



TWIN CITY TIMES

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Auburn Proposes Use Of ARPA Funding To Expand New Housing Opportunities

AUBURN, ME (January 20, 2022) – The City of Auburn is exploring creative new ways to promote home ownership and encourage the construction of new, attainable housing that will help lift people out of poverty and attract and retain employees.

During a meeting of the Auburn City Council on Tuesday, Auburn Mayor Jason Levesque unveiled two proposals that he hopes will accelerate smart growth within the city.

The first proposal: an owner-occupied grant program that would increase opportunities for owner occupied multi-unit buildings throughout the city, especially in areas that are already serviced with public water, sewer, and along existing roadways.

“The vision is to budget \$500,000 to fund grants of up to \$10,000 per unit for owner-occupied duplexes and triplexes,” said Levesque. “We would require that the owner occupy one of the units for a minimum of 5 years.” “This program would not only encourage construction of owner-occupied units, resulting in a net gain in attainable housing,” added Levesque. “It will also offer a path for new homeowners to build generational wealth.”

Ward 1 Councilor Richard Whiting agrees. “Investing in much needed new housing will be a win-win equation for aspiring homeowners and for Auburn’s long-term success,” said Whiting.

The second proposal would establish an employee home ownership grant program that officials hope will entice job seekers and current employees to live in the same community where they work.

The program, which would apply to new and existing municipal and school department employees, would grant up to \$20,000 toward the construction of a new home. The grant would apply to single family homes as well as owner-occupied duplexes and triplexes.

“We recognize that our city and school employees are an essential part of our community fabric,” said Levesque. “We want to encourage our current and future employees to live in our neighborhoods and contribute their vast talents to making Auburn a better place to live.”

Among the terms that Levesque proposes: to qualify for this grant, an employee would have to stay with the City of Auburn - and occupy the home - for a minimum of 5 years.

“By focusing on new construction, we can not only increase housing stock and help stabilize our tax base, but further enhance our neighborhoods, provide true opportunities for young families, and create a more resilient city that future generations will be proud to live and work in,” said Levesque.

If approved, these programs would be funded with federal ARPA funds. City leadership will propose program terms and guidelines during the city council’s February meetings.

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.”



Special “Candlemas” Celebrations Set for Auburn and Scarborough on Wednesday, February 2



Celebrating Candlemas

SCARBOROUGH, ME (January 19, 2022) --“Candlemas,” another name for the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, occurs 40 days after Christmas on February 2, marking the first time Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple for the rites of purification and dedication as prescribed by Jewish law.

On Wednesday, February 2, St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish in Scarborough and Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Auburn will commemorate the feast with the blessing of candles at special Masses. The candles symbolize the light created by the birth of Christ as He is the light who came into this world to dispel sin and darkness. For this reason, at least since the seventh century, candles have been blessed at Mass this day, coining the term “Candlemas.”

Parishioners can bring their own candles to the Masses on February 2 to have them blessed for use at home throughout the year. The candles can be in any style (votive, tealight, taper, etc.). Candles will be blessed at St. Maximilian Kolbe, located on 150 Black Point Road in Scarbor-

ough, at the 8 a.m. Mass, and at Sacred Heart Church, located on 8 Sacred Heart Place, at the 7:45 a.m. Mass. Contact your local parish to find out if they will also be offering blessings of candles during Masses on this day.

The Gospel reading on “Candlemas” (Luke 20:22-40) tells of Simeon, a just and pious man, who awaited the Messiah and was inspired to come to the temple. He held baby Jesus in his arms and bless-

ed God, saying, “Now, Master, you can dismiss your servant in peace; you have fulfilled your word. For my eyes have witnessed your saving deed, displayed for all the peoples to see: A revealing light to the Gentiles, the glory of your people Israel.” The Messiah has come not just for the Jew but the gentile; not just the righteous, but the sinner. The Presentation is a proclamation of Christ — Messiah and Priest, Lord and Savior.

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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

Great Falls Forum with Stephanie Kelley-Romano



LEWISTON, ME (January 18, 2022) -- The 2021-2022 season of the Great Falls Forum continues on Thursday, February 17th, featuring Bates College Professor Stephanie Kelley-Romano.

no, with a talk entitled "Conspiracy Theories: Why, How, and What To Do." This free, public program will take place from 12 noon to 1 PM virtually via Zoom and streamed to the Lewiston Public Library Facebook page.

Conspiracy theories seem to be everywhere— are we living in an age of conspiracies? In her Great Falls Forum talk, Stephanie will describe what a conspiracy theory is, and draw out the differences between misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy. She will also talk about the psychological and sociological conditions that may promote

conspiracy thinking, and will describe the common rhetorical characteristics of conspiracy theories. Most importantly, she will do so with an eye to helping people recognize conspiracy theories, faulty evidence, and errors in reasoning. Finally, Stephanie will offer several suggestions (some of which may seem counter-intuitive) in terms of how we should try to counter conspiracy theories.

Stephanie Kelley-Romano is an Associate Professor in the rhetoric, film, and screen studies department at Bates College where she has taught since 1999.

She earned her undergraduate and MA degrees at Emerson College in Boston. Her Ph.D. in Communication Studies was earned at The University of Kansas. Her research and teaching interests include gender and media, myth and narrative, conspiracy, political rhetoric, and substance (mis)use disorder/addiction. Her scholarship has appeared in such journals as *The Journal of Hate Studies*, *Communication Quarterly*, *Journalism Studies*, and *The Journal of UFO Studies*. She is often sought after for podcasts on political or paranormal topics, and her public scholarship

has appeared in *Newsweek.com* and *The Conversation*. Kelley-Romano received the Kroepsch Teaching Award at Bates College for excellence in teaching in 2019.

Admission is free to all Forum events. The Zoom link will be posted to the Library website and Facebook prior to the event. For more information, please contact the Lewiston Public Library at 513-3135 or LPLReference@lewistonmaine.gov.

The Great Falls Forum speaker series is co-sponsored by Bates College, Lewiston Public Library, and the *Sun Journal*.

Origami Hearts With Lewiston Public Library

LEWISTON, ME (January 20, 2022) -- The Lewiston Public Library will be posting a video demonstration on how to make two types of origami hearts on Monday, February 7, which will be available for viewing online via the library's Facebook page and YouTube Channel. In addition to the video demo, there will be origami hearts take

& make kits available for free to pick up at the library.

The video will show viewers how to make hearts with wings and love note hearts using the Japanese art of paper folding called origami. It will premiere on February 7 and continue to be available for viewing indefinitely on the library's Facebook page and YouTube chan-



nel. Each take & make kit will include origami paper, written instructions, and a special list of book recommendations on love, romance and relationships

from LPL staff. The kits become available on Monday, February 7 and will remain while supplies last or until Monday, February 28. Visit the library's lending desk to pick up a kit or call 513-3134 to pick one up using LPL To Go. Participants are encouraged to share their work on social media using the hashtag #LPLValentines.

This program is

free and directed towards adults and teens.

Origami Hearts is sponsored by the Lewiston Public Library. The Lewiston Public Library is located downtown at 200 Lisbon Street at the corner of Pine Street. For more information, contact the Lewiston Public Library at LPLReference@lewistonmaine.gov or 513-3135.

Come Play in the Snow!



AUBURN, ME -- Join us for the first-ever family ski, snowboard and tubing night at Lost Valley in Auburn to benefit The Public Theatre! Saturday, February 12, 2022 5 - 9 pm.

The PLAY in the Snow event features skiing, snowboarding, snow tubing, door prizes, 50/50 Raffle, Raffle basket drawings, FREE Cook-

ies and cocoa, Food and drink from the Lost Valley Brewpub.

Tickets: ** Skiing/snowboarding (all ages) - \$25 Skiing/snowboarding CUB CARPET Only - \$5

Snowtubing (by the hour, minimum height requirement of 42") - \$10 Raffle tickets - 1/\$2, 6/\$5, 15/\$10 (available

online or at the event)

Rentals are available through Lost Valley for an additional cost.

Tickets are limited for snowtubing, so buy early to save your spot! Not snowtubing? Still buy your tickets early. Tickets purchased before February 2nd may be mailed, maximizing your time on the mountain and not in line at will-call.

*Rain date: Saturday, February 13, 2022 from 5 - 9 pm at Lost Valley.

** This is a private fundraising event. Lost

Valley season passes are not valid for this event.

This event will raise much needed funds to bring live professional theatre to Maine, delighting and inspiring audiences with life-affirming contemporary plays. It also supports The Public Theatre's education and outreach programs. The Theatre has partnered with schools and libraries across Maine to bring the arts—in the form of creative readings, video performances, and live virtual classes—to kids at no cost.

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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

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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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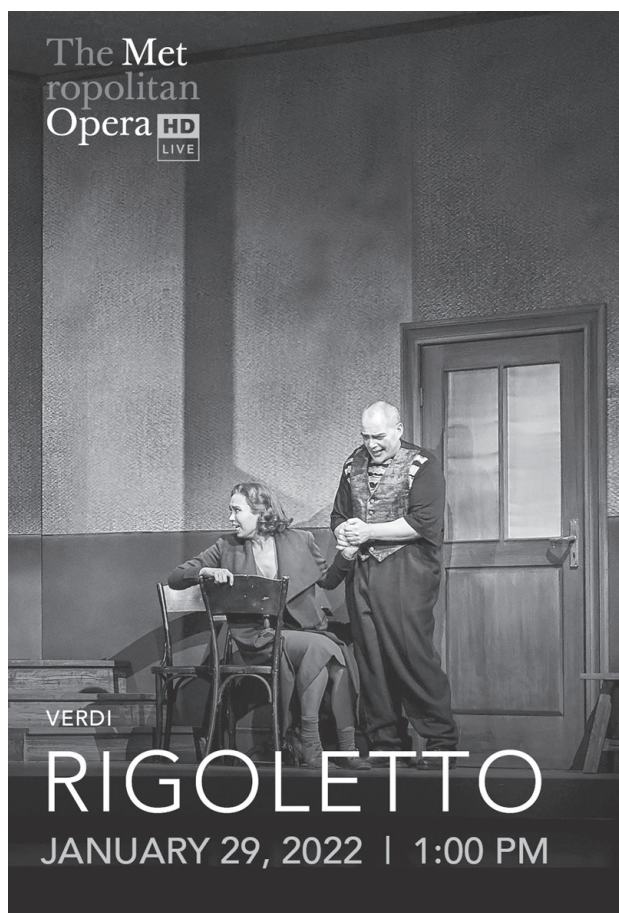
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Arts & Entertainment

“Rigoletto” Live in HD At The Leura Hill Eastman Performing Arts Center



FRYEBURG, MAINE — The Metropolitan Opera Live in HD series presents Verdi’s Rigoletto at the Leura Hill Eastman Performing Arts Center on Saturday, January 29th at 1:00 pm. Tony Award-winning director Bartlett Sher’s bold new take on the timeless tragedy resets the opera’s action in 1920s Europe, with Art Deco sets by Michael Yeargan and elegant costumes by Catherine Zuber, themselves boasting a combined 11 Tony Awards. Baritone Quinn Kelsey, a commanding artist at the height of his powers, brings his searing portrayal of the title role to the Met for the first time, starring alongside soprano Rosa Feola as Gilda and tenor Piotr Beczala as the Duke of Mantua, with leading maestro Daniele Rustioni on the podium. This live cinema transmission is part of the Met’s award-winning Live in HD series, bringing opera to movie theaters across the globe.

Opera enthusiast Joe De Vito will be hosting his acclaimed Opera Lecture Series in the LHE/PAC seminar room on Thursday, January 27th at 3:00 pm. The lectures are free and open to the public.

Live in HD tickets are \$28 for adults, \$25 for seniors, and \$10 for students. Order online at www.fryeburgacademy.org/pac, or call the box office at 207-544-9066. In order to keep our doors open, facemasks are required inside the building during all events. The LHE/PAC is located at 18 Bradley Street in Fryeburg, Maine on the Fryeburg Academy campus.

Opera enthusiast Joe De Vito will be hosting his acclaimed Opera Lecture Series in the LHE/PAC seminar room on Thursday, January 27th at 3:00 pm. The lectures are free and open to the public.

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

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February 10th - just in time for Valentine’s Day. The faster we sell 300 tickets, the faster your winning ticket will be pulled!

Androscoggin Home Healthcare + Hospice employee, Ben Sullivan, named recipient of Home Care & Hospice Alliance of Maine’s 2021 Media Award

Lewiston, ME (January 10, 2022) — Ben Sullivan, Communications and Marketing Manager for Androscoggin Home Healthcare + Hospice, was named the 2021 recipient of the Home Care & Hospice Alliance of Maine Media Award during a virtual presentation held December 15, 2021.

The organization’s Media Award is presented annually to an individual or group recognizing an outstanding contribution

to the health of Maine residents living at home through the use of television, radio, newspapers, or magazines. Sullivan was selected from a pool of nominees based on his extraordinary skill for heartfelt storytelling through video, photography, music, and the written word, as well as his talent for conveying the patient experience, resiliency of providers, and importance of quality of life.

“Ben not only under-

stands the mission of a particular organization; he authentically appreciates and communicates the value of home health and hospice services in the health care continuum,” said Kenneth Albert, R.N., Esq., Androscoggin President and CEO, adding, “Whether his goal is advocacy, fundraising, celebration, education, resilience building, or simply acknowledging a holiday, Ben delivers with heart, making his work relatable and inspiring.”

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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 reim-

bursement 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:

- Human Resources Managers
- Benefits Administrators
- Health, Wellness and Safety Managers
- Training and Development Professionals
- Supervisors
- Small Business Owners

Other individuals interested in Human Resource issues

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- Learn about current HR issues from local and state experts
- Participate in dis-

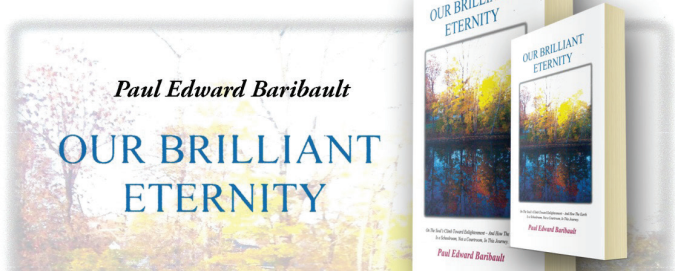
cussions about HR challenges

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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Updates on the Lewiston High School Expansion Project



The new main entrance to Lewiston High School is framed by a two-story arch in Lewiston Blue with signage reading “Welcome” in many different languages.

LEWISTON, ME (January 21, 2022) -- The beginning of the second semester at Lewiston High School this week brought with it the opening of the new wing. The occupancy of the extension virtually completed the \$13.4 million project approved by voters, almost three years ago, and includes significant renovations to the original building – that area already having been reactivated.

“The new wing houses fine arts classrooms for creating ceramics, drawings, paintings, and digital arts works. The performing arts areas include a drama studio and acoustically engineered choral and instrumental rehearsal rooms. Also featured are a secure school entrance, a stunning lobby, art gallery-style hallways, a student gathering area - with a snack bar, classrooms, conferencing space, and the community adult education office,” reflects Tim Brochu, principal of Adra Architects, and clerk of the works for the LHS venture.

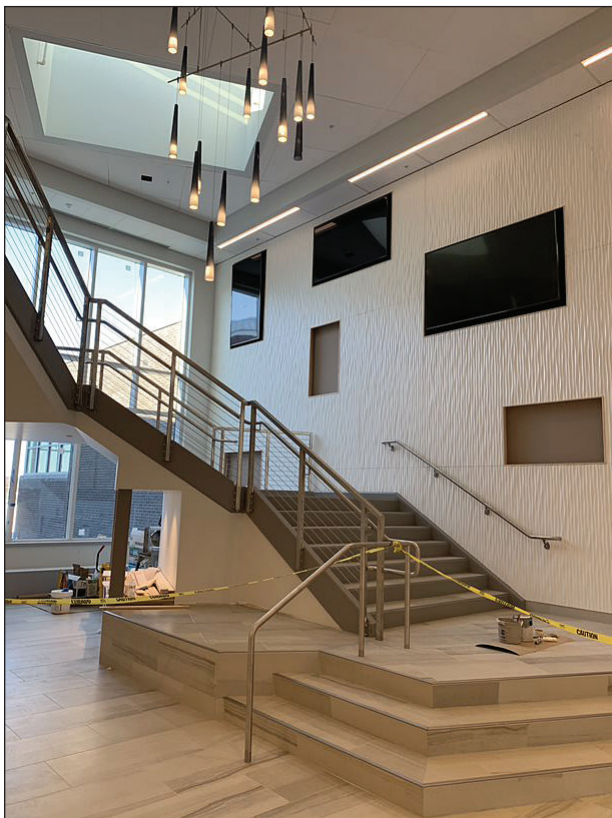
“The renovated portion of the existing structure comprises an ADA-compliant elevator, a new nurse’s suite, accommodations for the administrators and their clerical staff, a functional life skills classroom, and a large conference room. Contemporary offices for the special education coordinator and the school resource officer also were created,” Brochu adds.

This project, Phase II of a three-part plan, has approximately 1000 more square feet of space than first conceived, and, yet - even with materials delays caused by COVID, it

came to fruition within the budget. Due to the efforts and diligence of Lavallee Brensinger Architects; the Ledgewood Construction Company; the subcontractor crews; Tim Brochu; Jay Dufour, LHS assistant principal, and the project liaison representing the Lewiston Public Schools; and the LHS Expansion and Renovation Committee, comprised of LHS staff

members and community residents, Lewiston taxpayers have an investment of which they can be proud for many future decades. And, much credit goes to the residents of Lewiston, who voted overwhelmingly to financially support this very ambitious venture.

Phase III, the final piece of the master plan, already is being visualized. The Committee is



The Lobby features a sculptural staircase and daylit display wall for artwork and digital media.



The new High School Administration suite includes a secure and accessible reception area, meeting rooms, and offices. Adult Education has a separate reception area also accessed from the new main entry.



The first floor corridor terminates in a “golden spiral,” believed since antiquity to generate beautiful proportions in art and architecture.

beginning to explore the feasibility of constructing a 1000-seat, state of the art, performing arts center (PAC) for Lewiston High School and community-based activities, including evaluating various funding sources to make it a reality.

When the PAC is completed, the Lewiston High School campus will be essentially as it was envisioned more than a half century ago. Even though it will have taken so long to realize the dream, based on what’s been accomplished over the years – and especially in the 21st Century - it will have been well worth the journey.

See more photos on page 16

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Auburn Public Library Offers Programs Leading Up to 2022 Camden Conference



Francesco Duina will be presenting **Populism & Nationalism in Europe** on Wednesday February 9, 2022. Duina is a Professor of Sociology and European Studies at Bates College.

When: see below for dates and times

Where: Auburn Public Library, 49 Spring Street, Auburn, Maine

Contact: Donna Wallace, 333-6640, ext. 4

The Camden Conference was founded in 1987 as a nonprofit, non-partisan educational organization whose mission is to foster informed discourse on world issues. Each year, they host a conference, with participating libraries offering community events related to their theme. The 2022 conference, scheduled for February 25-27, is entitled "Europe: Challenged

At Home and Abroad" and will again be an entirely virtual event, live-streamed from Camden, Maine.

The Auburn Public Library is pleased to participate as one of the hosting libraries. Leading up to this year's Conference, the Library will host three events. To register for any of these programs, visit the Events page of the APL website at www.auburn-publiclibrary.org; contact the Reference Desk at 207-333-6640, ext. 4; or email dwallace@auburn-publiclibrary.org.

Film Screening & Discussion: The Europe-

an Union Explained

Thursday, February 3, 2022

4:00-5:00 p.m.

The Camden Conference and the Auburn Public Library invite you to a film screening and discussion of the documentary, *The European Union Explained*. Key topics will include the history of the European Union, the EU institutions, and arguments for and against.

"Conceived as a noble cause, to prevent another war in Europe, the EU has become embroiled in controversy. But what is the EU? How does it work? Should we love it or hate it?"

This program will take place in person, in the Androscoggin Community Room. For planning purposes, registration is required.

Populism & Nationalism in Europe

Presented by Francesco Duina, Professor of Sociology and European Studies, Bates College

Wednesday, February 9, 2022

4:00-5:00 p.m.

The Camden Conference and the Auburn

Public Library invite you to a presentation by Francesco Duina, Professor of Sociology and European Studies at Bates College. He has held appointments at Harvard University, Copenhagen Business School, and the University of British Columbia (where he was Professor and Head of Sociology from 2013-2015). He is the author of nearly 30 articles in leading academic journals, op-ed pieces in newspapers such as the LA Times and The Guardian, and six books. The most recent is *Broke and Patriotic: Why Poor Americans Love Their Country* (Stanford University Press, 2018).

Right-wing populist parties have scored major victories in Europe. What can explain their success? This talk will explore a rarely discussed factor: their surprising ability to weave right-wing ideologies with left-wing or progressive positions. These positions include support for gays, gender equality, and generous welfare policies. Why and how do these parties do this? We will consider the cases of

the Party for Freedom in the Netherlands, the National Rally in France, and the Sweden Democrats.

This program will be offered as a hybrid program (in person or virtually, via Zoom). For our planning purposes, registration is required. When registering, please indicate whether you plan to attend in person or would like the Zoom link emailed to you on February 9.

Book Discussion: How Democracies Die by Steven Levitsky & Daniel Ziblatt

Wednesday, February 16, 2022

4:00-5:00 p.m.

The Camden Conference and the Auburn Public Library invite you to a book discussion -- "How Democracies Die" by Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt.

Since 2016, we have been asking the question, "Is our democracy in danger?" Drawing on decades of research and a wide range of historical and global examples, from 1930s Europe to contemporary Hungary, Turkey,

and Venezuela to the American South during Jim Crow, Levitsky and Ziblatt show how democracies die -- and how ours can be saved. The authors are professors of government at Harvard University. Levitsky's research focuses on Latin America and the developing world; Ziblatt studies Europe from the 19th century to the present. (Information from book jacket, provided by publisher.)

This discussion will take place in person, in the Androscoggin Community Room. To register, please contact the Reference Desk at 207-333-6640, ext. 4. Please give us an email address when registering so we can contact you when your book is available for pick up. Thanks to funding provided by the Camden Conference, the copy of the book is yours to keep.

For more details on the Camden Conference, including participating speakers, membership, or other pre-Conference events, visit their website at camdenconference.org.

February Snowshoe Event To Be Held at Thorncrag Nature Sanctuary

As part of a year-long celebration of the 100th anniversary of Thorncrag Nature Sanctuary, the Stanton Bird Club will be hosting a snowshoe trek from 10am-12noon on Saturday, February 19th. 100 years ago, the Bird Club accepted the first gift of 45 acres from the Anthony Family to begin the process of creating a 'model bird sanctuary'. Over the next few years Professor Anthony, his wife, Gertrude (1911 Bates

graduate), and his sister bought and donated another 175 acres to expand the Sanctuary. The Stanton Bird Club had been organized two years earlier to promote the "study of birds and the understanding of nature" and named in honor of Professor Jonathan Stanton, a long-time and beloved teacher at Bates College.

At 10am, Gary Maurer, Chair of the Stewardship Committee for the

Bird Club and the long-time steward for Thorncrag will lead a walking tour to share some of the history of the Thorncrag. At 10:30 am Master Naturalist and Board member, Paula Everett and her husband, Michael, will lead a tracking tour for families. Both walks will end at the Anthony Fireplace where Boy Scouts from Troop 111 will be roasting marshmallows and serving hot chocolate for all. Community mem-

bers are welcomed to walk on their own to the fireplace or to participate in one of the walking tours. This is a perfect time of year to enjoy Thorncrag. If it is a clear day, folks can take in the view of Mt. Washington from the viewing corridor by the height of land.

For questions about this event please contact Board member Nancy Long at nermaid57@yahoo.com.

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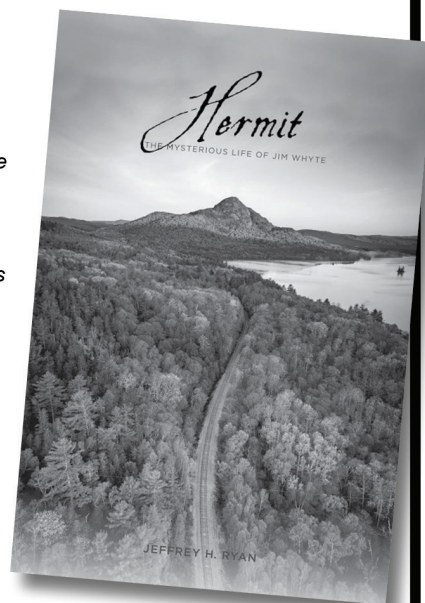
"Ryan is an excellent storyteller, and this tale is as good as any novel, especially since it's based on real people and real events."

— Bill Bushnell, *Bushnell on Books*

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— George Smith, *Bangor Daily News*

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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.”

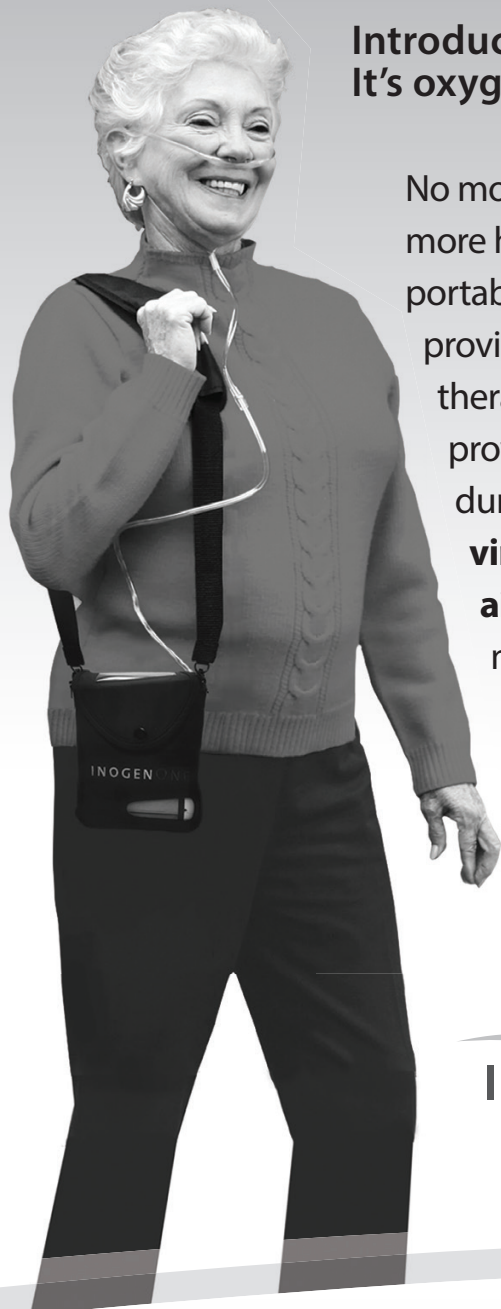
by a food order. LD 1751 would make all of these changes permanent. “Fully two years from the beginning of the pandemic, the virus still rages. It has taken on different forms, but the devastation that is left on the hospitality industry, with restaurants specifically, will be hard to reverse. Most restaurateurs 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.”

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.

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

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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 American 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 benefited 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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person double occupancy with a \$75.00 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.

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

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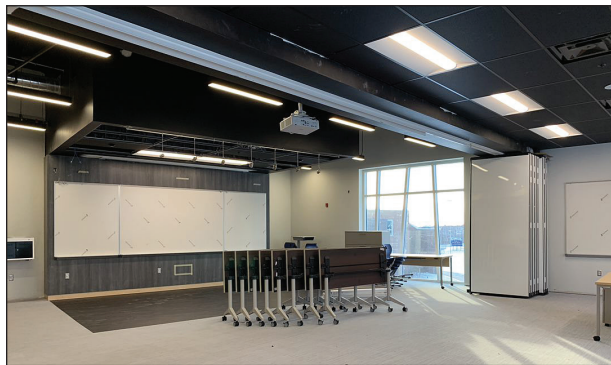
Updates on the Lewiston High School Expansion Project



The first floor corridor is designed as a gallery space to showcase work created in the surrounding art rooms.



The Drawing and Painting classroom takes advantage of large north-facing windows for optimal daylight.



The Drama studio can be opened to the adjacent classroom with a motorized partition for "black box" theater performances.



The Instrumental Music suite includes a large rehearsal space for concert band, jazz band, and string orchestra as well as individual practice rooms, instrument storage, and a MIDI digital music lab.



The Digital Media Arts room includes 18 computer workstations for graphic arts design and production.

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