeting each family as they approached the table. She knows them and is comfortable with them. She inquires how a family member is doing, or if a family problem has been resolved. The families look forward to this exchange and are enjoying it and add to the conversation as well.

The Pantry Session is over and the workers gather with Debbie in the parish hall, relax and talk over the morning's work. Everyone is pleased with another great gathering with the client families. They have become friends as they meet weekly and have a comfortable and friendly rapport with all of them.

Dave and Mary MacMahon are always excited with how the children love poring over Mary's Bookmobile and taking a few books to carry home. Mary is known as The Book Lady and reported that the number of children's books she has solicited and received has topped over 20,000 books in the past seven years of the Pantry's existence.

Dave says how grateful he is The Pantry receives large donations from The Good Shepherd Food Bank in Auburn and Hannaford's in Lewiston and Auburn on a regular basis.

Debbie and I also had a chance to sit in her office and get to know each

other which we really wanted to do. She told me how she was very drawn to the Church's Food Pantry. She wants to grow and expand on what they are doing for the folks in the community.

Debbie's plan with the parishioners is to sponsor a Community Meal every few months once the Covid numbers begin to diminish. That sounded great to me. She continued, saying they have been reading a series of books focused on anti-racism that has been thought-provoking and enlightening. They are reviewing what they may do with that as well.

We covered her educational background, a graduate of Natick High School, she has a Business Degree from Emmanuel College, Boston and an MDiv from Andover Newton Theological School. Her Clinical Pastoral Education was at Hebrew SeniorLife in Boston.

Debbie's Field Education was at both Worcester United UCC and Worcester Fellowship (an outdoor church for the homeless) in Worcester. She served two years at Fourth Presbyterian Church in South Boston.

We talked about a few of Debbie's personal interests-- physical fitness being the top one. Debbie works out almost every day and is a member of a CrossFit gym in Augusta. "Wow", I thought to myself, "Debbie is really active." (I struggle to get a walk in twice a day.)

Debbie says how she loves being outdoors, running and hiking and especially enjoys the Family Time she has with her close family at their camp in Weld. You can tell: Family is her top love and interest.

We were getting to the end of our conversation. We had really enjoyed our time together. We reflected she had been ordained a year ago, but the Ministry was not her first career, but her second one. Debbie's first career was in Property Management which she held for 30 years prior to becoming an ordained minister.

This is very interesting. Perhaps a second column will show how this career change came about.

How exciting to embark on a second career which Debbie is clearly well suited for. Debbie has forged new friendships with her parishioners and has goals in mind for the Church Family.

I am happy to welcome Debbie and her husband Duncan to Auburn and
See Pastor, page 9

Big Brothers Big Sisters Asks Us All to Join the Village

Brunswick, Maine, January 4, 2022 – January is National Mentoring Month, and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Bath/Brunswick is celebrating those who are already volunteering as Bigs and recruiting volunteers.

Every January, the news is full of the same stories: people are trying to eat more healthfully, hit the gym more often. This year, BBBS of Bath/Brunswick is changing that story and asking: What if this year, you could resolve to do something vital with long-term positive impacts for yourself, a local family, and the greater community? What if you could make a resolution worth keeping, one that inspires more resolutions? In 2022, the agency is asking people in Brunswick, Harpswell, and Sagadahoc County to resolve to become a Big Brother or Big Sister.

"The community has supported us throughout the pandemic, and that has been essential in keeping Littles matched with their Bigs," said Lindsay MacDonald, Executive Director of BBBS of Bath/Brunswick. "But now we are finding we have more Littles waiting than we have Bigs to fill those roles. It's of critical importance that we find the right Bigs to match with these waiting children – our community's Littles. We need people to step up and join the village this year."

More than 24 youth in the agency's service area are waiting to be matched with a Big Brother or Big Sister, and the only way to ensure they have someone to inspire them to reach their potential is for more adults to become Bigs. "Being a Big means committing to spending a few hours a month with a young person participating in the activities that you already love to do," said MacDonald. Activities include playing basketball, visiting the library, taking a walk, cooking and sharing a meal, or creating an art project. The opportunities for sharing time together are vast, and it's a lot of fun!

Community members can get involved by visiting www.bbbsbathbrunswick.org or calling (207) 729-7736. Throughout the month, Big Brothers Big Sisters encourages followers on social media to tag a friend who would be a great Big Brother or Big Sister, using the hashtag #JointheVillage.

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

MaineHealth Reminds Community: ED, Walk-In Centers and Clinics Do Not Perform Confirmatory COVID-19 Tests

PORTLAND, Maine – January 5, 2022 -- MaineHealth is reminding community members who test positive for COVID-19 with at-home tests that they should isolate at home and notify their primary care provider. MaineHealth emergency departments,

urgent care and walk-in clinics do not perform confirmatory COVID-19 tests. “At-home antigen tests are reliable if they’re positive and you have symptoms,” said Dora Anne Mills, M.D., MaineHealth Chief Health Improvement Officer. “There

is no need to have a confirmatory PCR test before you begin following CDC guidelines for isolation.” Emergency Departments, Walk-in clinics and urgent care centers should be used for medically appropriate needs. The only time anyone who

has tested positive should leave isolation is to seek necessary or emergency medical care. Community members who have tested positive at home should contact their primary care providers to determine if follow-up care is necessary. Anyone showing any

of these signs should seek emergency medical care immediately:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

Community members who need a COVID-19 test should visit <https://www.maine.gov/covid19/testing> to see a list of COVID testing centers. The CDC also has published helpful guidance on how to treat mild COVID illness at home.

No Tobacco ‘22: Lung Association Tips to Begin Your Journey to a Tobacco-Free 2022

Augusta, ME -- January 4, 2022 -- Along with hitting the gym more often and starting a diet, quitting smoking tops many New Year’s resolution lists. Quitting tobacco isn’t easy, but 50 million ex-smokers in the United States are proof that it’s achievable. Tobacco use remains the nation’s leading cause of preventable death and disease and is a serious public health threat. Nationally, near-

ly 40 million Americans smoke. According to the Lung Association’s State of Tobacco Control report in Maine, the adult smoking rate is 17.6% and high school tobacco use rate is 33%. To encourage people to quit smoking, vaping and using all tobacco products in 2022, the American Lung Association is promoting “No Tobacco ‘22.” To help people quit, the organization is sharing tips and resources through

social media and Lung.org. “More than 70% of smokers want to quit smoking and 40% will make an attempt this year, but only between 4 and 7% can quit without support. Smokers and tobacco users who want to quit should make a plan to be successful such as setting quit date, understanding smoking triggers, talking to a doctor about quit smoking medications and finding support through family, friends and cessation programs,” said Jennifer Folkenroth, National Senior Director, Tobacco Programs, the American Lung Association.

The American Lung Association offers five tips to help Americans who are ready to commit to No Tobacco ‘22:

It’s never too late to quit. While it’s best to quit as early as possible, quitting tobacco use at any age will enhance the length and quality of your life. You’ll also save money and avoid the hassle of going outside in the cold to smoke or vape. You can even inspire those around you to quit.

Learn from past experiences. Most people who smoke, chew or vape have tried to quit before and sometimes people get

discouraged thinking about previous attempts. Instead, treat those experiences as steps on the road to future success. Think about what helped you during those tries and what you’ll do differently in your next quit attempt.

You don’t have to quit alone. Enrolling in a proven-effective cessation counseling program such as the Lung Association’s Freedom From Smoking Program can increase your chances of successfully quitting and staying quit by 50%. In addition to enrolling in a program, enlisting friends and family to support you along your quit journey will help ease the process.

Talk to a doctor about quit smoking medications. Talking to a doctor about including cessation medication into your tobacco treatment plan can double your chances of quitting successfully. There are seven FDA-approved medications that are proven to help you quit. Just make sure to follow the directions and use them for the full duration they are prescribed.

Quit. Don’t Switch. E-cigarettes are tobacco products, and the Food and Drug Administration has not found any e-cigarette to be safe and effective in helping smokers quit. Switching to

e-cigarettes does not mean quitting. Quitting means ending your addiction to nicotine. Make sure your tobacco treatment plan includes the two components proven to work- behavioral counseling plus FDA-approved cessation medication.

The American Lung Association offers resources to help adults and teens to quit all tobacco products:

Lung Helpline: Not sure where to start? Call the Lung Association’s free Lung Helpline and Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-LUNGUSA, which is staffed with licensed registered nurses, respiratory therapists and certified tobacco treatment specialists. They can answer all your questions and connect you with the resources that are right for your quit journey.

Freedom From Smoking® helps individuals create their own unique quit plan, as well as tips and techniques to stay successful in the long run. Freedom From Smoking can be accessed online, at a group clinic and through a self-guided workbook. Those looking to quit smoking are encouraged to use the method that works best for their learning style, schedule and unique quit tobacco use plan.

Not-On-Tobacco® (N-O-T) is a teen

smoking/chewing/vaping cessation program for teens who want to quit. The 10-session program provides the tools, information, and support for teens to end their addiction to tobacco.

Vape-Free Schools Initiative: The Vape-Free Schools Initiative provides school administrators and educators with training to offer an alternative-to-suspension program for students found vaping, smoking or chewing on school property, and a voluntary vaping/tobacco cessation program for youth wanting to quit for good. Learn more at Lung.org/vape-free-schools.

For more information about quitting smoking and vaping for No Tobacco ‘22, visit the American Lung Association website at Lung.org or call the free Lung HelpLine at 1-800-LUNGUSA (1-800-586-4872). To speak with a local lung health expert, contact Jennifer Solomon at 516.680.8927 or Jennifer.Solomon@Lung.org.

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

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Guest Column: Updates from Gorham Superintendent, Heather Perry



By Gorham Superintendent Heather Perry, January 7, 2022

Good afternoon to everyone. I hope you are each well and have been enjoying our beautiful snowy weather. I have to say I am not a huge fan of Maine winters, but there is just something about a snow day in Maine that is peaceful and up lifting. Being able to sit and type by a window, watching the snow fall just makes me feel like a kid again, and that was many moons ago! Of course, for those of you that have to get out there, drive in this, clear the snow, salt/sand, etc. you may not share those same feelings, so I'll stop here with my metaphors!

This past week returning from break has been both exciting and challenging. It was great to see our children back in our schools. Their smiles, laughter and joy were once

again contagious as they shared their holiday experiences with their friends and teachers. It also was very challenging being the first week back with new SOP's for dealing with positive cases of COVID 19, and with dealing with impacts of the current surge in COVID 19 cases. I suspect the current surge may get just a little worse before it gets better over the next week or two.

I realize that makes people a little nervous, and I can understand why - however I want to remind you that we already have the appropriate "tools in the toolbox" to make sure everyone remains safe while at school. Our data continues to demonstrate that our schools are very safe places for students to be even amidst yet another wave of COVID 19 cases in our community. This is the case because we continue to concentrate on

following our core safety guidelines.

Many folks ask, however, What can you do to ensure everyone's safety? My response: You can continue to use these tried-and-true tools. Those are:

- Get vaccinated (or boosted if eligible)
- Stay home if sick (remember to use that daily health screener found in our handbook)
- PROPERLY wear those masks when indoors around people (and if you can double up or use a surgical mask or N95 mask, even better)
- Wash and sanitize those hands frequently
- Keep that physical distance if possible

When things seem out of control, remember, you have these tools to help make sure you are doing what you can to stay healthy and mitigate the spread of COVID 19. You are not powerless.

Now, I'm a realist so I'm going to state the obvious. Even after vaccinating and following all these rules, you may still contract COVID 19. This is true. However, it is important to remember that the goal of these mitigation strategies is to prevent serious illness, hospitalizations and death as a result of contracting COVID 19. We know from the past two years' worth of data that using these techniques does indeed accomplish that task. So if you have been using them - keep it up. If you have maybe gotten a little more relaxed about using these tools, perhaps now is the time to recommit. Keeping our children and families from getting seriously ill, keeping our neighbors from getting seriously ill, and keeping our schools open continues to be the primary goal I am sure we all share and we need everyone as a community to continue to do what they can towards this common goal.

Now on to other important information...

AN OVERVIEW OF THE NEW SOP'S FROM MDOE/MCDC & UPDATED HANDBOOK

I realize I have already shared a quick overview of the recent changes made by the MDOE and MCDC to the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for how we deal with positive cases of COVID 19 in our schools. I also realize that when implementing quick changes of this magnitude it is important to repeat clearly and often the key aspects of these changes to help curb confusion. Over the past two years as we have had to move and adjust and be flexible with our rules, we have certainly learned the importance of repetition. So here goes:

On December 30, 2021 the Maine Department of Education (MDOE) and the Maine Centers for Disease Control (MCDC) in conjunction with the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) released a new set of rules for how we deal with positive cases of COVID 19 in our schools. You can access the full document online but below is a bulleted highlight of significant changes in the order they appear in the revised SOP:

* Schools may elect to accept results of home COVID 19 tests (which we are now doing), although these results are NOT formally reported to the state CDC and they will not count towards the 90 day exemption.

* The isolation period for individuals testing positive for COVID 19 has moved from 10 days to 5 days. After day 5 individuals may come out of isolation so long as their symptoms are resolving and they remain masked for an additional 5 days.

* We are no longer contact tracing for exposures that occur outside on playgrounds.

* We are no longer contact tracing for exposures that occur while on school buses, although masks are still required to be worn on school buses at all times.

* Although the definition for what constitutes a close contact HAS NOT CHANGED, how we treat individuals who have been

designated as close contacts has changed. Individuals designated as close contacts must now quarantine 5 days from exposure from school and school-based activities and wear a mask for an additional five days UNLESS one of the following exemptions/conditions apply (see chart).

* There is no distinction any longer between where the exposure took place and the school's response to it. Therefore, for example, if an exposure takes place in the household to a positive case (let's say a parent tests positive) but the children are not symptomatic and do not test positive, they may still come to school.

* The definition of "School Outbreak" has changed. The process now requires that 15% or more of a school's population (including staff) be absent due to illness. When that target is hit, CDC is notified and they open an investigation to determine outbreak status. From there the process works very similarly to how it has worked the past few years.

All of these changes have been updated in our COVID 19 handbook. I would encourage you to go there to learn more and to of course reach out to your school's nurse with specific questions you may have.

We realize these changes have come fast and furious and in the midst of a spike in cases but we have always followed the state's SOP and *See Superintendent, page 11*

Gorham WEEKLY

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The Teacher of the Year Journey Starts With Your Nomination!



MAINE - Nominations are now open for the 2022 County Teachers of the Year and 2023 Teacher of the Year. Members of the public are encouraged to nominate educators who demonstrate a commitment to excellence and who in-

spire the achievement of all students.

"Our educators have continued to inspire, educate and care for their students during dynamic and difficult times," said Commissioner of Education Pender Makin. "We encour-

age education colleagues, students, and community members to nominate an educator who exemplifies the committed heroes in our classrooms and schools."

Nominations can be made through a nomination form on the Maine Teacher of the Year Website now through 5:00 pm on Feb. 4, 2022. Nominations will be accepted from students, parents, caregivers, community members, school administrators, colleagues, college faculty members, and associations/organizations (self-nominations and nominations from family members are not accepted).

To be considered for

the County and Maine Teacher of the Year award, a person must:

Be employed by a Maine public school including PK-12, Career and Technical Education sites and centers, and/or Adult Education Programs

Hold the appropriate professional certification for their position

Be actively teaching students at least 50% of full-time at the time of nomination and during the year of recognition

Have been teaching for a minimum of five

years – three of which are in Maine

Remain teaching in the County for which they are selected during year of recognition

Maine's County and State Teachers of the Year serve as advocates for teachers, students, and public education in Maine. They serve as advisors to the Department of Education and state-level education stakeholders across Maine. Additionally, County and State Teachers of the Year join a cohort of teacher leaders that actively work together for the betterment of education in Maine. They also receive on-going professional

learning and participate in many state and county leadership opportunities.

The 2022 County Teachers of the Year will be announced in May. The 2023 Maine Teacher of the Year will be selected from the 16 county honorees. The field will be narrowed to eight semi-finalists, and then three state finalists before the Maine Teacher of the Year is announced by Maine's Education Commissioner at a school assembly in the fall. Each year, State and County Teachers of the Year are honored at the annual Teacher of the Year Gala also held in the fall.

Maine DHHS Releases Child Welfare Annual Report, Responds to Ombudsman 2021 Report

AUGUSTA—The Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) today released its Child Welfare Annual Report and its formal response to the Maine Child Welfare Ombudsman's report for fiscal year 2021.

The Child Welfare Annual Report reviews the Office of Child and Family Services' (OCFS) activities in calendar year 2021 and progress toward improve-

ment initiatives identified in a comprehensive evaluation of Maine's child welfare system completed in 2019. Highlights include: the launch of Family First that uses Federal funds to support at-risk families to prevent neglect and abuse; the near completion of the overhaul of the antiquated Maine Child Welfare Information System; current data on system performance; and progress

on recommendations from intensive reviews made in the wake of the tragic child deaths in 2021.

The Department additionally released its formal response to the Ombudsman's report, which includes an assessment of 84 out of nearly 12,000 child welfare cases handled by OCFS in fiscal year 2021. The Department's formal response to the report is online.

"Together, these reports provide valuable insights into Maine's child welfare system and further opportunities to improve the health and safety of Maine children," said DHHS Commissioner Jeanne Lambrew. "We especially thank the Ombudsman for acknowledging the pressures Maine families and our frontline staff have faced over the last year, particularly those resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic which has placed unprecedented stress on our systems and supports."

"Our partnership with the Ombudsman this year has helped to inform improvements as we work together toward a stronger child welfare system," said OCFS Director Todd Landry. "While 2021 brought many challenges, strong collaboration among dedicated stakeholders, including the Ombudsman, will help to keep Maine children and families safe in 2022 and into the future."

Since 2019, DHHS

has focused on supporting child protective staff by increasing their pay, enhancing training, and securing funding for more than 70 new staff positions to improve caseload and workload. In addition, the number of resource (foster) families caring for Maine children has increased by nearly 30 percent.

In partnership with stakeholders, who have independently and comprehensively evaluated Maine's child welfare system, DHHS also adopted in 2019 a Child & Family Services Strategic Plan to improve policies and practices to ensure child safety. This work continued during the COVID-19 pandemic, although the pandemic affected both the systems that care for families as well as the families themselves, contributing to the tragic child deaths that DHHS announced in 2021. The Department is implementing the original plan as well as recommendations from nationally-recognized experts at Casey Family Programs to improve child

safety and wellbeing.

DHHS is also implementing its Federal Family First Prevention Services Act plan following approval in September 2021 from the federal government, which will expand prevention services to help keep children and families healthy and safe and prevent the need for children to come into the care and custody of the State. Maine, the first New England state to gain approval to implement Family First, will receive approximately \$2.4 million in additional federal funding annually. Recognizing that substance use disorders harm children and families, and that the pandemic has induced mental health challenges, the Department has also expanded its support through programs like Maine-MOM and StrengthenME.

The Department will continue to collaborate with the Legislature and other stakeholders to further improve the child welfare system to best serve Maine children and families.

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UMaine, UNH Extensions Offer Webinars



UMaine Extension Offers Updates for Agricultural Industry Jan. 19

University of Maine Cooperative Extension will offer two online research updates specific to the agricultural industry from 7–8 p.m. on Jan. 19.

“Integrated Pest Management — Controlling Pests in Potatoes” will be presented by Paul Horne, entomologist, potato IPM expert and owner-director of IPM Technologies Pty Ltd., Victoria, Australia; followed by “Potato Early Dying Research Update and Disease Management” with Khalil Al-Mughrabi, a plant pathologist and specialist with the Department of Agriculture,

Aquaculture and Fisheries at the Government of New Brunswick, Canada.

The cost is \$5; registration is required to receive the link. Register on the event webpage. Eligible participants can earn one pesticide recertification credit and one CCA credit. For more information or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact 207.554.4373 or stevenj@maine.edu.

UMaine, UNH Extensions Offer Hydroponics for Home Gardeners Jan. 24

University of Maine Cooperative Extension and University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension will offer a webinar for home gardeners

about hydroponic gardening from 6–7:15 p.m. on Jan 24.

“Hydroponics at Home” will explain how to build a working hydroponic system for year-round indoor gardening with a few simple tools and materials. Jonathan Ebba, UNH Extension field specialist, will lead the workshop.

Registration is required; a sliding scale program fee is optional. Register on the event webpage to attend live or receive a link to the recording. This is the fourth in a six-part winter gardening webinar series offered monthly through March for Maine and New Hampshire gardeners. For more information or to request a rea-

sonable accommodation, contact Pamela Hargest, 207.781.6099; extension.gardening@maine.edu.

UMaine Extension Offers Webinar on Winter Care of Equines

University of Maine Cooperative Extension is offering an online workshop about best practices for winter care of equines from noon–2 p.m. on Feb.

1. Workshop topics include winter health issues and options for fresh water, as well as mud management around the farmstead. Donna Coffin, UMaine Extension professor, and Dr. Beth McAvoy, consulting veterinarian and chief financial officer of Foxcroft Large Animal Veterinary Associates in

Dover-Foxcroft, will lead the workshop.

The fee is on a sliding scale, up to \$10; registration is required to receive the link. Register on the event webpage. For more information or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact Becky Gray, 207.781.6099; extension.agcumberland@maine.edu.



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Gorham High School Workout Warrior Of The Week



Winter Workouts Week 2

This Winter and Spring Coach Morrison will highlight Gorham Students who are making a commitment to getting better in the weight room! Being highlighted

as Workout Warrior of the Week is open to any GHS Student of any grade that is working out in the Gorham Weight Room!

Coach Morrison is supervising and providing programming 4 days a week after school in the

Weight Room.

This week's workout Warriors of the Week are our Students who are participating in a GHS Winter Sport & STILL logged 4 workouts this week!!

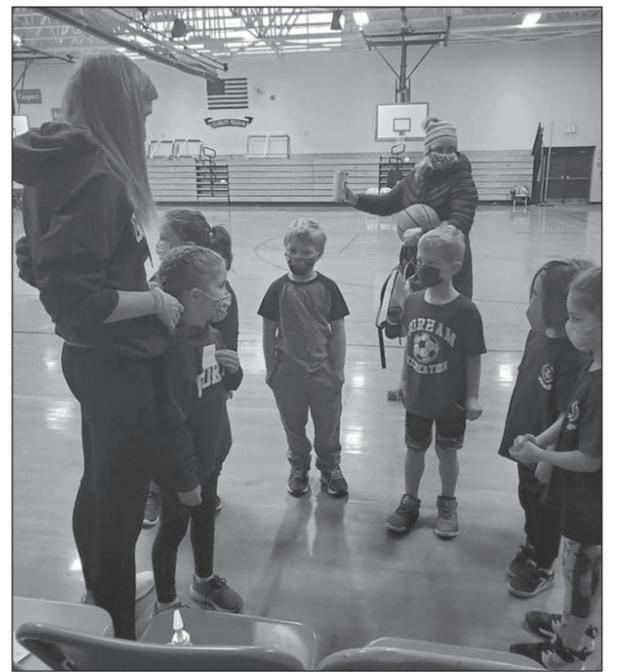
GO RAMS

Gorham Recreation Department Hosts Middle School and Elementary Basketball Games

"Children who participate in sports grow up healthier, and the physical benefits of the sports follow kids into adulthood. When our children play sports, WE all win."

January 8, 2022, Gorham Recreation Department hosted games at Shaw Gym, Gorham Middle School and Great Falls Elementary School for players in kindergarten through sixth grade, boys and girls.

Thank you to all of the players, coaches, volunteers, referees, parents/guardians, friends/family who came out to support the players at the games. You are all making a positive difference to each and every one of the kids here today and every day.



Thank you to the many players! schools for opening up Thank you! Thank gym time to support so you! Thank you!



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Three Islandport Press Books Win Northern Lights Book Awards

Yarmouth, Maine -- January 3, 2022 —Three Islandport Press children's books, featuring subjects ranging from a clam chowder competition to adventure-seeking woodland creatures to allegorical tales of the sea, have been recognized for excellence by the 2021 Northern Light Book Awards.

The annual awards, announced in December, recognize "children's literature of exceptional merit." The winners in 2021, included: Best Food Book, *The Chowder Rules!*, written by Anna Crowley Redding and illustrated by Vita Lane; Best Illustrator, *The Old Main-er and the Sea*, written by Jean Flahive and illustrated by Marie Dieumegard; and Best Author/Illustrator, *Hector Fox and the Giant Quest* by Astrid Sheckels. Co-winners were chosen in

each category.

"The style of the illustration and the spirit of each book varies widely, but the common thread they share is the remarkable talent of the five creators, the timelessness of each story and the art," said Dean L. Lunt, founder and editor-in-chief of Islandport Press. "We are thrilled for Anna, Vita, Jean, Mari, and Astrid to be recognized with these awards, which are well-deserved."

Earlier this year, *Chowder Rules!* was also recognized as a Lupine Award Honor Book.

The national Northern Lights Books Awards, which stems from an organization called Northern Dawn Awards, considers children's books to be an art form and says it strives to honor books that excel in aesthetic and literary qualities and will leave a lasting

impression.

"The idea behind the Northern Lights Book Awards came about when our first granddaughter was born," wrote co-founder Kathleen Jacobs, "we spent hours looking for quality picture books to read to them and wanted to find a way to honor those who write, illustrate, and publish exceptional books. After all, picture books are often the first portal into great literature and art, but more importantly, the right books can get children excited about reading."

Islandport Press is a dynamic, award-winning publisher dedicated to stories rooted in the essence and sensibilities of New England. For more information, please call 207-846-3344, visit www.islandportpress.com, or e-mail info@islandportpress.com.

Maine DOE and MCCS Partner to Offer Free College Courses for Adult Education Students

MAINE - Maine adults seeking to pursue college have a new option to jumpstart their education with support from their local Maine adult education program. A new partnership between the Maine Community College System (MCCS) and the Maine Department of Education (DOE) will offer tuition-free college courses to Maine's adult education students.

Maine adult education programs have supported adult students in their transition to college and career through the Maine College and Career Access program for almost twenty years. This new opportunity expands upon that idea by allowing adult education students to take a college course with the full support of their adult education program mentors so they can develop the habits, skills, and confidence to succeed in college.

"Maine's adult education programs have assisted thousands of Maine adults in making a successful transition to college," said Maine Education Commissioner Pender Makin. "This new partnership with the Maine community college system takes it to the

next level by giving students the chance to try a college course with the support they need. We are excited to see the impact it makes for our adult education students."

Adult education programs will work with adult students to select a course at the community college that is appropriate for their college and career goals, and then, support the student as they complete the course. The goal is that they will continue their education once the course is completed.

"This is an opportunity for us to encourage and connect with adult students throughout Maine," said MCCS President Dave Daigler. "The hope is that students can choose courses that align with their individ-

ual career goals and that we can help provide that motivation and support to continue on once they complete their adult education program."

Tuition and fees for the courses are being generously provided by the Maine Community College System while the Maine Department of Education's Office of Adult Education will provide textbooks and course materials for students.

Adult students interested in this program will need to be enrolled in a Maine Adult Education program to take advantage of the opportunity. Adults (with or without a high school diploma) who would like help achieving their educational and career goals can contact their local adult education program for next steps.

An Update from the Public Theatre

As The Public Theatre's season continues to unfold, we remain committed to doing everything possible to keep our audiences safe and excited by what they see onstage. Unfortunately, the challenges of the pandemic continue to confront our community.

Given the current transmission rates in Maine, the expected "post-holiday surge", and our upcoming rehearsal and production dates for BE HERE NOW, (actors would be arriving from NYC to begin re-

hearsals January 3rd) we have decided to reschedule our January production of BE HERE NOW to June 17-26, 2022.

At this time, we believe it is wiser to be "flexible" rather than to "push through".

We are hopeful that over the next few weeks Maine's COVID numbers will decrease, booster rates will rise, more science about Omicron will become available, and we will produce the rest of our season as scheduled.

On the positive side, at least we know for certain that the weather in June will be nicer than the weather in January.

If you are a current ticket holder to BE HERE NOW, we will be moving your tickets to the new dates in June and contacting you shortly. Subscribers will find these changes reflected in their confirmation packets.

In the meantime, If you have any questions feel free to email or call us at 782-3200.

Is the worry about what comes after this life weighing you down? Whatever your faith, or if it is absent, you're a child of God – and ultimately

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Choreographer: Eileen Messina
Stage Manager: Paul Menezes

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Thu-Sun – January 20-23, 2022

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Pastor

Continued from page 1

looking forward to seeing and hearing more about Deborah's and the parishioners' plans for the High Street Congregational Church.



Rev. Deborah Rogers Duval and her husband, Duncan Duvall, on one of their many hiking trips. They both enjoy the outdoors and hike as often as their schedule permits. (Submitted Photo)



Rev. Deborah Rogers Duval's Ordination picture taken directly after her Ordination in December, 2020 at Wellesley Village Church UCC, Wellesley, MA. It was her home church. All are Family members pictured. Front row, L to R, Greg and Jessica Towne with children Felix and Scotia Towne, Rev. Deborah Rogers Duval and her husband, Duncan Duval, Tim and Jasmine Laffin with children Tripp and Piper Laffin. Back Row, L to R, Alexa Cohen, Derek Duval, Marjorie Rogers, Cameron Duval, Emma Chinman. (Submitted Photo)



Mary MacMahon checks her supply of Children's Books, a very popular booth at The Food Pantry. The children love to pore over the books and select a few to bring home. Mary has solicited and received over 20,000 children's books during her seven year tenure as The Book Lady.



Dave and Mary MacMahon with Pastor Deborah Rogers Duval.



Rev. Duval always showed a personal and friendly interest in the families as they picked up their boxes. She had gotten to know them and checked in with them on how they were doing at home. She would ask how a child was doing or if a problem at home had been resolved.



The Food Pantry Volunteers gather for a brief discussion on the success of a good morning's work despite the occasional rain drops. Front Row, L to R Bonnie Miville, Barbara Cloutier, Rev. Deborah Rogers Duval, Wilma Labrie, Ed Cormier, Dave Griffiths. Back Row, L to R, Donald Miville, John Crouch, Lee Kendall, Bill Lelansky, and partially hidden, Leroy Brown.

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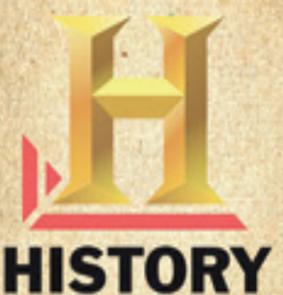
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- A DESCRIPTION OF YOUR ITEMS



Citizen Volunteers Needed for Town Boards & Committees

The Town Council Appointments Committee is still seeking citizen volunteers for various boards and committees. Boards and Committees available are:

- Planning Board - 3
- Gorham Economic Development Cooperation- 3
- Conservation Commission - 3
- Board Of Appeals - 3
- Board Of Trustees-Baxter Memorial Library - 3
- Historic Preservation Commission - 2
- Fair Hearing Board - 1
- Board Of Assessment Review - 1

- Board Of Voter Registration Appeals - 2
- Revolving Loan Fund Committee - 2
- Board Of Health - 1
- If you are interested in applying to serve on any

of these town boards and committees, or for more information, please visit the Town Clerk's office. To apply, complete and submit a Committee Volunteer Application available online. You

may also contact the Town Clerk at 222-1670 or email her at Inordfors@gorham.me.us. Applications will be accepted until January 21, 2022.

Superintendent *Continued from page 3*

we will continue to follow them. Together we will work through the nuances and we will continue to ensure the safety of our children and staff while at school. That remains our top priority.

MAJOR TOPICS AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEVEL

With all that is happening in our lives right now, I'm sure it has become more and more difficult to try and follow what is happening at the School Committee level right now. What are the issues they are focused on? What are we thinking about for the future, both short and longer term? Sometimes when we get so busy, and we don't know what is going on, we might assume nothing is. Well, I wanted to take a moment to assure you that our School Committee continues to work hard to lead our community's schools through our current challenges, while maintaining an "eye on

the horizon" so that our schools are able to maintain the strong and positive learning environments our community has come to expect. A list of Current/Short Term and Longer Term items can be found at <https://gorhamsuperintendent.blogspot.com>.

Again, these lists are by no means comprehensive in nature, but they provide for you an insight into the ongoing work of the School Committee.

If you wish to better follow along, you can go to this blog posted online (at <https://gorhamsuperintendent.blogspot.com>) for links to more information and to see agendas and meeting minutes and you can view our regular monthly meeting to view via GoCaT. You can also always reach out to our School Committee members to share your thoughts/opinions and ask questions. See this blog online or our website to get a list of their email addresses. Typically, you would email the chair (Anne Schools)

directly and then cc others in an email correspondence. You can also reach out to me anytime with your questions and comments at heather.perry@gorhamschools.org and I can be sure to share with the School Committee.

Their regular meeting is always held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. (unless otherwise notified) and their workshop meetings are held on the 4th Wednesday of each month at the same time. Regular meetings are broadcast live. All meetings are open to the public.

UPCOMING PUBLIC FORUMS FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING

As mentioned above, one of our major areas of work this year is in the area of creating a new 3-5 year strategic plan for the Gorham School Department. Thus far, we have created a steering committee with broad stakeholder representation, we have conducted a Thought Exchange Survey (to re-

view a summary of results, head to this blog online for links) and we have met with District Leadership Team members and members of the Gorham School Committee to begin to develop key themes for focus points moving forward.

Our next step is to more directly engage

parents and community members in this important conversation. As a means to this end, we have developed a series of virtual and/or in person meetings that will be open to parents and community members to participate in. In my next blog I will provide more specific details with zoom

links and meeting location, but for now, I thought you all might like to mark your calendars if you are interested. Here's the list below:

* K-5 Parents and community VIRTUAL meeting - February 7, 2022 from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

See Superintendent, page 14

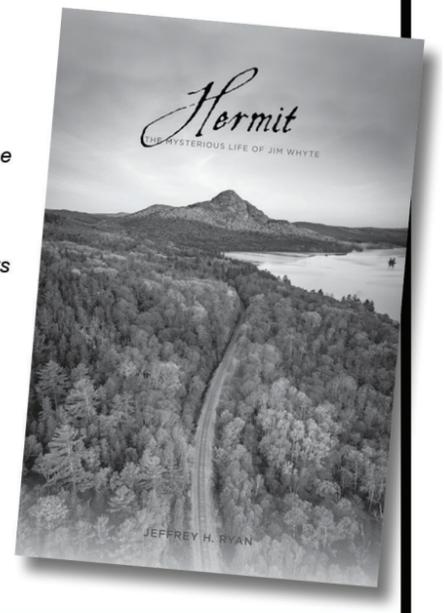
Cabin fever got you down?

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— Bill Bushnell, *Bushnell on Books*

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— George Smith, *Bangor Daily News*

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GORHAM LITTLE LEAGUE *Field Funding Campaign*



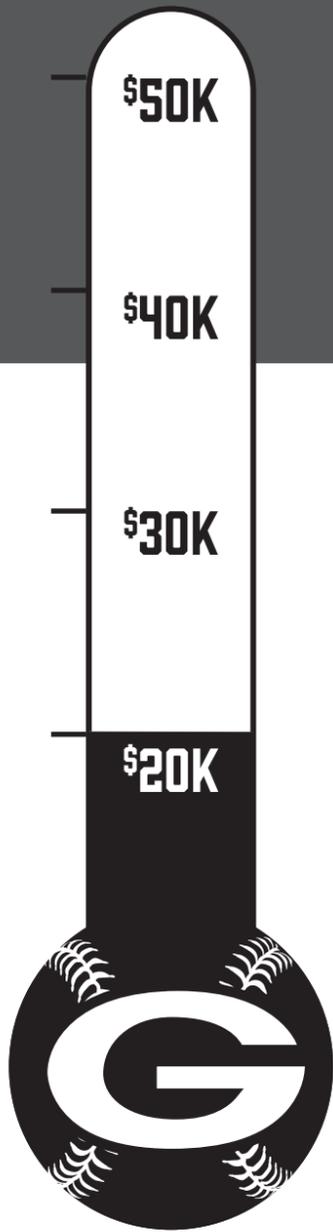
The Gorham Youth Baseball & Softball Association is making a large capital investment to provide updates and add fields to accommodate practice and game schedules:

- Develop 2 fields at White Rock
- Purchase seasonal fence for Shaw Park
- Repair dugouts and fencing, build storage centers
- Add infield mix and relevel current fields
- Acquire tarps and field maintenance equipment
- Add scoreboards

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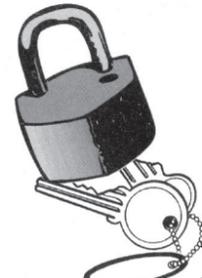
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Calendar

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Jan. 17
GORHAM – Municipal Center, Administrative Offices & Library closed in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Jan. 18
GORHAM – 8am Ordinance Committee Meeting Conference Room A

Jan. 18
GORHAM – 6:30pm Tentative Recurring Town Council Workshop Council Chambers

Jan. 19
GORHAM – 8am Gorham Economic Development Corporation Meeting Conference Room A

Jan. 20
GORHAM – 6:30pm Tentative Recurring CIP Meeting TBD

Jan. 20
GORHAM – 6:30pm Tentative Board of Appeals Meeting Council Chambers

Jan. 20
GORHAM – 6:30pm Tentative Recurring CIP Meeting TBD

Jan. 24
GORHAM – 5:30pm Finance Committee Meeting Town Manager's Office

Feb. 1
GORHAM – 6:30pm Regular Town Council Meeting Council Chambers

Feb. 7
GORHAM – 7pm Planning Board Meeting Council Chambers

Feb. 9
GORHAM – 7pm School Committee Meeting Council Chambers

Feb. 15
GORHAM – 8am Ordinance Committee Meeting Conference Room A

Feb. 16
GORHAM – 8am Gorham Economic Development Corporation Meeting Conference Room A

Feb. 17
GORHAM – 6:30pm Tentative Recurring CIP Meeting TBD

Superintendent

Continued from page 11

* 6-12 Parents and community VIRTUAL meeting - Feb. 8, 2022 from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

* K-12 IN PERSON meeting - Feb. 10, 2022 from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Again, I'll get more details out in my next blog as we get a little closer, but we'd really love to have some solid parent/community participation in these. They won't take long (just one hour) and the conversation will be thoroughly engaging and focused on something other than COVID for a change...refreshing indeed! Hope to see you there!

JANUARY ASPIRE GORHAM NEWSLETTER NOW AVAILABLE TO READ!

These newsletters are

always awesome, but this one in particular is definitely worth the read as we have several students sharing their new year's aspirations related resolutions. I am always so impressed with our students...seeing/reading this does nothing but strengthen that! Check it out using the link below:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fiRT-vXO2U3b4F2EiY-cgpE3QHiqEJx4b4/view?usp=sharing>

WHERE TO GO TO GET ONGOING INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING AT OUR SCHOOLS

Just a quick reminder about where to go to access more information about our schools, ongoing activities and the like. The first place I would suggest anyone go is to our website: www.gorhamschools.org.

org. There is A LOT of information there. On the front page there is a direct link to COVID 19 data. Also there is a calendar showing all district wide important events. Then you can click on each school to view updated calendars for their events as well. You can also link to our district wide social media pages. Each of our schools also have social media pages as well that can be found readily with a quick search of their school names.

There is always way too much going on in our schools to include in this little blog, so I strongly encourage you to like and follow our schools activities via our website or their individual social media sites.

IN CLOSING...

I just want to once

again be clear with families that I believe strongly our schools remain some of the safest places for our students and staff to be right now, even amidst the current surge in cases happening in our community. With all that continues to be plastered on the front page of our newspapers, and in the news and on social media sites right now, I know it is easy to believe otherwise. But let's take a quick look at the facts.

The fact is that we have had a total of 302 positive cases of COVID 19 associated with our schools since the beginning of this school year. Yes that is higher than last year, but this year we've had all students in our schools, 5 days per week for in person instruction. That is 302 different and unique opportunities for

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COVID 19 to have spread in our schools with less physical distancing available. Thus far we have had some school based transmission, yes, but only 13 reasonably identified such cases. That is just 4% of the "opportunities" for COVID 19 to spread in our schools that have actually come to fruition.

Now, to be clear, this isn't exact math because it is VERY HARD to determine if in school transmission is occurring due to the close nature of our community. However, I do think that at the macro level, these numbers very clearly tell the tale. With how easily COVID 19 spreads (either Delta or Omicron), it is NOT spreading that easily in our schools. Our mitigation strategies work to prevent spread. Our schools re-

main safe places for our students and staff. And unless this data changes significantly, we will work diligently to keep our schools open for in person instruction now and in the future.

I truly appreciate the continued flexibility and support of each of you as parents and as staff. This pandemic continues to challenge us all, but it also strengthens us in ways that will endure far beyond this pandemic. For this blog post I am choosing to end the post with those pictures I usually share - showing exactly what I mean! Our students, our staff, our families remain strong and we are slowly learning how to continue to positively live and learn together in this new pandemic world. Enjoy!

ATA Freight Forecast Shows Freight Recovering from Pandemic-Induced Dip

Arlington, Virginia – January, 4, 2022 -- Today, the American Trucking Associations released its annual look at the future

of the freight economy – U.S. Freight Transportation Forecast 2021 to 2032 – showing a strong rebound and continued

growth for freight demand this year and into the future.

“With a focus on the supply chain this year, it

is key we understand that among the many stressors on the system, the simple growth in freight demand and the economy

is a significant factor,” said ATA Chief Economist Bob Costello. “After falling 6.8% in 2020, freight volumes are set to surge 7.4% this year, and we will see continued growth in freight demand across all modes for the foreseeable future.”

Some key findings of this year's Forecast:

Total freight tonnage will grow from an estimated 15.1 billion tons in 2021 to 19.3 billion tons in 2032 – a 28% increase.

While truck's share of the freight tonnage will slowly decline from 72.2% in 2021 to 71% in 2032, overall volumes will grow across all segments of the industry: truckload, less-than-truckload and private carrier. Truck tonnage should grow from 10.23 billion tons this year to 13.7 billion tons in 2023.

The total revenue derived from primary freight shipments in the U.S. will increase from an estimated \$1.083 trillion in 2021 to \$1.627 trillion in 2032.

“Trucking is continuously looking forward, and Freight Forecast is a tremendous tool for industry leaders and policymakers to see what the future holds for the transportation sector,” said ATA President and CEO Chris Spear. “Forecast is an indispensable resource for anyone interested in understanding not just the trucking industry, but the entire freight economy.”

U.S. Freight Transportation Forecast 2021 to 2032 is available for purchase at www.atabusinesssolutions.com.

American Trucking Associations is the largest national trade association for the trucking industry. Through a federation of 50 affiliated state trucking associations and industry-related conferences and councils, ATA is the voice of the industry America depends on most to move our nation's freight. Follow ATA on Twitter, Facebook, or at Trucking Moves America Forward.

ATTENTION:
THE MEMBERS OF WHITE ROCK GRANGE ARE NOT ONLY FARMERS

WANTED: PEOPLE WANTED WITH NEW IDEAS AND COMMITMENT



The Grange located in Gorham at 33 Wilson Rd. (off rte 237) is inviting you to join us at any meeting the first Friday of the month at 7 PM.

Folks willing to put their generous hearts and open hands to raise all of their neighbors and community is the goal of the Grange since 1876. The Grange is an inclusive nonprofit organization. Local activities include but not be restricted to crafts, music, suppers, display at the Cumberland fair and quilts for veterans. Our agenda and focus is at the local level determined by the members themselves. The historical Grange Hall is the perfect building and location for doing any craft. Handicapped accessible, heat, hot water, and full kitchen.

Dues are \$26 per year.

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

Ph/ 207-839-3946 leave a message.

Please Join Us!

Gorham Action Team for Youth Tip of the Month

Each month GATY (Gorham Action Team for Youth) puts out a Tip of the Month on our social media page to highlight different ways we as adults can support youth here in Gorham. The image below is January's tip!

January
Tip of the Month

Teaching Children About Diversity

Learning for Justice is a website that highlights diversity, justice and human rights: offering free educational resources - articles, lessons, films, webinars, and more.

Learning For Justice suggested books for K-12
EYES THAT KISS IN THE CORNERS
by Joanna Ho

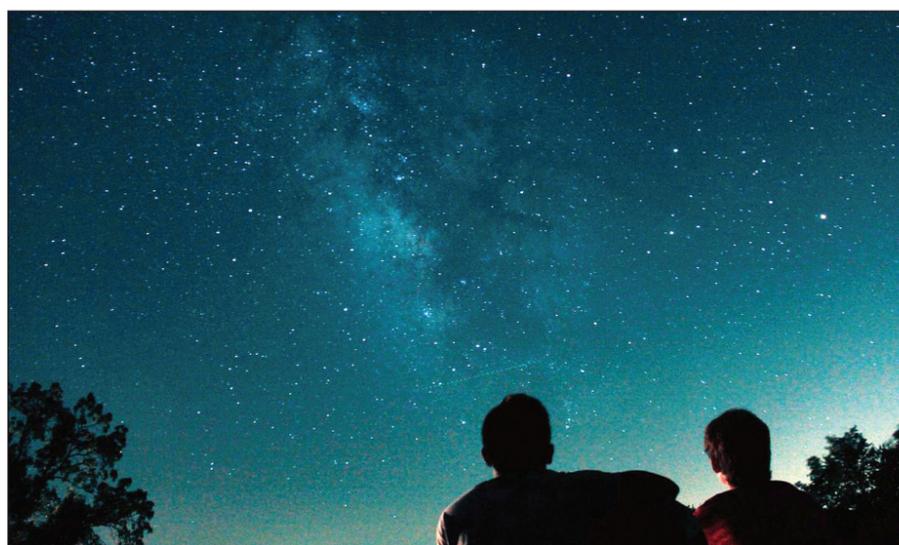
THERE MUST BE MORE THAN THAT!
by Shinsuke Yoshitake

EVERYTHING SAD IS UNTRUE
by Daniel Nayeri

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
www.learningforjustice.org

Gorham Action Team for Youth is a coalition of people focused on promoting positive youth development and preventing at risk behavior for youth.

New Moon Stargazing at Orchard Ridge Farm



Join us Saturday January 29th from 5-8pm for New Moon stargazing!

Telescopes will be set up so you can view some of winter's constellations and our friend Chris will be here to guide you through our night sky. Please feel free to set up your own telescope, too!

As the goal is to have optimal viewing, please refrain from using blue light during this event. We will have a few available, but anyone with a headlamp or flashlight with a red setting is encouraged to bring it.

Smokey and Brines will be in the greenhouse slinging BBQ and our a la carte menu will be

available for additional food and beverages in the Farm Store. Tickets are \$5, please head to our eventbrite page to purchase them.

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