

Schooner Estates Named Caring Super Star



Caring.com has named Schooner Estates a “2022 Caring Super Star” for service excellence in senior living for the fourth year in a row. This year, out of 158 Caring Star communities across the country, we represent the state of Maine along with Atria Senior Living in Kennebunk.

“We are so grateful to be recognized again this year as a Caring “Super Star,”

said John Rice, Director of Operations at Schooner Estates Senior Living Community. “It’s truly an affirmation and testament to all the hard work and dedication our staff have shown over this last year through all the challenges we were presented with. They never gave up on providing a quality service and experiences to our tenants.”



Gorham SnoGoers Seeking Support

The Gorham SnoGoers are working hard to get our trails and equipment ready for the upcoming season. You can assist our efforts by making a donation to our club. Your donation will help offset the cost of trail supplies, equipment repairs, and the fuel necessary to run our groomers. All donation amounts will be thoroughly appreciated!

You can also become a Supporting Business of the club and the Maine Snowmobile Association (MSA) Business Partner by joining today. You will enjoy many benefits to your business including:

*Receiving a season’s subscription to the Maine Snowmobiler newspaper

*A listing in the Maine Snowmobiler on the Supporting Business pages

*An MSA decal and certificate to post in your place of business

*Discounted advertising rates in the Maine Snowmobiler Newsletter

*A listing on the back of the following year’s Statewide ITS map

*Best of all, the satisfaction that you are supporting a local non-profit club!

Knowing how busy you are, we have made this easy for you. If you would like to become a MSA Business Member or would like to donate to the club, follow the link below and select “Click to Join or Donate Today!” button on the front page. While on the website, check out our “Supporting Businesses” page. Here you will find our current business listing, contact information, and with a simple click on their logo, you will be directed to even more information. Your business can be added with a donation or membership! Thank you!

Visit our website at gorhamsnogoers.com

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

College Wrestling: Southern Maine Rallies Past AIC 28-19

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. (January 14, 2022) – Trailing 10-0 after the first three weight classes were settled, the University of Southern Maine Huskies wrestling team rallied to take a 28-19 win over the American International College Yellowjackets Friday night at Henry A. Butova Gymnasium.

Competing for the first time since mid-December, the Huskies improved their dual meet record to 3-1 with the win. AIC is now 1-6. Husky freshman Colby Frost (Steep Falls, Maine) started the Huskies’ rally with a win by fall, while classmate Anthony Mears (Lawrence, Mass./Central Catholic) closed the match with a key pin at 285.

On the Mat:

· Wrestling at 149 pounds, freshman Colby Frost (Steep Falls, Maine/Bonny Eagle) pinned his opponent Luke Mangiafico in 2:51 to earn the first Huskies’ points of the match to ignite the rally. Frost’s win is the 14th of the season (14-6) and marked his seventh win by fall. He is 6-2 in his last eight matches and has won three straight.

· After a loss at 157, USM claimed points in the next three weight classes (157, 174 and 184). Senior Juan Vernaza (Miramar, Fla.) worked his way to a dominant 9-0 win by major decision over AIC’s Alfred MacNeill in the 174 pound bout to tie the score at 16-16. Vernaza is now 12-6 on the season.

· Graduate student Aidan Whitis (Gorham, Maine) gave USM the lead for good with a 1:31 win by fall over Tommy Caracciolo at 184 pounds. The win marks Whitis’

10th of the season.

· AIC picked up an 11-8 win by decision at 197 pounds to pull to within three points of USM, 22-19; however, Husky freshman Anthony Mears (Lawrence, Mass./Central Catholic) shut the door on the match earning a win by fall in 2:24 over AIC’s Alphonse Ferrentino for the 28-19 final.

Up Next:

Southern Maine returns to action on Saturday at the Johnson & Wales University Wildcat Open and then competes at the NEWA Duals on Sunday, also hosted by Johnson & Wales.

Southern Maine 28, American International College 19

Records: Southern Maine (3-1); American International College (1-6)

Wt. Bout Running Score
125 Jerry Echevarria (AIC) dec. Antoine Grace (SM) 6-4 (SV-1) AIC, 3-0
133 Aaron Morocho (AIC) dec. Ethan Ford (SM) 6-5 AIC, 6-0

141 Sean Johnson major dec. Kevin Moore (SM) 13-0 AIC, 10-0

149 Colby Frost (SM) pinned Luke Mangiafico (AIC), 2:51 AIC, 10-6

157 Baltazar Gonzalez (AIC) pinned Trevor Engling (SM), 1:34 AIC, 16-6

165 David Kurker (SM) won by forfeit AIC, 16-12

174 Juan Vernaza (SM) major dec. Alfred MacNeill (AIC), 9-0 T, 16-16

184 Aidan Whitis (SM) pinned Tommy Caracciolo (AIC), 1:31 USM, 22-16

197 Justin Osler (AIC) dec. Nick Beebe (SM), 11-8 USM, 22-19

285 Anthony Mears (SM) pinned Alphonse Ferrentino (AIC), 2:24 USM, 28-19 Exhibitions

184 Markys Lissaint (AIC) major dec. Jeremy Sendrowski (SM), 12-3

184 Matt Bremner (AIC) pinned Timothy Smale (SM), 6:10

Southern Maine Athletics has gone to fully digital game programs, please go to <https://southernmainehuskies.com/sports/2021/8/31/digital-game-programs.aspx> to access the game programs to future Husky home events!

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Dirigo Reads to Add Schools for 2022-2023 School Year

Bangor, ME – (January 11, 2022) – Dirigo Reads, a program that aims to put a book in the hands of every Maine first grader each month during the school year by 2025, is looking to increase the number of schools that will participate in the program during the next school year. Dirigo Reads co-founders Dan and Karen Cashman of Brewer say that new schools are being solicited and considered for the 2022-2023 school year now.

“We have received countless notes and letters from students, educators,

and parents saying how important the books are that they have received this year through Dirigo Reads,” said Karen Cashman. “The foundation of a love for reading is built around first grade. Expanding this program means expanding the opportunity for more Maine kids to realize their love for reading in their own home.”

Dirigo Reads’ mission is to improve the health and wellbeing of children in Maine through literacy and share a little optimism along the way. This is accomplished by

giving first graders in participating schools a brand new book to keep during every month of the school year. Fifty-one schools spread over 13 counties are currently a part of Dirigo Reads. By the time the school year is finished, first graders in each of these communities will have ten new books to add to – or start – their own home library. Over three school years, Dirigo Reads will have distributed more than 26,000 books to first graders in participating schools.

“The partners involved with Dirigo Reads

have made this a reality,” said Dan Cashman. “For the books to make their way into the homes of first graders, supportive partners are a necessity. Dirigo Reads partners with a number of businesses who understand the importance of reading.”

Dirigo Reads is operationally supported by United Way of Eastern Maine, and the founding Dirigo Star partner is Machias Savings Bank.

Additional partners of Dirigo Reads include Sutherland Weston, Bangor Savings Bank, Northern Light Health, PCHC,

Cross Insurance, Changing Seasons Federal Credit Union, Woodlands Senior Living, Hannaford, Acadia Federal Credit Union, WS Emerson, and The First.

There are about 11,600 first graders enrolled in Maine public schools, more than 300 of which contain first grade classrooms. Currently, Dirigo Reads is providing books to about 14% of this population.

Schools and businesses interested in being a part of Dirigo Reads should visit www.DirigoReads.org and click on “Contact,” where a form is

available to submit all necessary information.

“Dirigo Reads received a tremendous amount of support in its first couple of years,” said Dan Cashman. “But in order for every first grader in Maine to receive a new book every month of the school year, we need to increase the number of partners involved.”

Any organizations interested in partnering with Dirigo Reads, or schools with first grade classes that would like to join the program can find more details at www.DirigoReads.org.

Maine Forest Service to Support Rural Maine Fire Departments, Assist with Distributing PPE

Old Town, ME (January 13, 2022) -- This winter, the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry’s Maine Forest Service (MFS) Forest Protection Division will award \$189,804 to rural Maine Fire Departments as

reimbursements for wildland fire fighting equipment purchases. One hundred three fire departments have been approved by the federally-funded Volunteer Fire Assistance Program grant committee to receive reimbursements.

The Volunteer Fire Assistance Program grant program is posted online annually during August and applications are due by mid-November. Reimbursements are for purchases under \$5,000, with the most common items purchased being personal protective equipment (such as wildland fire clothing), portable pumps, wildland fire hoses, and hand tools. The average amount for reimbursement is about \$1,800.00.

Interested fire departments should visit the MFS Programs and Services web page. Or for personal assistance, please contact Ranger Kent Nelson by calling (207) 287-4989 or by emailing kent.nelson@maine.gov.

Also this week, Forest Rangers and support staff from the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry’s Maine Forest Service are assisting the Maine Emergency Management Agency



and the Penobscot County Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) in distributing personal protective equipment (PPE). The equipment is for first responders, medical and school agencies across Penobscot County, and beyond.

“This is a great opportunity for the Maine Forest Service to assist our county and state emergency management partners,” said Chief Forest Ranger Robby Gross. “The process led by Penobscot County Emergency Management Agency Director Bradley Nuding and his staff have been very well managed.”

Utilizing the MFS Central Region Headquarters in Old Town as the dis-

tribution pickup location, agencies have requested supplies from the following inventory:

- Industrial Grade N-95 Respirators (3M brand, one-size-fits-all) (50,000)
 - Surgical Grade N-95 Respirators (Prestige Ameritech brand in sizes small and RS/medium) (10,000, Small / 10,000 Medium)
 - KN-95 Masks (3M brand) (10,000)
 - KN-90 Masks (3M brand) (10,000)
 - Level 3 Surgical Masks (Honeywell brand) (50,000)
 - Face Shields (10,000)
 - Gloves (15,000, Medium / 80,000, Large / 80,000 X-Large)
- Agencies requesting

supplies have completed request forms sent to Director Bradley Nuding at PEMA. An agency representative is scheduled to pick up the equipment at the MFS headquarters upon approval.

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Gorham's Mikaela Pellerin Wins Miss Maine High School America

GORHAM, ME -- On Tuesday, December 28, 2021, Mikaela Pellerin of Gorham, Maine was awarded the Miss Maine High School America 2022 title. Hollins University awarded her a \$24,000 4 yr. renewable scholarship for this accomplishment. This June, Pellerin will represent Maine at the national Miss High School America Scholarship Pageant in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Pellerin is currently a junior at Gorham High School, a member of the National Honor Society, Editor of GHS Key Club International, a student intern for the Gorham Times newspaper, a freelance model, and a pageant queen. With all that she has going on, she still makes time to give to others. At her high school she has been a member of 6 different volunteer-based clubs and organizations.

"Giving back to the community is something

that's always been important to me. Having lived here in Gorham my entire life I've seen all the positive impacts kind gestures have on a town and the people within it," she says.

At four years old, Mikaela started a "shop" inside her home selling homemade crafts to friends and family. She donated all of her profits, with the help of her mom, to St. Jude's Children's Cancer Research Hospital. Now she plans to attend college in the fall of 2023 as a pre-med student. "I want to combine my interest in medicine with my ambition to help others," she says.

Her newest title will also allow her to reach out to the community and work to prevent childhood bullying. The Miss High School America Scholarship Organization's national platform incorporates the five-letter acronym, B.R.A.V.E. which stands



for **BUILDING RESPECT AND VALUES FOR EVERYONE.**

"I believe incorporating educational resources regarding bullying into elementary classrooms is a great way to not only handle bullying but start the change to abolish it," she says. Mikaela plans to work with young chil-

dren from all over Maine to instill the acronym of B.R.A.V.E. As for her own personal spin on B.R.A.V.E., she started her own podcast called BRAVE x EMPOWER on January 9th, 2022. The purpose of her podcast is to create a positive impact for women involved in STEM and to provide them with

resources to combat bullying in the classroom and workspace. Her podcast is at <https://pellerinmikaela.wixsite.com/bravexempower> and her Instagram is @bravexempower

During the National competition, state titleholders from all over the nation will be flown down to Little Rock, Arkansas to have a once in a lifetime experience. For the competition portion, the delegates will be scored in three categories -an individual interview with judges (40%), evening gown runway (40%) and fun fashion runway (20%). Their time spent in Arkansas will also consist of service, a parade, production filming, excursions, rehearsals, and more.

"It's such an honor to represent Maine on a national stage. I'm beyond grateful to have this opportunity and to inspire and advocate for others." says Pellerin.

The Miss High School America Scholarship Pageant Organization was started in 2009, for the purpose of providing personal and professional opportunities for young women. It is our goal to provide outstanding junior high, high school and collegiate girls the opportunity to compete in a prestigious national level scholarship pageant. The 2022 national winners will receive over \$100,000 in prizes, scholarships, and trips.

For more information, see

Miss Maine HSA Instagram Link: <https://www.instagram.com/missmainehsa-america/?hl=en>

Instagram Username: @missmainehsa-america

MHSA Organization Website Link: www.americashighschoolpageant.com

MHSA Organization Facebook Link: <https://www.facebook.com/misshighschoolamerica/>

Request for Information (RFI) on Potential Rural Land Available to be Preserved from Future Development

The Town of Gorham is seeking to locate potentially developable land located in the Rural District to be preserved from future development with or without other conservation stakeholders.

This RFI provides prospective respondents with enough information to submit a complete request. At the sole discretion, the Town may conduct

pre-submittal meetings and/or site visits with potential respondents. Meetings and/or site visits may be held individually or in a group format. Based on inquiries, meetings, and/or site visits results, the Town may choose to issue changes to this RFI. It is solely the responsibility of potential respondents to request updates and changes to this RFI.

Instructions for Viewing the RFI

To view the RFP, please subscribe for updates at this website: <https://www.gorham-me.org/home/bids/request-information-potential-rural-land-available-be-preserved-future-development>

This will ensure you automatically receive any associated addendums. Once the webform is sub-

mitted, you will then be able to view the full RFI and all submission requirements.

Response Submission Process

Responses will not receive consideration unless submitted in accordance with the following instructions to respondents:

Written responses must be received no later than Friday, April 29, 2022

by 4:30pm.

Email in PDF file format to tpoirier@gorham.me.us, or if electing to submit a hard copy - please mail/hand-deliver to:

Town of Gorham
Department of Community Development
Attn: Director of Community Development
75 South Street, Suite 1
Gorham, ME 04038

Questions

Potential respondents seeking pre-submittal information should contact: Thomas M. Poirier, Director of Community Development
Town of Gorham
Department of Community Development
75 South Street, Suite 1
Gorham, ME 04038
tpoirier@gorham.me.us
207-222-1620

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Collins, Colleagues Introduce Bipartisan Legislation to Rebuild Public Health Workforce Amidst Shortages

WASHINGTON, D.C. (January 19, 2022) – U.S. Senators Susan Collins (R-ME), Tina Smith (D-MN), Cory Booker (D-NJ), and Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) introduced bipartisan legislation to reinforce and expand our public health workforce amidst significant shortages. The Strengthening the Public Health Workforce Act would help restore the public health workforce at the state, local, and tribal levels to support the COVID-19 response effort. These measures are particularly urgent given the current state of our public health sector: according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there is a nationwide shortage of 80,000 public health professionals.

“Our nation’s public health workers are the true heroes of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the severe shortage of these skilled professionals has taken a

toll,” said Senator Collins. “As we continue to respond to this persistent pandemic, it is imperative that we take steps to alleviate the many burdens on our public health infrastructure and support the development and expansion of this workforce so that we are better prepared for the next crisis. Reauthorizing and strengthening the bipartisan Public Health Workforce Loan Repayment program would help attract more young people to the field, support our state and local health departments, and preserve access to critical activities like testing and contact tracing.”

“We thank Senators Collins, Smith, Booker, and Murkowski for their advocacy and support, especially during these challenging times. The Strengthening the Public Health Workforce Act will enable small local health departments such as ours to compete for skilled professionals in

this very competitive marketplace,” said Patty Hamilton, APRN, Public Health Director, City of Bangor. “The program has the added benefit of addressing student debt as well as helping keep these professionals in the public health field for a multi-year commitment. This program would provide us with an important incentive to entice individuals to the exciting field of public health. Loan repayment along with predictable, sustainable dedicated funds for public health activities would enable us to be more proactive in meeting local emerging needs. We thank Senator Collins and her colleagues for their advocacy and support.”

Since 2008, state and local health departments have lost nearly a quarter of their workforce, representing over 50,000 jobs across the country. Public health departments also face a looming retirement crisis, with almost a quar-

ter of health department staff currently eligible for retirement and 55 percent of local public health professionals already over age 45. It is projected that nearly half of the public health workforce is considering leaving their organization in the next five years. Furthermore, COVID-19 may exacerbate workforce shortages, as over half of public health workers surveyed reported experiencing poor mental health due to the demands of responding to the pandemic.

The Public Health Workforce Loan Repayment Program was created to help bolster public health capacity and reduce workforce shortages. The program provides education loan repayment assistance to eligible individuals in exchange for work in a public health department. While the Public Health Workforce Loan Repayment Program was authorized from 2010 to 2015,

it has never been funded or implemented. As a result, public health departments have not been able to benefit from this targeted loan repayment incentive, and they continue to face workforce shortages.

The Senators’ bipartisan Strengthening the Public Health Workforce Act would reauthorize and improve the Public Health Workforce Loan Repayment Program to help expand the public health workforce at the state, local, and tribal levels and support the COVID-19 response effort.

Specifically, the Strengthening the Public Health Workforce Act:

Reauthorizes the Public Health Workforce Loan Repayment Program to provide education loan repayment assistance to eligible individuals who work in a state, local, or tribal public health department. Under the program, an individual could receive

up to \$35,000 in repayment assistance for each year of service;

Authorizes the program for the next three fiscal years;

Shortens the obligated service time period from three years to two years;

Expands eligibility requirements to include individuals with degrees in public health, epidemiology, data systems, data science, data analytics, informatics, or statistics;

Ensures that program contracts are equitably distributed between geographic areas, local, state and tribal health departments, and rural and urban health departments; and

Directs the Comptroller General to conduct an evaluation of the public health workforce in the United States during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The bill is endorsed by the National Association of County and City Officials (NACCHO).

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Letter to the Editor: Volunteer with AARP Maine

As the current State Director and the new Volunteer State President of AARP Maine, we are thrilled and honored to work with and serve Maine’s 50+ community. As we look ahead to a New Year and new legislative session, we are excited by all the initiatives AARP Maine is advocating for and we wish to highlight a few of our key priorities for this year.

We will continue the ever-important fight to lower prescription drug costs and increase pricing transparency so that all Mainers have the ability to stay healthy and age independently.

In the past two years, we’ve come to recognize how crucial reliable

high-speed internet connection is to living, working and thriving. AARP Maine is dedicated to supporting advocacy for and investments in high-speed internet throughout the state.

As we face another Maine winter, AARP Maine is committed to ensuring that providers of electricity, gas, landline, wireless, and broadband offer services customers can depend on and afford.

One of our goals is to help expand the volunteer pool by fostering an understanding that AARP is so much more than the mailings that we all receive; AARP is a powerful advocacy group for the entire community of adults who are 50 and old-

er, as well as their families. We both have a tremendous appreciation for all the things a committed group of volunteers can accomplish.

Every aspect of the work AARP Maine does is supported and guided by members of the community, from across the state, just like you. To get involved as a volunteer advocate and to join our dynamic group of volunteers, or to learn more about the AARP Maine mission, visit aarp.org/me or reach out to me@aarp.org.

We look forward to serving you in 2022!

Carl Bucciantini,
AARP Maine Volunteer State President

Noël Bonam, AARP Maine State Director

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U.S. Department of Education Announces Joint Temporary Action with U.S. Department of Transportation to Help Address School Bus Driver Labor Shortage

(January 10, 2022) -- The U.S. Department of Transportation in coordination with the U.S. Department of Education has announced that the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) is giving states the option of waiving the portion of the commercial driver's license (CDL) skills test that requires applicants to identify the "under the hood" engine components. All other components of the written and road test will remain.

This announcement aims to alleviate some of the labor shortage challenges schools are facing and is one of many resources the

U.S. Department of Education continues to provide to safely keep schools open for full-time, in-person learning.

"This Administration is listening to the needs of school communities and remains committed to making sure schools are open safely for in-person learning full time," said U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona. "We've heard from educators and parents that labor shortages, particularly of bus drivers, are a roadblock to keeping kids in schools. Today's announcement will give states the flexibility they need to help increase the pool of

drivers, who are a key part of the school community, and get kids to school safely each day where students learn best. And American Rescue Plan funds can be used to hire these critical staff, including offering increased compensation or other incentives to recruit and retain staff."

"This federal waiver will help states that are short on bus drivers," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg. "By allowing states to focus on the testing requirements that are critical to safety, we will get additional, qualified drivers behind the wheel to get kids to school

safely."

Drivers receiving a CDL under this temporary waiver are permitted to operate intrastate school buses only; they are not authorized to operate trucks, motorcoaches, or any other type of commercial motor vehicle requiring a CDL.

The FMCSA waiver, which became effective Jan. 3, 2022, expires March 31, 2022. The full release from the U.S. Department of Education can be found on their website.

Prepare to Become a School Bus Driver in Maine:

Contact your local school district, Career and

Technical Sites/Center, Adult Education Programs, or call to ask when the next School Bus Driver class begins. Some local classes are free.

Study Section 10, School Buses, of the Maine Commercial Driver License Manual: <https://www.maine.gov/sos/bmv/licenses/cdlmanual.pdf>

Call Maine Bureau of Motor Vehicles about commercial driver license (CDL) requirements, application, exam schedules, or extent of the Federal waiver. The direct contact for Maine BMV's CDL Examination Section is 207-624-9000 ext. 52122. Between

January 3, 2022 and March 31, 2022, the Federal waiver impacts a portion, not all, of the overall pre-trip inspection exam requirement.

Beginning February 7, 2022, local citizens can search the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Training Provider Registry to find local CDL school bus trainers in Maine and your community.

Meanwhile, local school transportation teams will continue to do what they have always done (pre- and post-trip school bus inspections), making school bus safety priority one!

USACE Seeks Comments on Proposed Work in the Saint Croix River in Calais & Sugarloaf West Mountain Project

Concord, Mass. (January 11, 2022) – Saint Croix River

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District received a permit application to conduct work in waters of the United States from the New Brunswick Power Corporation for proposed work in the Saint Croix River off Poorhouse Lane in Calais, Maine.

The proposed work involves the placement of temporary and permanent fill below the ordinary highwater line of the Saint Croix River in conjunction with the full decommissioning and removal of the Milltown Power Station. The proposed work is designed to restore the river to a near natural state and provide fish passage for native sea run fish species.

USACE is soliciting comments from members of the public; federal, state

and local agencies; American Indian Tribes; and other interested parties to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. The public notice with more detailed information is available for review on the District website at <https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/PublicNotices>, file # NAE-2019-2782.

Public comments on this proposed work should be forwarded no later than Feb. 10, 2022, to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, Attn: Shawn Mahaney, Regulatory Division, 696 Virginia Road, Concord, MA 01742 or by email to Shawn.B.Mahaney@usace.army.mil. Please reference file # NAE-2019-2782.

Sugarloaf West Mountain Project

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District received

a permit application to conduct work in waters of the United States from Boyne Resorts for proposed work in numerous unnamed freshwater wetlands and streams off West Mountain Road in conjunction with the construction of the Sugarloaf West Mountain Development Project at Carra-basset Valley in Franklin County, Maine.

The proposed work involves the placement of fill, grading, grubbing, and clearing of freshwater wetlands, as well as the installation of freshwater stream crossings in conjunction with the construction of the Sugarloaf West Mountain Development Project. The proposed project will include the addition of one ski lift, 140 acres of ski terrain, a skier services building, 196 total housing units and parking areas within an approximate 460-acre

undeveloped parcel.

The project will be constructed in three phases and approximately 4.3 acres of permanent freshwater wetland will be impacted.

USACE is soliciting comments from members of the public; federal, state and local agencies; American Indian Tribes; and

other interested parties to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. The public notice with more detailed information is available for review on the District website at <https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/PublicNotices>, file # NAE-2021-00994.

Public comments on

this proposed work should be forwarded no later than Feb. 10, 2022, to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, Attn: LeeAnn B. Neal, Regulatory Division, 696 Virginia Road, Concord, MA 01742 or by email to leeann.b.neal@usace.army.mil. Please reference file # NAE-2021-00994.

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Arts & Entertainment

Gorham High School Workout Warrior Of The Week



Winter Workouts Weeks 5-6
This week's workout Warriors of the Week are

our students who earned a t-shirt for their work in the weight room since November.

The following students earned a t-shirt for a 75% attendance rate from November 29th to January

7th: Ethan Verrill (100%), Joshua Cenate (100%), Gabe Harrington, Hayden Battaglia, & Cody Sellick.

The following student earned a t-shirt for a 50% attendance rate from November 29th to January 7th while participating in a GHS Winter Sport: Ryker Spear (88%)

The following students earned a t-shirt for eclipsing an 800 pound combined total in their Bench, Squat, & Dead Lift: Quentin Riiska & 81% attendance while participating in GHS Indoor Track as well.

The following students earned a t-shirt for

eclipsing a 1000 pound combined total in their Bench, Squat & Dead Lift: Ian Connors & 94% attendance

Congratulations to these 8 students and we look forward to seeing who earns a shirt from now until February 18th!!

GO RAMS

Maine's Only Independent Entertainment Retailer, Bull Moose, Becomes 100% Employee-Owned

PORTLAND, ME (January 4, 2022) -- Through the transition Wickard will remain the Interim CEO and Chair of the Board of Directors.

During a company-wide meeting, Wickard laid out three goals for the sale: to build a platform for employees to have more control and input into company operations, to create financial security for their future, and to provide more earning opportunities. "As we've grown over the decades, it's always been a collaborative effort. Our team is local, loyal, and hardworking and together we've built one of Northern New England's greatest brands from the ground up. I'm very proud of what we've accomplished," said founder Brett Wickard.

"Maintaining local ownership will continue Bull Moose's mission to connect, inspire, and entertain folks with our inexpensive, fun, collectible stuff," Wickard added.

Eligible employees will be granted stock ownership by Bull Moose's ESOP Trust -- which owns 100% of Bull Moose after buying out Wickard. Employee owners will be represented by an ESOP Committee, to whom the Board of Directors will report. "I'm optimistic about the future," says Mick Pratt an eleven-year veteran of Bull Moose. "It seems like a really big first step toward making a better Bull Moose for the people who helped build it," Pratt added.

Wickard started Bull

Moose in 1989 while a student at Bowdoin College. Bull Moose steadily grew from one small location selling CDs and tapes to eleven stores selling a large variety of pop culture items. Over the decades, Bull Moose has brought famous musicians and actors to Maine including Mike Mills from R.E.M., The Smashing Pumpkins, Rihanna, Kiefer Sutherland, John Densmore from The Doors, and Jack Black. Bull Moose is an active supporter of local music has paid more than \$5.5 million directly to local musicians and venues since 2002.

"I've been interacting with Bull Moose's employees since I was 11 years old as a customer," says Maine rapper Spose.

"When I started selling my music, I developed a business relationship with not only the staff, but also the behind-the-scenes figures. I'm so happy to see Bull Moose doubling down on the community of people who make the company feel personal and human," Spose said.

In 2007, Chris Brown, Bull Moose's first and longest-tenured employee, proposed Record Store Day, an annual event to promote independent music stores with special vinyl and CD releases, local performances and artist meet-and-greets. Record Store Day quickly grew to be an international event and is now considered one of the main drivers of the multi-billion-dollar resurgence of vinyl.

"Many of the big moves that transformed Bull Moose happened when Brett let other people help lead," Chris Brown, Bull Moose CFO said. "Same-store sales have returned to pre-pandemic levels and our profit margin has increased. Bull Moose is on an upswing so we couldn't ask for a better time for Brett to do this. His generosity amazes me," Brown said.

Wickard will continue running FieldStack, a Portland-based retail management software company that he founded in 2014. FieldStack is experiencing rapid growth as retailers look for full-service partners to help them grow profitably. "I am excited to see what this creative, hardworking team will do

with the company in the future. My heart will always be at Bull Moose," Wickard said.

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USDA Announces Increased Funding to Support School Meals and to Help Continue Serving Healthy Meals to Kids

WASHINGTON, Jan. 7, 2022 – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced an adjustment in school meal reimbursements to help schools continue to serve children healthy and nutritious meals. This move will put an estimated \$750 million more into school meal programs across the nation this year, making sure federal reimbursements keep pace with food and operational costs, while ensuring children continue to receive healthy meals at school.

“USDA understands that balancing the pressures of the pandemic with the need to feed children healthy and nutritious meals continue to be a priority for schools across the country,” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. “The Biden-Harris Administration is doing everything we can and these higher meal reimbursements will help allow school meal programs to continue meeting their mission of giving children the nourishment they need to grow, learn, and thrive.”

School lunch reimbursement rates usually do not increase during the school year. However, this year, due to the pandemic, USDA allowed schools to benefit from the highest rates available, which are normally reserved for the USDA Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). By law, these summer rates adjust for inflation annually in January.

This adjustment is well-timed to ensure the purchasing power of schools keeps pace with the cost of living. Schools receiving these reimbursement rates can stretch their operating budgets further during these tough times, while giving families fewer meal expenses to worry about each school day.

At the start of the 2021-2022 school year, the SFSP lunch reimbursement rate for participating schools was already 15% higher than the standard reimbursement for a free lunch. Now, because of higher food costs and other circumstances, schools will receive an additional 25 cents per lunch. Taken together, schools are receiving 22% more for school lunches than they

would under normal conditions.

This action is part of USDA and the Biden-Harris Administration’s joint effort to ensure school meal programs are strong and have the assistance they need to navigate current challenges. This year’s upward adjustment will add to the range of flexibilities, resources and hands-on support USDA has provided to school meals, which has included:

Providing \$1 billion for schools to buy food for their meal programs and another \$300 million for states to purchase 100% American-grown foods to be distributed to schools;

Awarding up to \$200 million to states for purchases of domestic local foods for distribution to schools, through the new Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement Program;

Ensuring schools are not penalized if they cannot meet meal standards due to supply chain issues;

Issuing and extending 14 nationwide waivers that allowed schools to run more flexible meal pro-

grams and serve free meals to all students, including relaxing meal pattern requirements, allowing parent/guardian pick-up of meals, and permitting meal service outside of the typically required group settings and meal times;

Reimbursing local child nutrition program operators for emergency operating costs during the early months of the pandemic due to COVID-19 related restrictions and closures;

Publishing new educational resources to help schools plan and serve meals, including a new set centered around the theme of Planning for a Dynamic School Environment, aimed at helping schools leverage current flexibilities;

Ensuring schools and their partners understand complementary options for feeding children both in and out-of-school, such as the Child and Adult Care Food Program’s (CACFP) At-Risk After-school Program and “grab ‘n’ go” meals for children during remote or hybrid learning, student quarantines, and school closures;

and

Providing Pandemic EBT benefits to children attending schools participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) via virtual learning or a hybrid model.

For more information about SFSP, visit: www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/summer-food-service-program

To see state-by-state reimbursement rates, visit: www.fns.usda.gov/cn/total-amount-support-to-school-districts

More information on USDA’s response to COVID-19 can be found at www.fns.usda.gov/coronavirus

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive

ways. In the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America’s food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy, and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.

Central Maine Human Resource Association (CMHRA) Seeks New or Renewing Members for 2022

Membership is open to all for-profit, non-profit, public and private organizations. Meetings (currently viz zoom) are regularly attended by:

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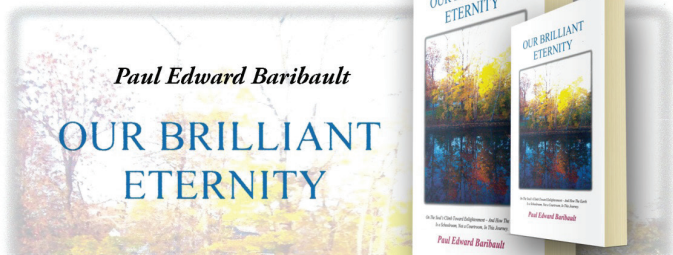
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- Participate in discussions about HR challenges

Discussions about HR challenges

- Dive into a sea of HR related resources
- Take advantage of HR Professional Development opportunities

If you are interested in joining the Central Maine Human Resources Association or for more information, please go to <https://cmhra.org/cmhra-membership/#join> or email membership@cmhra.org.

Thank you!



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Local Businesses Partner with Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce to Bring Food to Frontline Workers at Mercy Hospital and Maine Medical Center



PORTLAND, ME (January 21, 2022) -- As we enter the second year of the Covid-19 pandemic, we must remember the tireless efforts of our essential workers, who have been continuously keeping the community safe under extremely difficult, and exhausting circumstances. We want to make sure that the community is taking care of them in return. To help with this goal, the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce has partnered with several member businesses to deliver meals to frontline workers at Mercy Hospital and Maine Medical Center.

Bernstein Shur is partnering with local restaurant, El Rayo, to deliver authentic Mexican cuisine. Owner Tod Dana commented, "El Rayo is excited to partner with Bernstein in this effort. We are thrilled to provide a little support, and most importantly, a 'Thank You' to the heroic staff at Maine Med and Mercy Hospital." Amidst the latest surge of the Omicron Variant, Bernstein Shur is hoping this gesture offers a special kind of comfort. "Many of us show up with a hot meal as a way to support friends

or neighbors in a time of crisis or loss," said Bernstein Shur CEO, Joan Fortin. "For nearly two years now, our heroic health care workers have been putting themselves at risk to save lives in the ongoing battle against COVID-19. We at Bernstein Shur feel honored to show up for them with hot local meals as a symbol of our gratitude for their service, sacrifice, and courage."

MEMIC has committed to giving 100 meals per week over the next two months. Senior Vice President of External Affairs, Tony Payne, commented on the partnership, saying, "MEMIC's focus as a company is on the wellbeing of the workforce, and a healthy workforce includes being appreciated as well as being well-fed. The work of everyone in healthcare, from the front desk and housekeeping to the ICUs, is important. We hope everyone who relies on our hospitals will help these important folks through this stressful time."

Hannaford is giving back to essential workers by donating Hannaford gift cards. "Medical professionals have been doing so much, for so long, to care for their patients and

our community. They have been selfless throughout the pandemic, setting aside their own needs, day after day," said Eric Blom, Director of External Communications and Community Relations for Hannaford Supermarkets. "We appreciate the opportunity to partner with the Portland Regional Chamber to provide a token of Hannaford's thanks to local hospital workers."

cPort Credit Union will be assisting with this food drive by partnering with local sports bar, Rivalries to bring lunches to both Maine Med and Mercy over the next couple of weeks. When describing the process, cPort CEO Gene Ardito said, "cPort Credit Union is grateful to be able to support the remarkable individuals and organizations in the communities we serve. We recognize the incredible work health care workers have provided to keep our communities healthy and safe."

If your business or organization would like to partner with the Portland Regional Chamber to provide food for essential workers, please reach out to Tommy Johnson at tjohnson@portlandregion.com or (207) 772-2811 x226.



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Collins, Colleagues Introduce Bipartisan Legislation to Rebuild Public Health Workforce Amidst Shortages

WASHINGTON, D.C. (January 19, 2022)

— U.S. Senators Susan Collins (R-ME), Tina Smith (D-MN), Cory Booker (D-NJ), and Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) introduced bipartisan legislation to reinforce and expand our public health workforce amidst significant shortages. The Strengthening the Public Health Workforce Act would help restore the public health workforce at the state, local, and tribal levels to support the COVID-19 response effort. These measures are particularly urgent given the current state of our public health sector: according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there is a nationwide shortage of 80,000 public health professionals.

“Our nation’s public health workers are the true heroes of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the severe shortage of these skilled professionals has taken a toll,” said Senator Collins. “As we continue to respond to this persistent pandemic, it is imperative that we take steps to alleviate the many burdens on our public health infrastructure and support the development and expansion of this workforce so that we are

better prepared for the next crisis. Reauthorizing and strengthening the bipartisan Public Health Workforce Loan Repayment program would help attract more young people to the field, support our state and local health departments, and preserve access to critical activities like testing and contact tracing.”

“We thank Senators Collins, Smith, Booker, and Murkowski for their advocacy and support, especially during these challenging times. The Strengthening the Public Health Workforce Act will enable small local health departments such as ours to compete for skilled professionals in this very competitive marketplace,” said Patty Hamilton, APRN, Public Health Director, City of Bangor. “The program has the added benefit of addressing student debt as well as helping keep these professionals in the public health field for a multi-year commitment. This program would provide us with an important incentive to entice individuals to the exciting field of public health. Loan repayment along with predictable, sustainable dedicated funds for public health activities would enable us to

be more proactive in meeting local emerging needs. We thank Senator Collins and her colleagues for their advocacy and support.”

Since 2008, state and local health departments have lost nearly a quarter of their workforce, representing over 50,000 jobs across the country. Public health departments also face a looming retirement crisis, with almost a quarter of health department staff currently eligible for retirement and 55 percent of local public health professionals already over age 45. It is projected that nearly half of the public health workforce is considering leaving their organization in the next five years. Furthermore, COVID-19 may exacerbate workforce shortages, as over half of public health workers surveyed reported experiencing poor mental health due to the demands of responding to the pandemic.

The Public Health Workforce Loan Repayment Program was created to help bolster public health capacity and reduce workforce shortages. The program provides education loan repayment assistance to eligible individuals in exchange for work in a public health department.

While the Public Health Workforce Loan Repayment Program was authorized from 2010 to 2015, it has never been funded or implemented. As a result, public health departments have not been able to benefit from this targeted loan repayment incentive, and they continue to face workforce shortages.

The Senators’ bipartisan Strengthening the Public Health Workforce Act would reauthorize and improve the Public Health Workforce Loan Repay-

ment Program to help expand the public health workforce at the state, local, and tribal levels and support the COVID-19 response effort.

Specifically, the Strengthening the Public Health Workforce Act:

Reauthorizes the Public Health Workforce Loan Repayment Program to provide education loan repayment assistance to eligible individuals who work in a state, local, or tribal public health department. Under the program,

an individual could receive up to \$35,000 in repayment assistance for each year of service;

Authorizes the program for the next three fiscal years;

Shortens the obligated service time period from three years to two years;

Expands eligibility requirements to include individuals with degrees in public health, epidemiology, data systems, data science, data analytics, informatics, or statistics;

See Collins, page 16

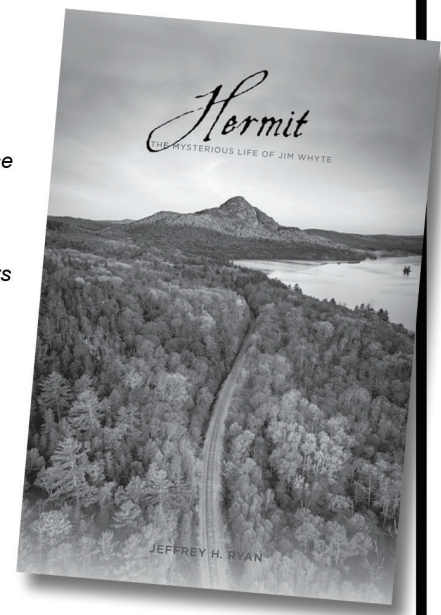
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Project Canopy Community Forestry Grants Application Period Now Open

AUGUSTA, ME (January 20, 2022) – The Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry’s Maine Forest Service (MFS) Project Canopy community forestry program will award up to \$175,000 in grants to local governments, municipalities, educational institutions, and non-profit

organizations in support of efforts to develop and maintain long-term community forestry programs. Project Canopy encourages communities to develop project proposals that support sustainable community forestry management, increase awareness of the benefits of trees and forests, and increase

the health and livability of communities through sound tree planting and maintenance. Funded by the USDA Forest Service, Project Canopy grants are available in two categories: planning and education grants and tree planting and maintenance grants. Planning and education grants

have a maximum award of \$10,000, while planting and maintenance grants top out at \$8,000. To apply for a 2022 assistance grant, all applicants must attend a web-based grant workshop before applying (previous workshop attendees are excluded from this requirement). The grant workshop

will be held on February 2, 2022, at 1 pm. Topics will include grant writing, project development, sustainable community forestry management, and grant administration. Grant applications will be due to the Maine Forest Service at 5:00 pm on Friday, March 11, 2022. All grants require a 50%

match from the grant recipient in cash or in-kind services. To learn more about the Project Canopy Assistance program and sign up for a grant workshop, visit the Project Canopy Assistance Grants web page, or contact Project Canopy Director Jan Ames Santerre at (207) 287-4987.

Sen. Luchini Introduces Bill to Permanently Give Restaurants, Bars and Distilleries the Ability to Sell Alcohol To-Go

Augusta, ME (January 11, 2022) — On Monday, Sen. Louis Luchini, D-Ellsworth, introduced a bill to support Maine’s hospitality industry by per-

manently allowing bars, restaurants and distilleries to sell alcohol to-go. LD 1751, “An Act To Make Permanent the Changes to the Liquor Laws Made by

Public Law 2021, Chapters 3 and 91,” was the subject of a public hearing before the Legislature’s Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee.

“Maine’s hospitality industry has faced tremendous challenges these past two years, yet business owners and employees have adapted to keep their

doors open while safely serving customers,” said Sen. Luchini, who serves as senate chair of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee. “One big part of this has been allowing the sale of alcohol to-go. I’ve spoken to dozens of bar, restaurant and craft beverage business owners over the past year, and many have said this ability has kept them afloat. Making this change permanent allows businesses to plan ahead and lets customers who may not feel comfortable dining out to enjoy a restaurant experience at home.”

by a food order. LD 1751 would make all of these changes permanent. “Fully two years from the beginning of the pandemic, the virus still rages. It has taken on different forms, but the devastation that is left on the hospitality industry, with restaurants specifically, will be hard to reverse. Most restaurateurs have modified service in some way and are trying different ways to keep their businesses solvent and viable, and beer and wine and cocktails to-go are just one of those fixes that in many instances has now become a big part of the business model,” said Greg Dugal of Hospitality Maine in testimony supporting the bill. “For this program to end abruptly as the statute sunsets could be devastating to our industry.”

During the COVID-19 pandemic, restaurants and bars have been allowed to sell alcohol to customers through take-out and delivery service if the alcohol is accompanied by a food order. Last session, Sen. Luchini sponsored a law to extend this ability through Sept. 10, 2022, and to allow licensed Maine distilleries and small distilleries that operate tasting rooms but do not operate licensed on-premises retail establishments to sell spirits through take-out and delivery service unaccompanied

Also testifying in support of the bill was the Distilled Spirits Council, Maine’s Bureau of Alcoholic Beverages and Lottery Operations, the Maine Tourism Association and several Maine businesses including Bow Street Beverage and Three of Strong Spirits. LD 1751 faces further action in committee.



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New Year, New Goals, New Family Member!

World Heritage Student Exchange Programs, a highly respected, non-profit, public-benefit organization, is seeking local host families for high school boys and girls from Scandinavia, France, Germany, Italy, Thailand, China, South Korea, and the former Soviet Republics. Students are already awaiting word on who their host families will be for the 2022-2023 academic school year. If your goal was to try something new for the new-year, this will fulfill that! Host families provide room, board, and guidance for a teenager(s) living thousands of miles from home. Couples, single parents, and families with or without children in the home

are all encouraged to apply. The exchange students arrive from their home country shortly before the 2022-2023 school year begins and each World Heritage student is fully insured, brings his/her own personal spending money and expects to bear his/her share of household responsibilities, as well as being included in normal family activities and lifestyles. If you are interested in opening your home and sharing your family life with a young person from abroad, please contact us today for more information, call (800) 888-9040, go online at host.world-heritage.org or email info@world-heritage.org

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Jan. 29

BUXTON – 5pm Haddock Supper Buffet Living Waters Church; Parker Farm Road, Buxton.

Suggested donation: \$8 Adult, \$4 Child, \$20 Family. Please note: We will offer the option of takeout containers for those who do not want to come inside for seating. Wearing of face masks for those who are not vaccinated is suggested. Hand sanitizer is available for those who wish to use it.

Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

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

Feb. 5
GORHAM – 4:30-5:30pm
Take Out Bean Supper White Rock Community Clubhouse; 34 Wilson Road, Gorham
Pre-order dinner

to go, \$20 for double or \$10 for single orders. Meal includes kidney & pea beans, coleslaw, potato salad, macaroni & cheese, biscuits, hot dogs and a dessert bar. Please, pre-order by Wednesday, Feb 2. Call Fran at 892-9521.

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

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Over 66,000 Maine People Chose Affordable Health Plans for 2022 on CoverME.gov

AUGUSTA, MAINE (January 18, 2022) — The Mills Administration announced today that 66,095 Maine people selected plans for affordable health insurance for 2022 at CoverME.gov, Maine’s new Health Insurance Marketplace, an increase of more than 10 percent over the previous year.

At Governor Mills’ direction, Open Enrollment ended on January 15, 2022, giving Maine people an extra month to browse and enroll in quality, affordable health plans. During this first Open Enrollment Period as a State-based Marketplace, which began on November 1, 2021, an additional 6,357 Maine people selected plans, surpassing the 2021 Open Enrollment period and reversing declines in Marketplace plan selections since 2017.

Among the 66,095 Maine consumers who selected plans, 11,025 were new consumers who had no Marketplace coverage at the start of open enrollment, marking a 14 percent increase over 2021.

Thanks to additional funding available this year from the federal Ameri-

can Rescue Plan, 82% of Maine people who selected plans on CoverME.gov received financial assistance to help pay the cost of their premiums, and more consumers upgraded their level of coverage, reducing out-of-pocket health care costs.

“I am proud that Maine’s new State-based marketplace has helped contribute to a 10 percent increase in consumers choosing plans,” said Governor Janet Mills. “This great news is further proof that running our own marketplace leads to affordable, high-quality coverage for more Maine people. At a time when health insurance is more important than ever before, I am so glad that CoverME.gov was able to put Maine in the driver’s seat and give Maine people more control over their health insurance options.”

“This successful inaugural year of CoverME.gov demonstrates that Maine is best positioned to connect the people of our state with high-quality, affordable health coverage,” said Health and Human Services Commissioner Jeanne Lambrew. “Maine’s transition to a State-run marketplace

means better consumer support for affordable health care for more than 66,000 Maine residents in 2022.”

“It is exciting to hear that so many more people in Maine are getting health care coverage through our new state-based marketplace,” said Rep. Denise Tepler, D-Topsham, House chair of the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services. “More than 80% of Mainers who are now enrolled in health care plans through CoverME.gov are receiving financial assistance in the form of advanced premium tax credits, and their average monthly cost is \$179. While there is more work to be done to make sure all Mainers have affordable health care, this is good news indeed.”

“We’ve known for a while that creating a health coverage portal tailored to Maine’s needs would be crucial in getting more people signed up. The numbers we’ve seen clearly show that effort to create a state-based system has paid off,” said Sen. Heather Sanborn, D-Portland, Senate Chair of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial

Services Committee. “Tens of thousands of Mainers were able to go online and find the coverage that’s right for them during our extended Open Enrollment period. That’s definitely something worth celebrating.”

“This is great news. The numbers show that moving Maine to a state-based Marketplace has benefitted Maine people,” said Ann Woloson, Executive Director of Consumers for Affordable Health Care. “More Mainers have been able to enroll in the health coverage they need through CoverME.gov and we applaud the Department of Health and Human Services for getting more Mainers covered.”

“The Maine Association of Health Underwriters is a key stakeholder and supporter of Maine’s State Based Marketplace, so we are excited to see this increase in plan selections,” said Kimberly Vance, President of the Maine Association of Health Underwriters. “MAHU members play a large role in both assisting people with choosing new plans and transitioning to the new platform. Many of us have experienced the initial launch of other state Marketplaces, so we know these transitions come with challenges, but CoverME.gov’s first Open Enrollment has been a success for Maine consumers. As we have stated from the beginning, we feel that it’s critical for all parties, consumers, providers, and insurers that Maine control the operation of its Marketplace, so we look forward to continuing to collaborate with the Office of the Health Insurance Marketplace to further improve the enrollment experience for the consumers we work with.”

Plan selections provide a snapshot of activity by new and returning

consumers who have selected a plan for 2022. “Plan selections” become “enrollments” 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.

The transition to a state-based Marketplace allowed Maine to launch and oversee its own Marketplace, with greater flexibility to set Open Enrollment dates and Special Enrollment Periods, conduct marketing and outreach, and use state-specific data to best serve the population of Maine. The Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Office of the Health Insurance Marketplace (OHIM) ran its own marketing and outreach campaign, targeted to the people and communities of Maine. This included advertising on placements in diners, gas station displays, and bus stops among other activity.

Now that Open Enrollment has ended, only those experiencing qualifying life events, such as loss of employer-sponsored coverage or moving to Maine, can choose a plan through CoverME.gov until the next Open Enrollment Period for 2023 in the fall, unless they qualify for a Special Enrollment Period. This year, for the first time, Maine will have two new Special Enrollment Periods: for people who become pregnant and people with income below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level (about \$19,000 for an individual and \$39,750 for a family of four). These individuals can now enroll throughout the year at CoverME.gov, not just during Open Enrollment. People who are eligible for MaineCare or Cub Care may enroll at any time of the year.

Along with the state’s expansion of MaineCare to more than 90,000 Maine people, CoverME.gov is at the heart of Maine’s effort to ensure that people can see their doctor, afford their medications, and stay healthy. Governor Mills’ Made for Maine Health Coverage Act – which passed the Legislature with a strong bipartisan majority – authorized DHHS to run a State-based Health Insurance Marketplace and made some of the most common medical visits less costly, as part of a larger plan to improve private health insurance for Maine people and small businesses.

The Department took the first step in the transition to a State-based Marketplace during the 2021 Open Enrollment Period (from November 1, 2020 to December 15, 2020), by launching a hybrid Federal-State Marketplace, following Maine’s use of a fully Federal system since 2014. Maine received full approval to complete the transition to CoverME.gov in October.

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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.

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person double occupancy with a \$75.00 due upon signing.

NASHVILLE SHOW TRIP - JUNE 11-19, 2022

Trip includes 9 days and 8 nights - 14 meals - Grand Ole Opry Show - Nashville Nightlife Dinner Theater - Guided tours of Nashville and Belle Meade Historic Site & Winery. Admission to the Country Music Hall of Fame. Admission to the Grand Ole Opry behind the Scenes Tour. Admission to Madame Tussauds Wax Museum. Price is \$1,025. per person double occupancy with a \$75.00 deposit due upon signing.

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Mackinaw City. Visit to Mackinac Island including a guided Carriage Tour. Boat ride through the Soo Locks and free time and sightseeing in Sault Sainte Marie. Admission to Colonial Michillmackinac. Price is \$899.00 per person double occupancy with a \$75.00 deposit due upon signing.

WHITE MOUNTAIN HOTEL AND RESORT - DECEMBER 4 & 5, 2022 -

Trip includes 1 night lodging - 3 meals (Grand Sunday Brunch) - 2 different entertainment shows, Austrian Sleigh Ride through Jackson Village, Chocolate Tour, shopping and much more. \$100.00 deposit due upon signing. Total price not available at this time.

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

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

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Letter to the Editor: Volunteer with AARP Maine

As the current State Director and the new Volunteer State President of AARP Maine, we are thrilled and honored to work with and serve Maine's 50+ community. As we look ahead to a New Year and new legislative session, we are excited by all the initiatives AARP Maine is advocating for and we wish to highlight a few of our key priorities for this year.

- We will continue the ever-important fight to lower prescription drug costs and increase pricing transparency so that all Mainers have the ability to stay healthy and age independently.

- In the past two years, we've come to recognize how crucial reliable high-speed internet connection is to living, working and thriving.

AARP Maine is dedicated to supporting advocacy for and investments in high-speed internet throughout the state.

- As we face another Maine winter, AARP Maine is committed to ensuring that providers of electricity, gas, landline, wireless, and broadband offer services customers can depend on and afford.

One of our goals is to help expand the volunteer pool by fostering an understanding that AARP is so much more than the mailings that we all receive; AARP is a powerful advocacy group for the entire community of adults who are 50 and older, as well as their families. We both have a tremendous appreciation for all the things a committed group of volunteers can accomplish.

Every aspect of the work AARP Maine does is supported and guided by members of the community, from across the state, just like you. To get involved as a volunteer advocate and to join our dynamic group of volunteers, or to learn more about the AARP Maine mission, visit aarp.org/me or reach out to me@aarp.org.

We look forward to serving you in 2022!

Carl Bucciantini,
AARP Maine Volunteer State President

Noël Bonam, AARP Maine State Director

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

Collins

Continued from page 11

Ensures that program contracts are equitably distributed between geographic areas, local, state and tribal health departments, and rural and urban health departments; and

Directs the Comptroller General to conduct an evaluation of the public health workforce in the United States during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The bill is endorsed by the National Association of County and City Officials (NACCHO).

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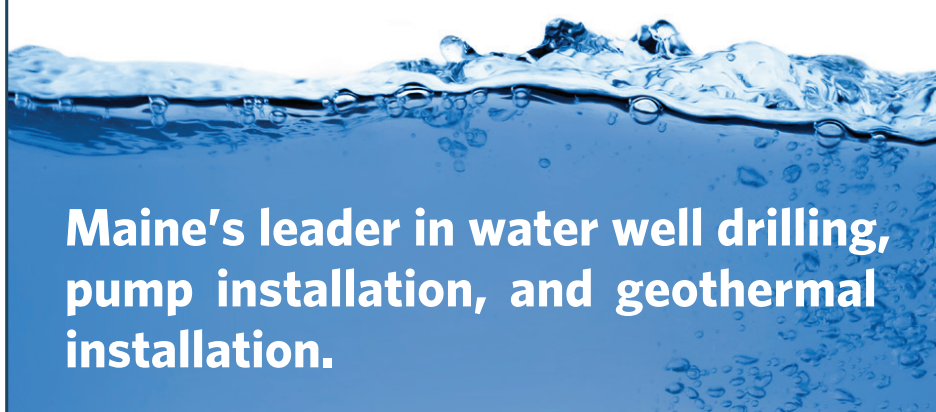
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