

# Gorham Times

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PERMIT NO. 10

Volume 27 Number 6 | March 18, 2021

A Free, Not-for-Profit Newspaper Serving Gorham Since 1995

## Return to School for More Time or Not?

HEATHER PERRY

Superintendent of Gorham Schools

This is a question that Gorham, as well as many other school systems in our region, is struggling with right now. For “good” or for “bad” there is no question that there is mounting pressure to re-open schools right now even though our staff are not yet fully vaccinated, and the CDC safety guidelines for schools to remain open have not changed.

The Gorham school system, however, is embarking on an in-depth study of how Gorham might still be able to overcome these odds and potentially look to increase face-to-face instructional time for students.

On February 24, the School Committee (SC) tasked me with a homework assignment to come up with three scenarios that might allow us to increase face-to-face instruction time for students this spring.

Right now, we are looking at these scenarios: return K-8 to four-days-per-week learning, 9-12 will continue hybrid but bring A and B groups in on Friday mornings for additional face-to-face learning time; return K-5 to four-days-per-week learning and move 6-12 to five-days-per-week but release at 1 p.m. each day (this could

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

## Gorham FD Making Gains on Vaccination Effort

SHERI FABER

Staff Writer

As of March 10th, the Gorham Fire Department has vaccinated over 1400 people including first responders as well as teaching staff over the age of 60 from Gorham and Windham.

Chief Ken Fickett and Lily McMillan, a firefighter and a paramedic, have been running the program and will continue to vaccinate people over 60 as they receive more COVID-19 vaccines, but the supply continues to be erratic.

Fickett and McMillan have traveled to Windham, Westbrook, Sebago and Naples to give vaccinations, in addition to the ones they do in Gorham. Portland and Scarborough Fire

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

## Oh, What A Year It Has Been

KATHY CORBETT

Staff Writer

Last March the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic and Gorham, along with the rest of the country, shut down. Daily life changed for everyone. Looking back, some Gorham residents spoke about challenges, temporary and longer lasting. Although COVID made this past year stressful, sometimes challenges led to creative responses and even new ways of thinking about work and relationships.

Peggy Marchand spent much of the year caring for a very ill older sibling who lost her job due to COVID restrictions. “We tried to muddle through and have some fun too,” she said. They ate Easter eggs out of the back of her car, grilled lobster rolls in the back yard, and walked often talking from opposite sides of back roads. She was thrilled to get six rolls of toilet paper for her June birthday! “After all these months of pandemic, we are all grateful, more aware of the little things that matter and love figuring out ways to be good neighbors and connected family despite distancing,” she said.

By the end of this February, 733 Gorham residents had been diagnosed with COVID. One of the first was Judy Ringo who attended a meeting last March where no one was sick; afterward twelve people came down with COVID. Ringo only spent a few days in the hospital, but a year later still has fatigue.

Lee Pratt spoke about how his work as Town Council Chair has changed. “Our meetings have gone from in-person to virtual,” he said. “It’s good because there is less driving and more meeting time available over the internet. But with in-person meetings you can see when someone in the crowd wants to speak. Although with virtual you can address a population that might not have been going to meetings before.” The Council has reappointed the Board of Health which Pratt said will give guidance for future planning. “I have watched our town do everything possible to stop the spread, he said. “I have lived in Gorham my whole life and could not be more proud of how our community has come together.”

“Not being able to hug my grandchildren has been heartbreaking at times,” Jackie Francis said. She quarantined before meeting and holding her three-month-old granddaughter, kissing her on the head while wearing a mask. However, one positive effect of the changes in her social life has been hiking Gorham’s trails and preserves with her husband, some for the first time, some-



Pictured top left, on Christmas Eve 2020, the Marchand family gathered in the snow around a new fire pit. Their first-ever outdoor Christmas tree “glowed and cheered us all.” - photo credit Roger Marchand

Pictured top right, Baxter Memorial Library is almost back to their normal schedule. Closed March except for on-line outreach, they opened in June but did not let patrons browse the stacks until July. Computers became available for the public in September. Throughout the year Baxter has offered a variety of on-line programs, including yoga, cooking classes and programs for children. - photo credit Kathy Corbett

Pictured bottom left, now that older Gorham residents have been vaccinated, inside dining at well-spaced tables is increasing at Ocean Gardens restaurant. About 35% of their business has been curbside pick-up and they intend to continue offering that service after the pandemic. - photo credit Kathy Corbett

Pictured bottom right, Junction Bowl offered outside dining in the fall and this winter they have offered inside dining at 25% occupancy. About 20% of business has been curbside carry-out. New regulations will permit them to serve more people inside later in the month. - photo credit Kathy Corbett

thing they will continue to do.

First Parish UCC Church began streaming worship services on March 22, 2020. They then moved to Zoom. “It was a steep learning curve when it came to tech equipment,” Pastor Christine Dyke said “People have enjoyed going to worship in their jammies, sewing and knitting during church, and having their coffee. They have even become less self-conscious about singing along with the hymns,” she added. She said that COVID gave her permission to try new things because nothing was the same and the positives have outweighed the negatives. She regrets not having contact with parishioners at Gorham House, that funerals have had to be small, and that she has not been able to assist people in the hospital, although most people brought their cellphones and called in. “In the future,” she said, “we will always

have Zoom or something like it. We will help anyone homebound in getting the tech they need so they can be at church on Sunday.”

Jenn Plummer, the North Gorham Public Library coordinator said that her greatest challenge has been quarantining books when they are returned and when patrons browse in the small library with its five-person limit. “The best thing to come of all this is how many people are using the online catalog to reserve books,” she said. They can pick them up in the library, contactless in the parking lot, or have them delivered. The library will continue home delivery after the pandemic.

Cecely Conrad is the English for Speakers of Other Languages specialist for Gorham’s elementary schools. Communicating online has been dif-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

inside the Times   GOCAM   
2 Augusta 4 Living 5 Municipal 6 School  
8 Sports 10 Community 11 Calendar

GMS TAKES THE  
VIRTUAL STAGE  
SEE ARTICLE ON PAGE 7



## NEWS FROM AUGUSTA

**Policy on News from Augusta:** The Gorham Times asked our three state legislators from Senate District 30, House District 26 and House District 27 to provide us with "News from Augusta." We publish their articles on a rotating basis. The submissions are devoted to updates of legislative and administrative news, proposed and passed bills and laws, and developments and events that are of interest and have an impact to Gorham residents. The Gorham Times reserves the right to edit the submissions and it further reserves the right to reject any submission, in its sole discretion.

# Finding Bipartisan Solutions for Mainers

REP. MO TERRY

After so much time spent working remotely in front of computer screens and on the phone, being back with all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and in person was a truly joyous experience. What was intended to be a two-day session, beginning on March 10, ran into the wee hours of the morning on March 12. Convened at the Augusta Civic Center in order to remain in compliance with CDC distancing requirements, the full Legislature met to pass a series of important and impactful pieces of legislation. As House chair of the Taxation Committee, and because I've spoken about this issue before, I'd like to highlight one hard-fought piece of legislation that was passed last night: the supplemental budget.

The supplemental budget will ensure that we maintain a balanced budget and that we are able to afford the many programs and services necessary not only to keep our state up and running, but also to support our economic recovery as Maine bounces back with gusto from the pandemic. Because the supplemental budget needed to go into effect immediately, it required a two-thirds vote of the entire Legislature, rather than a simple majority. This meant that we needed Republicans, Independents and Democrats on board - no easy feat in these divided times.

The supplemental budget includes many critical funding measures. As you may recall, in recent weeks a hotly debated part of the budget included Maine's tax treatment of the Paycheck Protection Program loans. After hearing from so many of you and working hard with our colleagues across the aisle to find a solution that made sense, we allocated \$100 million to exempt Maine businesses who accessed relief through PPP from state income taxes. This relief supports more than 28,000

businesses across the state. As a small business owner myself, I know how critical these loans were to so many of us. Being able to get this extra boost during a really challenging time is huge for Maine businesses.

In this budget we were also importantly able to provide additional relief for 160,000 Mainers who lost their jobs due to the pandemic. I have heard from so many of you who have lost employment over this past year and I've seen firsthand how job loss has affected my friends and family. Providing relief to Maine businesses is important, but so too is helping out those workers who were impacted by business closures. This budget measure takes the form of \$47 million allocated to exempt unemployment benefits from state income taxes. Without this relief, Mainers who relied on unemployment benefits at some point during the pandemic would've been hit with \$200-\$500 per person in state income taxes.

This budget also ensured targeted relief to direct care service providers and nonprofit providers in the form of \$30 million in state and federal money to direct care service providers and behavioral health providers that did not get PPP funds, state grants or any other relief and have struggled to meet the needs of Maine people, especially as COVID-19-related mental health concerns increase. These funds target people who provide support through MaineCare sections 18, 20, 21, 29, 17, 28 and 65. The state will cover \$10

million of the funds and receive \$20 million in matching federal funds. We have leaned on these health care providers over the past year more than ever before and I was so happy to be able to get them this much needed support.

Outside of these key elements, the supplemental budget also provides support to the Early College Aspirations program for working-class Mainers, invests in a new comprehensive child welfare information system, takes steps to address contamination from "forever chemicals," promotes the construction of affordable housing in Maine and so much more. After months of hard work, contentious discussions and continued negotiation, we were able to pass this crucial piece of legislation. It took a tremendous amount of work from my fellow colleagues on the Taxation Committee, Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee and leaders in both parties to reach this point. I am grateful to everyone's efforts and I am excited about the promising path to economic recovery that lies ahead for Maine.



Rep. Maureen "Mo" Terry, D-Gorham, is serving her third term in the Maine House of Representatives. She serves as House Chair of the Taxation Committee. She is a chef and small business owner with more than 25 years of experience in the food service industry. Contact her at maureen.terry@legislature.maine.gov.

## Gorham Times

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PO Box 401  
Gorham, Maine 04038  
Phone and Fax: (207) 839-8390  
gorhamtimes@gmail.com  
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The Gorham Times is a free volunteer-run community newspaper distributed every other Thursday to more than 100 pick-up sites throughout Gorham.

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**Business Manager:** Stacy Sallinen  
**Advertiser Coordinator:** Stacy Sallinen  
**Design/Production:** Shirley Douglas  
**Staff Writers:** Diane Abramson, Jacob Adams, Kathy Corbett, John Ersek, Sheri Faber, Edmund Ricker, Cathy Walter  
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**Photographers:** Amanda Landry, Roger Marchand  
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### EDITORIAL POLICY

The Gorham Times takes all reasonable care to prevent errors and disclaims all legal responsibility for any such errors, omissions, or typographical errors. The Gorham Times will print corrections if notified within 48 hours. We reserve the right to refuse publication of unsolicited materials. All submissions are subject to editing. Opinions expressed in the Gorham Times do not necessarily reflect those of the staff or publishers.

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## Upcoming Deadlines

March 24

April 7

April 21

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## Featured Photos

Share your photos with us! Please submit photos to [gorhamtimes@gmail.com](mailto:gorhamtimes@gmail.com).



Photo credits Erin Cole

Pictured left, is a Northern saw-whet owl. This little one is about 6 inches tall and not often seen in our area. Pictured right, is a Barred owl.

## Planning Board Meeting 3/1/21

Walter Stinson's request for approval of a self-storage facility at 551 Main Street was approved.

A request for approval for a change of ownership of Pheasant Knoll Subdivision Phase 4-6 from Kasprzak Homes to Cottage Advisors, ME LLC was approved.

Proposed amendments to the Narragansett Mixed Use Development District modifying side and rear setbacks and adding Personal Services as an allowed use was sent to the Town Council and recommended for adoption.

A proposed amendment to the Land Use and Development Code to allow medical marijuana as a home occupation use and to allow medical marijuana commercial cultivation, manufacturing and testing was recommended to the Town Council for adoption.

Burnham Road Solar's request for approval of a ground mounted solar energy generation facility on 35 acres located at 17 Nonesuch Road was postponed to a future consent agenda.

STJ, Inc's request for approval for Hannah Drive condominiums with four condos in two duplex units located on 1.5 acres off the existing

Hannah Drive cul-de-sac was granted a waiver for high intensity soil survey and preliminary approval was granted.

A request from Earle Enterprises, LLC to convert 8 College Ave. from an existing single-family residence into an 8-unit apartment building was discussed and postponed.

A proposed amendment to the Land Use and Development Code regarding Mosher's Corner Mixed Use Development Zone was referred to the Board's Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee for review and recommendations.

A Proposed amendment to the Land Use and Development Code to allow for an exemption beyond daytime hours for well drilling activities was referred to the Board's Ordinance Review Committee.

A proposed amendment to the Land Use and Development code regarding setback requirements during the permit application process was referred to the Board's Ordinance Review Committee.

Proposed amendments to the Land Use and Development Code regarding invasive terrestrial plants was referred to the Boards Ordinance Review Committee.

## Gorham FD Making Gains on Vaccination Effort CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Departments were also doing vaccinations but stopped because of the complications of getting the vaccine and the amount of paperwork required.

Each time the Fire Department runs a vaccination clinic, they need 1-2 people to give the shots, 1-2 people to get the vaccine ready, 4-6 to deal with the paperwork as well as 1-2 greeters. Fickett and McMillan work on the paperwork as they have time.

The Town is paying overtime to people who are working on the vaccinations and most people receiving the vaccine are covered by insurance but shots are covered regardless. Fickett expects that the overtime costs will be balanced by the insurance payments and state reimbursements.

One issue that has arisen, is that people have lost the vaccine record cards they were given, showing they had been vaccinated. Fickett reminds people to keep the cards in a safe place so they can show them should they need them to prove they have been vaccinated.

The Gorham Fire Department has been rolling out the Moderna vaccine, and now Johnson & Johnson, to first responders and other critical employees in phases 1a and 1b despite having limited resources and staffing. They have not been allowed to offer the vaccine to larger groups within the public because there is a limited supply. Despite this, they are making an impact on the local vaccination effort.

Sunday, March 21 from 1-3 pm, the Fire Safety and Story Time with Maine resident, Survivor winner, and former GHS Physics teacher, Bob Crowley, will be held behind Narragansett School. Please join in for fun and a free afternoon of fire building, fire safety, food and stories with Survivor Bob and members of the Gorham Fire Department. To register please message the Gorham Outdoors Facebook page or email [gorhamoutdoors@gmail.com](mailto:gorhamoutdoors@gmail.com)



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## TOWN OF GORHAM BOARD OF APPEALS NOTICE OF MEETING MARCH 18, 2021 ON-LINE ZOOM MEETING

The Gorham Zoning Board of Appeals invites you to view our upcoming regular Board of Appeals meeting on Thursday, March 18, 2021 starting at 6:30 pm. This meeting will be held remotely, hosted as a Zoom Webinar and streamed over Go-CAM and Facebook Live for anyone who wishes to view. Staff recommends those who would like to make a public comment regarding this agenda item to email written comments by 4 pm on Thursday, March 18, 2021 to the following email address: [ZB\\_Mtg\\_Public\\_Comment@gorham.me.us](mailto:ZB_Mtg_Public_Comment@gorham.me.us).

**Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83618869640>

**Webinar ID:** 836 1886 9640

**Phone Number:** 1(312)626-6799

To make a public comment during the meeting, we ask that you raise your hand using the button in Zoom.

Acceptance of the November 19, 2020 meeting minutes as printed and distributed.

**Appeal #21 – 01 Administrative Appeal.** Aaron Hill, petitioner is seeking an Administrative Appeal for the Code Enforcement Office's decision for Use Permit at 17 Water Street (Map 102 Lot 140). The subject property is located in the Urban Residential (UR) zoning district.

## GFWC GORHAM WOMAN'S CLUB First Night Kits



The goal of the GFWC Signature Program is to increase awareness of and help prevent the widespread occurrence of domestic abuse in communities.

With this in mind the GFWC Gorham Woman's Club is looking for community assistance to put together **First Night Kits** that can be distributed to our first responders and other appropriate groups to be given to individuals when it is necessary for them to leave their homes to get to a safer place.

Thanks to donations of items & money, we have put together 37 kits to date with more to come and have distributed the kits to Gorham Public Safety. Thank you all for supporting our project.

We would like to include in the kits: (new items only)  
Colored T-shirt that could be used as a nightshirt (L-3XL)  
Travel Size: toothpaste & toothbrush, soap, deodorant, shampoo, conditioner & tissues  
Socks, large combs & chapstick  
(We would also like to put together kits for children.)

To help – you can drop off donations at the Baxter Memorial Library or call to arrange a pick up. Financial assistance to purchase items is also welcomed.

For more information:  
Gorham Woman's Club  
PO Box 4, Gorham ME 04038  
Nancy 839-7093  
[GorhamWomansClub@gmail.com](mailto:GorhamWomansClub@gmail.com)





# Town Council Meeting 3/2/21

JACOB ADAMS

Tom Dupuis spoke on behalf of the Gorham Skate Park Project and wanted to introduce the project to the Council for their thoughts and review.

Councilor Hartwell challenged citizens to compare our roads to surround-

ing Town's roads after snowstorms. He commented that we use about half the amount of salt on roads compared to other communities. He acknowledged that this is a budget issue and wanted to make citizens aware.

Councilor Wilder Cross thanked Jessica Hughes and Laurie Nordfors for

their help with the many Zoom meetings over the past year. She recently sat in on the first Board of Health meeting and reported that this board will soon be announcing a number of resources regarding health issues to the community. Their meetings will be held monthly on the second Monday at 5:30pm via

Zoom. She also attended a meeting of the Historical Preservation Committee and is grateful how this group monitors Gorham's architectural historical integrity.

Councilor Hager announced that the Finance Committee will meet on March 25th and will be reviewing the budget

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

## LIVING

# Caregiver Guilt

BILL JENKS

Those who find themselves in the role of caregiver for their parents or other older family members often feel vaguely or acutely guilty. Frequently they feel that they just are not doing enough, or well enough, even when they have put their own lives on hold to provide care for someone they love.

If you are caring for an aging relative, you may also feel guilt arising from a number of different reasons.

Resentment for personal time lost – It is completely normal to be resentful when you're missing so much of life because you're focused on taking care of someone else. And it is difficult not to feel guilty for this resentment.

Unresolved issues – Many times, there are issues stemming from childhood/young adult conflicts with parents that hinder the caregiving process.

Comparing yourself to others – Some caregivers may look at others in similar

situations and think they could never achieve what someone else did, with apparent grace and effortlessness.

Knowing placement is inevitable – There can be tremendous guilt involved when a caregiver anticipates moving a parent to assisted living or a nursing home.

Dealing with your own problems – You may be dealing with your own personal or health problems, which can severely complicate your caregiving responsibilities.

If you are feeling even twinges of guilt around your caregiving role, there are some suggestion ways to help you handle it.

Acknowledge the guilt – It is normal to feel guilty from time to time. Once you acknowledge and accept it, you will be able to manage it better.

Look at the big picture – Although you may be stressed with a particular situation now, it will not last forever. Consider the real sacrifices you make

for your aging relative and realize that you are doing the best you can.

Accept that you are human and have flaws – All of us make mistakes from time to time. Some of us may be good at the physical aspects of caregiving, while others may be better able to handle the emotional toll. Celebrate your strengths and don't focus on the negative.

Make time for yourself – This is easier said than done, but it is a must. Even if it is just an hour or two a week, go out and have coffee with a friend, catch a movie, go for a walk, or just curl up and read a book.

Deal with unresolved issues or accept them for what they are – You may be taking care of someone whom you resent, perhaps for good reason. You may be able to resolve those feelings from the past so you can provide wholehearted care. If that is not possible, it may be better to allow someone else to provide the necessary care. Either way, your past with the person needing

care is something you should consider seriously. If necessary, talk with a professional to help you reach the best decision for both you and your aging relative.

Reach out for support from family and friends – Ask specific people for specific help to share the burden. When people offer help, accept it. Find caregiver support groups to share and work through feelings of inadequacy and guilt. Know that you are not alone. Most of all, never forget you are doing the best you can in difficult circumstances.



Bill Jenks owns Home Instead Senior Care, which provides non-medical home care throughout Cumberland County. He is also Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Alzheimer's Association, Maine Chapter.

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## Town Council Meeting CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

year to date as well as the Town's Schedule of Fees, which he hopes to bring back to the Council for their vote in June.

Councilor Shepard reported that the Ordinance Committee met on February 16th and reviewed the expansion of the Village Area as well as the requirements and restrictions in place for the installation of commercial and residential solar. They also reviewed amending the Land Use and Development Code in regards to permitting of certain private driveways. All of these items are on the agenda tonight.

Councilor Kuech reported that she attended a technical session of NNE SWANA and heard from speakers from surrounding states. She learned about different things from death rates of trash haulers to where our construction debris goes. She expressed that it was a very educational experience.

Councilor Phillips acknowledged that the Capital Improvements and Economic Development Committee met on February 18th and had a very nice discussion with Economic Development Director Kevin Jenkins. She gave an update on what is going on with grants. She also mentioned that the Gorham Outdoors Club is planning many fun outdoor events in the coming weeks that you can check out on their website.

Chairman Pratt attended the February 17th GEDC meeting and reported that they had a discussion

about the recent MEREDA Conference. He also reported that the GEDC will be starting a member outreach program which will consist of certain members of the GEDC reaching out to businesses in Town.

Town Manager Paraschak informed citizens that road postings are now in effect with the freeze/thaw cycles that are going on. The complete list of road postings are on our website. He mentioned that residents can get 2 buckets of salt/sand per storm at the Public Works Garage on Huston Road. He thanked Finance Director Sharon LaFlamme for securing a phenomenal rate for the School Department Bond that was recently passed by voters. He also reported that he attended the MMA Legislative Policy Meeting and one LD bill that he is following is the change in TIF policies that will allow Municipalities to use TIF funds for municipal facilities.

Town Council approved a renewal liquor license for Angelo's Pizzeria and Restaurant, located at 474 Main Street.

An Adult Use & Medical Marijuana License was approved for Skyfall Cannapy, LLC, located at 17 Little Wing Lane, property owned by 422 Ocean, LLC, with the conditions that they pass all inspections and receive a Certificate of Occupancy prior to beginning operations.

Town Council approved amendments to the Clustered Residential Development section of Land Use and Development Code.

# Cross Town Trail Expands

CHRIS CRAWFORD  
Staff Writer

A new segment of the Cross Town Trail (CTT) is now open for walking and biking. The Presumpscot Regional Regional Land Trust (The Land Trust), the Gorham Recreation Department and the Gorham Conservation Commission worked jointly to open Phase 1 of the Cross Town Trail (CTT).

The trail (3 miles out and back) runs roughly from an entrance near Dodge Oil on New Portland Road to Hutcherson Drive in the Gorham Industrial Park. It travels along the old York and Cumberland Railroad bed which ran through the center of Gorham beginning in the 1850's. The rail was removed about 70 years ago.

There are several ways to access the trail. In addition to the kiosk and parking near Dodge Oil, a kiosk will be installed sometime this Spring at the Hutcherson Drive Trail Head.

The CCT can also be reached from the end of Joseph Drive, off Rt. 25, by way of a .1-mile path bordering a wetland in the 3-acre Meadowland Preserve which connects to the CTT Trail. The popular Frazier Preserve near the High School, a popular spot for mountain bikers and walk-



Photo credit Presumpscot Regional Land Trust

The new 1.5 mile section of the Cross Town Trail is now open.

ers is also part of the Cross Town Trail.

Before you go hiking, you can check a link on the Land Trust website to make sure which trailheads have been plowed for parking this winter. Remember to carry in, carry out. Dogs must be leashed.

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# School Committee Updates 3/10/21

KATHY CORBETT  
Staff Writer

At the regular March 10 meeting of the School Committee (SC) held on Zoom, Superintendent Heather Perry announced that the state policy prioritizing teachers for COVID-19 vaccinating has no automatic connection to when Gorham will increase in-person instruction. She will be presenting options to the SC at their March 24 workshop. She reported that the state will be using the Northwest Educational Association (NWEA) tests for assessment which are currently used in Gorham schools. Also, the state is no longer funding the SATs, but that has been accounted for in the district's F22 budget, so all students will still have access to the PSAT and SAT. She anticipates no changes in state funding and expects the district will receive an additional \$1.4 million from new federal COVID relief bill. "Focus for these funds will be on staffing/facilities needs to ensure we are able to open up safely in the fall, hopefully in a five day a week model," she said.

Assistant Superintendent Chris Record gave a presentation on Assessment and Title Grants and explained how Gorham schools use NWEA testing to assess student progress in math, reading, and language usage two to three times a year depending on grade levels. This nationally normed test meets Maine curriculum

standards and gives information on each student's progress. In reviewing data from this past year, Record said that there had been some slippage, particularly with 2nd graders, but he expects that testing later in the spring will show more improvement. Quinton Donahue, principal of Gorham Middle School, gave some examples of how NWEA data enables teachers and parents to track student progress over time. Record also reported that 154 Gorham High School students had taken Advanced Placement tests in 2020, scoring above the Maine average in more AP course tests.

The Anti-Racism and Equity Ad Hoc Committee has completed reorganization and 43% of members are people of color. The SC approved policies on Curriculum Development and Student Assessment (6-0, Wright absent) and fulfilled a state requirement to vote on retaining the school principals another year. Before voting, SC members praised the principals for their outstanding work during this difficult year.

Anne Schools, chair of the policy committee, presented the first reading of the new Immunization Policy required by the state. Exemptions based on religious or philosophical beliefs will no longer be available after September 1, 2021. Only exemptions for medical reasons will be allowed. All children attending Gorham schools must be immunized in accordance with Maine state regulations.

# Read Across America Week



Photos courtesy of Becky Fortier

From left to right: Harper Speed, Travis Levesque, Evelyn Ridenour, and Virginia Michaud.

The first week of March was Read Across America Week, and Great Falls had a fantastic celebration thanks to their amazing library staff! Read Across America has always been an event focused on nurturing a love of reading. Read Across America's focus is on diversity in reading (books, authors, and readers) throughout the year.

Great Falls librarian, Richard Dowe, and media-specialist, Jessie Mason, have created a list of diverse books that can be found in the Great Falls Library. The list will continue to grow, and staff and students are welcome to check out titles of interest.

Classrooms welcomed guest readers both in person and virtually on March 3 and 4. Guest readers included administrators, central office staff, community members, Baxter Memorial staff and various special guests.

There is also a fun "Read Your World" book display in the stairwell area for the students to enjoy. All the books featured can be found in the Great Falls Library.

## School Notes

Animal Refuge League Collection Drive at Gorham High School (GHS) will be held Saturday, March 20, 2021 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. This is a drive thru collection that will be held outside the gymnasium. Drive by and donate dog food (wet or dry), dog toys, high quality/grain free treats, cat food (wet or dry), cat toys or litter. Bring your dog for treats and toys. This drive is hosted by the GHS Interact Club.

## Carter's Green Market

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Orders are due by March 26 with a pick-up date of April 3rd.

Also offering Easter goodies from *Wilburs of Maine* and *Lake Champlain* chocolates including chocolate-dipped peeps, bunnies, eggs and goody baskets.



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# GMS Takes the Virtual Stage

EMMA L. SMITH  
GHS Student Intern

Gorham Middle School (GMS) is presenting their first virtual show "Once Upon a Zoom" by Edith Weiss on March 28 at 6 p.m. The directors, Tana Krohn and Greg Walton, and cast have been working hard to put together this production which will be recorded and available for free to the public through April 11.

In "Once Upon a Zoom," the main character, Ava, played by sixth grader, Molly Peters, has agreed to work with some classmates on a project about the modern relevance of fairy tales. Ava finds herself doing all of the work on her own for this project, but then, is suddenly "Zoom-bombed" by fairy tale characters. Ava's Fairy Godfather has been tasked with helping Ava with her project, and thus recruits other fairy tale friends, to lend their expertise, and somehow, a few other characters stumble onto the Zoom scene as well.

This is the first time GMS has performed a theater production virtually, and naturally that presents some challenges. Zoom glitches and Internet connection issues have been frequent occurrences. However, another connection issue has also been presented. Tana Krohn, one of the directors of this production, explained that the in-person connection just is not there.

Krohn described how a rehearsal for them typically went, and how the friendly side conversations, and other things of that sort have stopped.

"This past week when I was handing out costumes was the first time I had met most of the students in-person who are in the show. So, all of the 6th graders, all of the people that hadn't done shows with us before, I was just meeting in-person for the first time after months of working with them virtually," Krohn said. She also explained how everything is new for them. "This show isn't any more work than a normal show, it's just new work," she said. "We have been directing shows here at GMS for 9 years and everything we have done in the past has had to be put aside."

On the other hand, it is truly amazing how the theater community at GMS have been able to adapt to the current circumstances. Sixth grader, Alex Tukey, who plays the Fairy Godfather in this show, explained his excitement to perform this show. "The characters are all funny in their own way and it is so amazing to see how it has all come together," he said.

The Directors and cast invite everyone to see their show produced by special arrangement with Pioneer Drama Service, Denver, Colorado. Starting March 28, the show can be viewed at: [sites.google.com/view/onceuponazoomgms](https://sites.google.com/view/onceuponazoomgms).

# Community Kindness Project



Great Falls 5th graders donated materials for and put together 26 art kits for Maine Needs. Then they loaded them up for a weekend delivery.

ERIC S. THISTLE, Esq.



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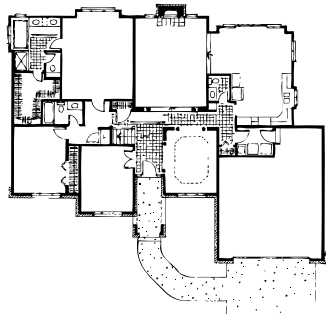
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### WHAT CHANGES WHEN YOU BECOME VACCINATED?

As Gorham Schools gain more staff who have become fully vaccinated, more questions are being asked about what being vaccinated means in terms of following safety protocols, quarantines, close contacts, and all the other wonderful new vocabulary we have learned over the past year.

- All staff who experience Covid-like symptoms will continue to follow the protocol in the handbook, regardless of vaccination status.
- All staff, regardless of vaccination status, will be required to wear face coverings in all public places, as per Gov. Janet Mills's order.
- All staff, regardless of vaccination status, should continue to practice social distancing and hand hygiene in the school setting.
- Staff who are asymptomatic, have been fully vaccinated, and are more than 14 days out from last vaccine will not be required to quarantine if they are a close contact of someone with Covid 19.
- Staff who are fully vaccinated and are more than 14 days out from last vaccine and who travel within the U.S. will not be required to test or quarantine when they return home.

vary a bit to say K-8 four days and 9-12 five days with release at 1 p.m.; return K-12 to four-days-per-week learning.)

Of course, the fourth option is to remain status quo. The biggest dif-

ference between the three scenarios and what we are doing now is that we would have to move to the three feet of physical distance vs the six feet we currently have. This is still within the parameters of MDOE and CDC rules.

Additionally, if we made any of these moves more parents would have to find ways to transport their children to and from school as our buses would not be able to double capacities since safety rules there have not changed, and we are still limited to one student per seat on the bus.

I have been working with District Leadership Team members and with other committees that involve teachers, nurses, social workers, and others from across the district on this homework assignment. Our building leaders are even working to "stage" some classrooms to see how many students can safely fit in classrooms using different configurations and what traffic flow might look like in various areas.

I want to be clear that just because we are investigating these potential changes, it does not mean we will implement any changes this spring. The SC is going to have to weigh many different factors ultimately to determine the appropriate direction for us to take in the best interest of the district.

Although what we have been doing has been awesome, I think it is safe to say that we are all getting

tired and frustrated and are feeling as though children simply need to be back in school more.

When we constantly ask ourselves the question: "What is best for children"... and we broaden that view to include what is best for their families and our community right now ... if we can increase face-to-face time, we probably ought to look at how we can do so safely. So, look we will.

The reality is we are going to have to find a way to open our schools for five-days-per-week next fall, and if we know we are going to have to do that, shouldn't we try to figure out how now and "practice" this spring while we have strong relationships built with existing students and families that will allow us to work through the "kinks" of what we all know will be a difficult task?

As we look at these ideas, I will keep you informed. We will seek to engage parents, staff, students and our medical advisors in these important discussions, and ultimately, we will advocate for what we all collectively feel is best for the students and staff of Gorham.

Whatever decisions are made will be made with two key focus points at the forefront of all that we do. The first is to continue to ensure the safety of our staff and students. The second is to make sure whatever is done, special focus will remain on meeting the social/emotional needs of our children, staff, and families over other needs.

### SPORTS

## GHS Swim Records Shattered



Courtesy Photo

Three Gorham High School swimming records fell last Friday night as the GHS Girls and Boys Varsity Swim Teams finished their season with a "virtual" Southern Maine championship meet with 19 teams (final standings pending). Co-Captain Caroline Bishop, a junior, swam the 100 yard Breaststroke in 1:12.83, lowering the previous Girls record set by Molly Sposato of 1:14.22 in February 2012. Junior Evan Russo broke the Boys 200 yard Individual Medley by swimming a time of 2:07.92, surpassing the previous Boys record set by Timmer Sposato of 2:08.92 in December 2014. Just a few heats later, Evan swam the 100 yard Breaststroke in 1:03.53, improving on his previous record of 1:05.86 set in February 2019.

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# USM Athletics and Covid-19 One Year Later

DESTINY COOK  
Sports Editor

Almost a year ago, Colleges and Universities across the country were in the same position when the Covid-19 pandemic began. They almost immediately switched to online learning, students were sent home and athletics were cancelled for the remainder of the season. Albert Bean, Director of Athletics at the University of Southern Maine said, "It's now been [a year] since Covid-19 became a reality for us in the athletic world."

One Wednesday in mid-March of 2020, the University of Southern Maine had just sent four track athletes to the NCAA Division III National Championship, as well as two wrestlers. According to Bean, the baseball and softball teams were set to leave the next day for the Florida portion of their season; they also had about 125+ people in attendance at the Alumni Reception Center for an Admissions/Athletics event.

Much to the disappointment of the student athletes, the National Championships were canceled the following night despite the fact the athletes were already there. Adding to the disappointment, the baseball and softball trips were canceled just two days later.

"Shortly following that time, the campus went remote. It was so discouraging for our student-athletes. The spring season was canceled, and so too were our summer sports camps and outside use of our facilities," Bean shared.

The university came back in the fall of 2020 with approximately 75% of courses online and a diminished capacity in the residence halls.

Bean stated, "The fall sports season was canceled but, with appropriate precautions in place, we did practice and scrimmage with our teams. We waited on a decision regarding winter sports to see where things were going."

Teams were allowed to ease into small group work and practice. After Thanksgiving break and after careful deliberation, it was decided they would attempt to play a shortened winter season.

"Each of our seven winter programs would be allowed to play up to six games/contests but travel would be limited to two hours and within Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont," Bean said.

The teams started the weekend of February 20th and have been able to continue. Bean said that student athletes, coaches, trainers and other close contacts are tested three times weekly. Significant precautions are also in place to protect everyone involved.

"Masking and social distancing must be followed and guidelines for visiting teams and our own teams have been developed and detailed. Officials and bus drivers are tested and no spectators are allowed at games," he said.

Students have felt the effects of the pandemic on so many levels. For Kristen Curley (GHS, '17) a senior at the University of Southern Maine and player on the women's basketball team, she

said in terms of classes, her experience has been "alright". Curley shared that she has been fully online this year, with no in-person classes during her fall or spring semester. "It is a different experience taking senior-level courses fully online at my own pace. It is not what I expected of my senior year school-wise, and basketball-wise as well."

To make things worse, Curley had a tonsillectomy due to some recurring issues prior to the start of the season. She felt she got a slow start getting back into the swing of things. In a time when people are putting their health first due to the pandemic, Kristen knew she was fortunate she had the opportunity to address her needs when it came to her own health.

At this point, they have had one game so far against Rhode Island College. "We are supposed to play 6 games in all, which is upsetting compared to a normal season," she said. Curley is grateful that the university has worked diligently to allow them to compete this season while putting protocols in place to keep everyone safe.

As for her future plans, Curley said, "I am graduating this May, and my plans are to move home for a little while to work this summer and figure out what my next move is. With everything so up in the air, it is hard to navigate plans for after graduation. I am looking forward to spending time with my parents and having the chance to really consider all of my options after graduation."

When it comes to the spring sports

season, Bean said the university is hopeful that it may be salvaged in some way saying, "this group of athletes has already lost one full season." The numbers seem to be trending in the right direction, however, he said the university will carefully monitor the virus, the situation in Maine as well as other areas of New England where we travel to help inform their decisions.

"Our students and coaches badly want to play and have greatly missed the interaction, the sports they love and the outlet. Our staff has worked very hard to keep them engaged and on track academically, socially and physically. We are respecting the health crisis, trusting the science and trying to move forward safely at the same time," Bean said.

## The Zone

Recently three GHS track stars went to Virginia Beach, VA to compete at Indoor Nationals held Feb 26th thru Feb 28th. Emma Green and Ryan Gendron both competed in the Champion Division HJ; Green jumped 5-2 and finished in 7th place. Gendron jumped 6-0 and also finished 7th.

Andrew Farr competed in the Open Division 200 and the Champion Division 60. His time of 22.96 in the 200 tied a school record. In the 60 Farr ran 7.21, which is the 4th best time ever for Maine boys in the state. According to Coach John Caterina, in Maine, the usual indoor sprint distance is 55 meters and not 60. It's usually only run at National meets.



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**AJ Booth**, University of Maine at Farmington, Farmington, Maine  
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**Keltan Tanguay**, SUNY Morrisville, Morrisville, New York  
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### OF INTEREST

**Gorham Parks & Recreation Department** offers a variety of recreation opportunities for all ages, all seasons. Check their website at [gorhamrec.com](http://gorhamrec.com) often to see what programs, events and activities are being offered, and like them at [Facebook.com/GorhamRec](https://www.facebook.com/GorhamRec). FMI 207-222-1630

**The Gorham Lions** are meeting at a new location, Moody's Collision Center at 200 Narragansett St. (Rte. 202). Regular meetings are the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. The next meeting is March 23 at 6:30 p.m. New members always welcome. FMI 929-9182.

**Veterans of Foreign Wars**, Gorham Memorial Post 10879 will be holding a virtual meeting on March 23. If you are interested in attending the meeting or in more information about the VFW, please contact the Post at [vfwpost10879@gmail.com](mailto:vfwpost10879@gmail.com).

**Join the Presumpscot Regional Land Trust on Wednesday March 24th at 7 p.m.** for a virtual program to learn about the ecology and natural history of the largest fish migration in Greater Portland and fish migrations throughout Maine. In the ocean, alewife provide food for predators from tuna to seals to cod, and are harvested for use as lobster bait. Each spring adult alewife leave the ocean to swim upstream to their natal lakes, spawn, and head back to sea in a migratory cycle of renewal that supports freshwater fish, waterfowl, mink, otter and eagles. The presentation will be given by Karen Wilson, Professor of Environmental Science at the University of Southern Maine. Her research includes years of tracking the largest fish migration from Casco Bay up the Presumpscot River, through Mill Brook Preserve in Westbrook to spawn in Highland Lake. Professor Wilson will share her findings, while focusing on the ecology and natural history of this rugged little fish. This will be a one-hour slide-show presentation with Q&A. This virtual program is free, but space is limited. The program is free but Registration is required at [PRLT.org](http://PRLT.org)

If you missed the Presumpscot Regional Land Trust's presentation on the Geology of the Presumpscot, the recorded program can be accessed on PRLT's youtube channel at [youtube.com/channel/UCm7DjW8XWQyAJjBFvLZGOVQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCm7DjW8XWQyAJjBFvLZGOVQ)

The highlights from the Presumpscot Regional Land Trust's Intro to Animal Tracks, led by master Naturalist Marion Sprague, can be seen on PRLT's new Nature Education webpage at [prlt.org/nature-education](http://prlt.org/nature-education) Even if you were unable to participate, this link can help you identify wild animal tracks all winter long."

**The University of Maine Cooperative Extension** hosts virtual workshops, classes and events. FMI, visit <https://extension.umaine.edu>.

**4-H Summer Camp Campership Applications Now Available.** Campership applications will be due on Friday, April 9, 2021 by 4:30 p.m. Camperships are scholarships for youth to attend a summer camp of their choice. Camperships are available for 4-H and non-4-H youth for 4-H and non-4-H camps. Applications are now available on the 4-H Camperships page at [extension.umaine.edu/cumberland/4h/events/camperships/](https://extension.umaine.edu/cumberland/4h/events/camperships/). Please email completed applications to [sara.conant@maine.edu](mailto:sara.conant@maine.edu).

### PUBLIC SUPPERS

**The St. Anne's Knights of Columbus will hold a Pre-Pay Drive-Through Fish Dinner** on Friday, March 19, 2021, from 5 to 6 p.m. at St. Anne's Church, 299 Main Street, Gorham. Dinner includes baked haddock, mashed potatoes, coleslaw, peas, a roll, and dessert for \$12. FMI, visit [www.gorhamknights.org](http://www.gorhamknights.org) or call 207-550-1320. Check web site for snow date cancellation info.


**Haddock Supper Buffet on Saturday, March 27**, at 5:00 p.m. at Living Waters Church, Parker Farm Road, Buxton. Suggested donation is \$8 Adult, \$4 Child, \$20 Family. Option of takeout containers for those who do not want to come inside for seating. Social distancing guidelines are in effect including wearing of face masks and use of hand sanitizer. FMI 207-329-0753.

### LIBRARY NEWS


**The North Gorham Public Library**, serving Gorham and Standish since 1897, is located next to the fire barn at the corner of Standish Neck Road and North Gorham Road. The library serves the surrounding community with a focus on fiction for adults and children, although most any book is available through inter-library loan. The library has WiFi service and computers for patron use. The library is open on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings. Home Delivery and contact less parking lot pickup is also available. Visit on the web at [north-gorham.lib.me.us](http://north-gorham.lib.me.us).

**Come to Baxter Memorial Library on Thursday, March 18 at 10 a.m. for Parent Workshop w/Speech Pathologist Laurie Harriman.** This will be an interactive Zoom ses-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11




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## Community CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

sion with questions encouraged. It is geared toward families with children birth-5 years. The upcoming STEAM events for K-5 learners with Ms. Deb are "Rain Sticks" on Wednesday, March 24 at 10 a.m. and "Invisible Ink and Secret Codes," on Wednesday, March 31. Also on March 31 at 10 a.m. is a Parent Workshop with Occupational Therapist Michelle Segovias on Zoom. Preschool Discovery Times with Ms. Heidi are on Tuesdays, March 23 and March 30, and Toddler Discovery Times for 18mos-3 yrs is on Thursdays, March 18 and March 25 with Ms. Dani. The children events are virtual events on Facebook. The parent Zoom sessions on the 18th and 31st require pre-registration. Find all events and more information at [baxterlibrary.org](http://baxterlibrary.org), or call 222-1190.

### USM NOTES

The USM School of Music is celebrating March Musical Theatre Madness with a series of studio recital showcases, and a variety of other spring performances, junior and senior recitals and more. Find them all at [usm.maine.edu/music/events](http://usm.maine.edu/music/events). Find information updates about the USM Summer Youth Music and Theatre Camps at [usm.maine.edu/music/summercamps](http://usm.maine.edu/music/summercamps).

The USM Art Department is pleased to present the USM Art Faculty & Staff Online Exhibition 2021. The exhibit is an exciting array of art disciplines and approaches by USM art faculty and staff participating in this year's exhibition, including Timothy Babulski, Hannah Barnes, Susan Colburn Motta, Christopher Cooper, Rebecca Goodale, Amy Hagberg, Kaitlyn Hunter, Annie Lee-Zimerle, Lin Lisberger, Jen McDermott, Jan Piribeck, Damir Porobic, Michael Shaughnessy, Helen Stringfellow, Stephen Walsh and Brian Zimerle. Find the exhibit at [usm.maine.edu/gallery](http://usm.maine.edu/gallery).

Detailed information regarding the COVID-19 response at USM is available on a dedicated section of the University website, Healthy Huskies, that is updated regularly. Find answers to frequently asked questions — from new and returning students to faculty and staff to community members — that cover all facets of the institution. Visit [usm.maine.edu/healthy-huskies](http://usm.maine.edu/healthy-huskies).

## Oh, What A Year CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

difficult for many families with whom she works who, she said, "have the additional challenge of navigating a changed world in a language that is not their first." Over 20 languages are spoken by Gorham students and their families. Conrad added, "I was surprised to find some great positives like seeing whole families on English Zoom classes and getting a window into the often-private lives of multicultural and multilingual families."

Although he closed Village Physical Therapy in mid-March, Michael Smith opened his two-person practice in a new office on April first. In May, they hired a person to clean and watch what patients touched. They cut back some on their schedules. "Most patients were comfortable coming for treatment because they felt it was a safe place," Smith said, "and our practice is almost back to normal."

Wendy Couch, co-director of the Gorham Food Pantry, said they have added new clients every month, including a 5% increase this past February. "We are now a drive-through with touchless pick-up." They now have an electronic check-in process and will continue to use it to provide "a more sophisticated order process for our clients."

Michelle Carlson, a volunteer at Great Falls School and in the community, said hers was "a family that was constantly on the go." Since last March they have become more appreciative of the outdoors and connected more through conversation and playing games together. Although her two sons in 2nd and 5th grade like the smaller classes, they say recess isn't as much fun because they are assigned stations to limit exposure to other "pods." Zack is anxious about middle school next year when he will move from a small group to a school with 6th graders from the three elementary schools. Carlson's son Luke is in the regular ed/autism program and his mother is grateful that he has been able to attend school four days a week. As a family, "we appreciate the slower cadence to our lives," she said, "and I think we will guard it more from getting too over-committed in the future."

## CALENDAR

### THURSDAY, MARCH 18

Baxter Memorial Library

Toddler Discovery Time with Ms. Dani on Facebook, (18mos-3yrs). 9:30 a.m.  
Parent Workshop w/Speech Pathologist Laurie Harriman, Interactive Zoom Session. 222-1190 to register.

### FRIDAY, MARCH 19

St. Anne's Knights of Columbus Pre-Pay, Drive-Through Fish Dinner, 5 – 6 p.m., \$12, 207-550-1320.

### TUESDAY, MARCH 23

Baxter Memorial Library, Preschool Discovery Time with Ms. Heidi on Facebook, (3-5yrs). 9:30 a.m.

Gorham Lions regular meeting, 6:30 p.m., Moody's Collision Center  
Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 10879 virtual meeting, contact [vfwp10879@gmail.com](mailto:vfwp10879@gmail.com) for details.

### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24

Baxter Memorial Library, STEAM – Rain Sticks with Ms. Deb on Facebook, (K-5) 10 a.m.  
Presumpscot Regional Land Trust, Ecology and Natural History, fish migrations, 7 p.m., [prlt.org](http://prlt.org)

### THURSDAY, MARCH 25

Baxter Memorial Library, Toddler Discovery Time with Ms. Dani on Facebook (18mos-3yrs). 9:30 a.m.

### SATURDAY, MARCH 27

Living Waters Church Haddock Buffet, 5 p.m., Parker Farm Road, Buxton. 5 p.m., \$8/\$4/\$20. FMI 207-329-0753.

### TUESDAY, MARCH 30

Baxter Memorial Library, Toddler Discovery Time with Ms. Dani on Facebook, (3-5). 9:30 a.m.

### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31

Baxter Memorial Library

STEAM – Invisible Ink and Secret Codes with Ms. Deb on Facebook, (K-5), 10 a.m.  
Parent Workshop w/ Occupational Therapist Michelle Segovias, interactive Zoom session. 222-1190 to register.

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