Superintendent Shares Initial Thoughts on Fall School Opening

GORHAM TIMES STAFF

In her May 12 blog post, Superintendent of Gorham Schools, Heather Perry, spoke about the possible scenarios for schools opening this fall. She shared the initial framework only as details are still being worked out.

“Basically, the framework we are working with has us set up into three ‘levels’ of operations that will be based on the specific conditions we may face as the school year opens and as we continue to move through it,” said Perry.

“The goal in creating these ‘levels’ is to be able to create an operational plan for the coming year that allows us to fluidly move between these types of conditions while maintaining our focus on educational programming,” said Perry.

Level 1 would be continuing distance learning much like everyone is doing now, but the ‘stages’ would likely be a little higher. Although the focus would still be on the social/emotional needs of students, academics will also likely play a larger role now that Gorham has devised an ability for all students, an ability to solve connectivity issues, and a better understanding of teaching required.

Level 3 would be operating schools under very ‘traditional’ environments. There may be a few restrictions, but not many. This level would be as close to ‘normal’ as schools will likely get prior to a vaccine being widely available. Level 2 is in between 1 and 2. Schools may be able to do some face-to-face instruction, but they would need to find a way to limit the number of students and staff in the buildings at any given time to maintain social distancing. There would also be significant protocols in place for sanitation and the mandatory wearing of face masks along with other safety measures.

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Congratulations to our Graduating Seniors

Linda Sanborn

Graduation is such a special time. For students, it’s a moment to celebrate their hard work, look back on their accomplishments and think about their future. For their families, it’s a time to show their pride and their affection for their child as they enter the next stage in their life. For teachers, it’s a bittersweet moment as they say goodbye to students they have taught and forged deep bonds with over the years. It’s an important moment for our community too, as we congratulate another group of students who are marking an important milestone on their journey toward adulthood.

Of course, this year is different. We won’t have the usual graduation ceremony in the packed auditorium, brimming with the excitement of our graduands and their proud families, friends, teachers and community members. We won’t have the big parties or school events celebrating our graduates and all they’ve accomplished. And regrettably, students won’t get to spend the last few months in school with their friends and teachers before they go on to their next adventure.

While social distancing measures are completely necessary to protect the most vulnerable members of our community, it’s still sad, and it’s not the most vulnerable members of our community, and it happened over a few short weeks in the middle of a pandemic.

With everything going on, it would have been understandable if teachers and students had decided to cancel the event and do the bare minimum to get through the final months of school. In the Gorham schools though, students and teachers alike found ways to go the extra mile.

In their first few weeks away from the classroom, Gorham High School students produced a public service announcement video called “Protect Nana,” which urged folks to adhere to social distancing guidelines to slow the spread of COVID-19. The video has been featured on NewsCenter and by the Maine Department of Education, and various versions on YouTube and Facebook have been viewed by thousands. I must say, as a “Nana,” I appreciated their message.

At Gorham High School teachers and students also worked together to create and promote the #SeparatedButNotDivided campaign to raise funds for the Gorham Backpack program and the Gorham Food Pantry. Their efforts raised more than $10,000 to help feed the hungry in Gorham.

Congratulations to all of our graduating seniors. You have shown yourselves to be an impressive group of young adults, and I am confident that whatever you do next, you will succeed at it. But for now, take a moment to celebrate in whatever way you can. You earned it.

If you ever need help or want to express your thoughts on an issue, please reach out to me.

Linda Sanborn is serving her first term in the Maine Senate, representing Senate District 30, which includes Gorham, part of Buxton, and part of Scarborough. She previously served four terms in the Maine House, and practiced family medicine in Gorham for 25 years. Senator Sanborn lives in Gorham with her husband, Jeff, a Gorham native. They have three adult children and one granddaughter. (207) 287-1515, Linda.Sanborn@legislature.maine.gov.

The Gorham Times is a free volunteer-run community newspaper distributed every other Thursday to more than 100 pick-up sites throughout Gorham.

For news and events of interest to Gorham residents, we publish articles from our three state legislators from Senate District 30, House District 26, and House District 27.

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.

Letter to the Editor

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The Gorham Rec Department announced that courts, fields, and playgrounds will be open for public use on June 1. These facilities will not be disinfected. Residents are asked to follow CDC guidelines.

Residents who use the Town’s curbside trash collection program can purchase a tag and attach it to a regular commercial bag for weekly pick-up instead of using a Gorham trash bag. Trash tags, sold in a pack of five, are for use with non-recyclable trash and are available at the Town Clerk’s Office, Public Works and Gorham Hannaford.

When life changes, let’s review your goal.

Edward Jones

To: Director of Education

Dear Director,

As some are already aware, I have decided not to run for a second term in the Maine State Senate. This was not an easy decision, and I truly want to express my gratitude to the community for the trust they have put in me over the past 12 years. While I continue to address the needs of our state and constituents as we work through the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences, I also look forward to traveling and spending more time with my family living in the West Coast.

The decision to step down became much easier when a great candidate, Stacy Brenner of Scarborough, stepped up to run for Senate District 30 (Gorham, Scarborough, and Buxton). Stacy has the experience and skills needed to be your State Senator.

For instance, I know that Stacy has a strong healthcare background, including a master’s degree in nursing and 10 years of work at Portland hospitals. As the call came for frontline health care providers to step up when they were most needed during this pandemic, Stacy returned to labor and delivery nursing at Mercy. But Stacy’s decision followed careful contemplation of much of Broadturn Farm’s business, which she co-owns with her husband, Jeff, a Gorham native. They have three adult children and one granddaughter. (207) 287-1515. Linda. Sanborn@legislature.maine.gov.
Plummer Family Brings Years of Experience to Gorham Ace Hardware

**LESLIE DUPUIS | Editor**

For the second time in three years, Ace Hardware has changed ownership and a new sign will soon appear at the Main Street store. The Plummer family, who has been in the business for four generations, purchased the store from Bill and Holly Chandler on April 1. The Chandlers took over from the Cook family in 2017 but decided to sell the business to focus on their Yarmouth store.

The new owners are Troy Plummer, his brother Garrett Plummer, and their cousin Chris Sanborn. The Plummers currently own Ace Hardware stores in Buxton, Limerick and Waterboro. Cindy Plummer, who is married to Troy and is the financial manager for the company, said, “Percy Plummer was the first generation of the Plummer family to open a general store a little over 100 years ago. He continued to grow the business with his sons having three locations at one point. The three stores merged into the one location in Buxton in the 1960s selling both groceries and hardware following the general store model. As the business grew, an addition was built in the 80s, and the hardware store had its own storefront for the first time.”

The family added stores in Limerick and Waterboro in the 1990s. With nearly 100 current employees among the three locations, the family took over the Gorham location during a difficult time.

“Purchasing the business right in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic has been a challenge. Approximately a third of our workforce across the locations needed a leave of absence for various reasons. We are holding positions for all of these workers until they can return but I have been hiring additional employees to help fill in,” said Plummer.

The Plummers have retained all current employees. Jim Rines manages the Gorham store. Plummer said, “The current staff is amazing. They have all been pleasant and receptive to our ideas. The only new faces you will see are the newly hired employees to help fill in the gaps.”

As the store was deemed “essential,” it remained open all along but did shorten business hours temporarily due to staffing issues. The hours have been extended slightly in May and the Plummers hope to be back to normal business hours in June.

When speaking about the preparation needed to meet the new restrictions set by the State order, Plummer said, “Within a day of the change, we implemented cleaning procedures and store occupancy limits. By the second week, we had our contractor install plexiglass barriers at the registers to help maintain separation.”

In looking ahead to the future, a “store reset” is planned in June which will include moving the location of the registers to improve the flow of the space. A design team from Ace will develop a new floor plan and will help implement the reset. As Plummer said, “There will be some disorganization for a short time, but the results will be a better product selection and better flow going through the checkout process. We hope to take the best of the old and add some new ideas to provide the best shopping experience for the Gorham customers as well as a good working environment for our employees.”

Plummer’s Ace Hardware is located at 57 Main St. Current hours for the month of May are 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 9 a.m.-3 p.m. on Sunday. To contact the store, call 819-4856, go to www.plummershardware.com, or visit the Plummer’s Ace Hardware Facebook page.

Maggie, the Cook’s Hardware Cat

Gorham Times reader Mary Jane LeCours shared old photos of Maggie the cat from her many years working at Cook’s Hardware. Maggie lived on Preble Street with her owner Lenora Trussell but quickly adopted the store as her second home in the early 2000s. She roamed the block, guarded the store, and even slept on the shelves and in the tool drawers recounted LeCours. Some customers believed she was a stuffed animal. She was loved by the store employees and missed greatly when she disappeared without a trace one day.

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**Photos courtesy of Cindy Plummer**

**Photos courtesy of Mary Jane LeCours**

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TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY
11AM - 8PM | DROP OFF - PICK UP ONLY

Taxes due July 15

We’re open & here to help year-round.

Drop off your docs or work with a tax pro remotely.
Caregiving in the Age of COVID-19

Bill Jenks

It is no secret that most older adults prefer to remain in their own homes as they age, most until the very end of their lives. Increasing numbers of people around the world are caring for these older adults at home. This is clearly evident right here in Maine where we have the highest median age of any state in the country (44.6 years old, vs. 38 for the country as a whole). Mainers are famously fiercely independent (some would say stubborn), and slow to ask for or accept help. Still, the time comes when, like it or not, they will need help if they are to remain at home. Inevitably, we have a growing legion of adult daughters, sons, nieces, nephews, grandchildren, and kind-hearted friends and neighbors who have become caregivers without even realizing it.

Helping an older person live out their dreams of remaining at home as they age can be challenging on a number of levels, especially for family members. Those challenges have been greatly magnified by COVID-19. Sheltering at home, physical distancing, repeated hand washing, not touching your face, masks, gloves, constant precautions. They are all important and are all important but remember: the person you are caring for is likely not out in the community much, if at all. In terms of spreading infection, there is a minimal risk. In that regard you are much more of a risk to your loved one, so your own adherence to infection precautions takes precedence.

Limit or even prohibit visits from other family members and friends. This can be extremely difficult but is one of the primary ways to protect your loved one from being infected.

When you’re not with the person you’re caring for, make sure you take care of yourself. This principle is always included in advice for caregivers, but usually at the end of a list. Since it can’t be emphasized enough, I’m putting it as the first thing to focus on. Eat and sleep well, exercise, manage stress, and treat yourself to at least one thing you enjoy every day is easier said than done, but definitely worth working toward.

When you are with the person you are caring for, keep your focus on them. Give them as much control over their own life as possible. Ask them what is most important to them, and support that rather than what you think is best.

Pick your battles. Explain the rationale behind wearing a mask. Wear one yourself, but if your loved one refuses, let it go. Likewise, the other precautions. They are all important but remember: the person you are caring for is likely not out in the community much, if at all. In terms of spreading infection, there is a minimal risk. In that regard you are much more of a risk to your loved one, so your own adherence to infection precautions takes precedence.

Limit or even prohibit visits from other family members and friends. This can be extremely difficult but is one of the primary ways to protect your loved one from being infected.

Strongly encourage those who are prohibited from visiting in person to visit virtually through Zoom, Facetime, or similar technology if available. If that’s not an option, promote phone calls, cards, children’s drawings, photos, “window visits,” any kind of caring contact that can reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness.

In pleasant weather, take the person you’re caring for outside if possible, being careful to maintain proper distancing from others. Sitting in the sun, watching the birds for a while, can be a true tonic.

Use music – and moving to music – to lift the mood and promote a positive atmosphere. Music that is meaningful to your partner, whether it is the Rolling Stones, Mozart string quartets, or favorite hymns, can be a powerful tool.

As much as possible, do things with rather than for the person. Keep them involved and engaged; give them purpose and meaning; provide a sense of being needed and valued.

Keep your sense of humor. Do your best but do not expect perfection. When all else fails, laugh!

State Primary & Referendum Election

COURTESY OF TOWN OF GORHAM

Per Governor Mills’ Executive Order and as part of continued social distancing efforts, the State Primary and Special Referendum Election previously scheduled for Tuesday, June 9, has been rescheduled to Tuesday, July 14.

The election has been called for the purpose of electing candidates for United States Senator, Representative to Congress (both districts), all 35 State Senate districts, all 151 State Representative districts, and the following county offices, which vary depending on the county: Judge of Probate, Register of Probate, Register of Deeds, Sheriff, District Attorney and County Commissioner. Secretary of State: Matthew Dunlap, encourages absentee voting as a proven and safe way to vote and to prevent the spread of COVID-19. You may request an absentee ballot by calling the Town Clerk’s Office, visiting the Town Clerk’s office once reopened, or requesting one online.

To be counted, a voted absentee ballot must be delivered to the Town Clerk’s Office no later than 8 p.m. on Election Day. Any absentee ballots received after this time will not be counted.
Town Update

Gorham Times Staff

All public Memorial Day activities were cancelled due to the current Stay at Home order. A small ceremony did take place and was recorded to be rebroadcast at a later date.

Town Manager Ephrem Paraschak confirmed that there is no plan to extend the property tax due date beyond June 15. Individuals can pay their taxes after the new deadline with interest and there is a payment arrangement process in place that individuals can still apply for if needed.

Paraschak also confirmed that some municipal offices, including the Clerk’s Office, will reopen by appointment only starting June 1. The date was chosen to align with the opening of State government as well as to give the Town time to install protective measures for staff and the public as well as come up with transitional plans.

Specific information on the opening and how residents can make appointments will be released soon. Appointments can be made in person and also by phone for those who do not have access to a computer. The Town is anticipating significant demand for appointments in the first few weeks and encourages anyone who is able to conduct their business online or over the phone to do so.

The new Industrial Park project (Rines property) is still moving forward. The Town’s consultants are currently surveying and working onsite to bring more information back to the Industrial Park Steering Committee. Construction is not expected until 2021.

Gorham Realtors Adjust to New Norm

of Economic and Community Development, for all residential real estate transactions must be completed by the building inspector only. Building inspectors must wear a cloth face covering, face shield, or face covering that goes over the mouth and nose when entering properties.” Buyers will receive pictures and a copy of the inspection report.

Thankfully, agents are not experiencing delays with closings. According to Mason, “title agents are still open for closings. Most are done in their office so they can control the environment (cleaning) before and after the closing. Buyer and seller are closing either in separate rooms or at staggered times. They have asked brokers not to come to closings. It’s a really strange feeling not accompanying buyers and sellers at closing after you’ve worked hand in hand (with rubber gloves on) for six to eight weeks. We’ve done any electronic closings but we’ve done plenty of mail away closings.”

Wills has found that processes are actually running more efficiently. “I know everyone I’ve talked to and some even find it available due in part to the new statewide guidelines and stay-at-home orders.”

Keith Nicely of Bean Group provided a summary of what to expect during a typical transaction. “Yesterday, we did a virtual showing to an out-state client moving from Maine. They were very educated and specific on what they were looking for and their needs. A property came on the market that got the buyer excited. We drove the neighborhood with them on Facetime and did a virtual walk-through with the buyer that afternoon. We made a well thought out offer electronically and were under contract the same day. The virtual home inspection will occur this week.”

All agreed that it is extremely important for buyers and sellers to work with an experienced licensed broker during this unprecedented time. Ruda said, “professionalism and knowledge is essential in putting clients at ease. You want an experienced broker who values the health of everyone and will ensure that proper PPE is being worn, and will make sure that all things touched will be wiped down prior to leaving.”

Skillin-Smith added, “we can help buyers navigate this new system. Our goal is to provide you with guidance, advice, and direction, especially in this market. Experience is critical because we can assist with making connections and educating individuals through any ambiguity.”

Planning Board Results

Gorham Solar, LLC’s (formerly Nexamp, Inc.) request for approval of a 49.9 kW Ground-Bound Array with associated equipment, gravel access and perimeter fence, located south of 412 Fort Hill Road, was postponed until the June 1 Planning Board meeting.

A proposed amendment to the Zoning Map to expand the Development Transfer Overlay District to include the area in the vicinity of Mosher’s Corner was moved to the Town Council with a recommendation for adoption.

A proposed ordinance to amend the Land Use Code to adopt a Marijuana Cultivation or Manufacturing Licensing Ordinance and symbol permitted uses in the rural, industrial and Olde Canal zoning districts was moved to the Town Council and recommended for adoption.

Lewiston Man Arrested After High Speed Chase

SHERI FABER
Staff Writer

On May 13 at about 7:50 a.m., Sgt. Nate Therriault was driving northbound on Route 114 as a 2002 Honda Accord, passing a car on a double yellow line on a curve while driving at a high rate of speed and coming into the northbound lane, caused Therriault to swerve and drive off the road in order to avoid a collision. Therriault was able to regain control of the cruiser and turned around to initiate a traffic stop.

The Honda failed to stop and Therriault pursued it but discontinued the chase. For Rob to locate the vehicle a short distance away on Milt Brown Road in Standish and the driver was located, arrested, and taken to jail.

Scott Frisco, 28, of Lewiston was charged with reckless conduct, criminal speed, operating without a license, eluding a police officer, leaving the scene of an accident, refusing to submit to arrest and having an outstanding warrant for violating conditions of release. He is being held without bail.

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GBE Business Person of the Year

Cindy Hazelton, Gorham Recreation Department Director, said, “Rob Lavoie has a passion for mountain biking and all that it entails. He has given freely of his time and vision for mountain biking and Gorham riders of all ages have benefited from his sweat equity and steadfastness in accomplishing these goals.”

Lavoie also had a vision for Gorham to be a place where its community members can recreate outside and enjoy a happy and healthy lifestyle. In addition to his work on the trails, he most recently was the backbone behind Gorham’s new Pump Track, aptly named the Lavoie Bike Park, off of Weeks Road.

“Rob’s efforts to transform a patchwork of small trails into a professionally built pump track and a 50+ mile network spanning public and private land has been a huge win for the town. His ability to coordinate and motivate dozens of dedicated landowners, local business fundraisers, and maintain solid relationships with local landowners was the driving force that made this all possible, and the results have definitely made Gorham an even better place to live,” said Bill Moreno, Gorham Conservation Commission member.

“When he’s not caring for his patients, building trails all over Gorham, and serving on committees to better his community, Lavoie has been found volunteering at various Career Day events in the schools, working with Happy Healthy Gorham, and supporting other local businesses in Gorham. Occasionally, you can find him riding his mountain bike...usually with a big smile on his face. He has often said, “How do you do one thing is how you do everything.” He practices what he preaches by giving his all to his family, to his business, and to his community.
Gorham High School’s (GHS) parade to celebrate the Class of 2020 will commence at 7:45 p.m. on Sunday, June 7, beginning at the Gorham Industrial Park and conclude at GHS. The route will follow Route 25 and Main St. and then turn left onto South St. and enter the GHS campus at Morrill Ave. Members of the Gorham community are invited to line the parade route to cheer and wave signs that celebrate Gorham’s seniors. Participants and spectators should maintain a six-foot-physical-distance and refrain from throwing candy or any other items from cars or toward the parade. Gorham Schools’ technology director, Dennis Crowe, was able to procure free laptops for all students in grades K-3 from the Maine Department of Education. These Chromebooks were distributed between May 11-22 to students in these grades. Having these laptops for the last few weeks of the “normal” school calendar helps to ensure all students have equal access to distance learning. The Gorham community is also allowing all families in current grades K-11 to keep their laptop for the last few weeks of the school year. Gorham also is allowing all families in current grades K-11 to keep their laptops over the summer so that they will have easier access to any online summer learning opportunities that may be needed to assist them in their learning.

Recognition for Gorham’s 2024 & 2027 Classes

Principals of the three Gorham Elementary Schools said they will also have parades for fifth graders (Class of 2027) who are moving on to GMS next year. Zoom meetings with parents, slide presentations, t-shirts, virtual talent shows, and other creative measures will take the place of the usual end-of-year activities.

The Great Falls fifth grade recognition parade will be held Friday, June 12, at 2 p.m. The route will begin at the Public Works parking lot at 80 Huston Rd. Cars can begin lining up at 1:30 p.m. If vehicles are to be decorated, it should be done so prior to arrival. Occupants remain safely inside the vehicle and pass the cars driving in so students can see each other and cheer their friends on. Students will have their names on a sign on the passenger side of their car to help identify them.

The plan is to have music; the Gorham Police Department, the Gorham Fire Department, and all of GMS’ teachers spaced out cheering the cars on as they approach. Assistant principal Tom Smith and principal Quinnon Downabue will read student names over a speaker system and hand out certificates and bags with the path of the procession through the bus loop decorated with congratulatory signs and support.

Students should sit on the right side of the vehicle. When vehicles arrive at the front of the school, the fifth grade student’s name will be announced. The classroom teacher will approach the vehicle for a quick, socially-distanced photo that will be shared with families.

Each fifth grade class was assigned a color to identify which class community they belong to. The colored paper was given out when students arrived to pick up their materials at Great Falls. The student’s name should be on the colored paper and it should be displayed on the passenger’s side of the windshield. This will allow staff to prepare for each arriving student.

Only teachers and Great Falls staff are allowed outside of vehicles while on school property. Masks will be worn by all staff participating in the recognition ceremony.

Village will be continuing its tradition of providing each student with a special t-shirt and a fifth grade slideshow. This year’s slideshow will include pictures of students learning from home and teachers will host virtual “watch parties” with their classes the week of June 8.

Additionally, Mark Curtis, from Gorham Sand and Gravel, donated a large boulder to the school for fifth graders to sign. The boulder will serve as a special memorial for these students who thrived despite the unexpected shift to distance learning.

As a final celebration, Village will host a fifth grade drive-by parade on Wednesday, June 10, from 9:30 a.m. Families are invited to drive through the bus loop as Village staff members cheer and say goodbye - from a safe distance. Narragansett will be having a fifth grade celebratory parade through the bus loop on Wednesday, June 10, at 6 p.m. to honor its 35 fifth graders.

School Notes

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School Notes

Gorham High School’s (GHS) parade to celebrate the Class of 2020 will commence at 7:45 p.m. on Sunday, June 7, beginning at the Gorham Industrial Park and conclude at GHS. The route will follow Route 25 and Main St. and then turn left onto South St. and enter the GHS campus at Morrill Ave. Members of the Gorham community are invited to line the parade route to cheer and wave signs that celebrate Gorham’s seniors. Participants and spectators should maintain a six-foot-physical-distance and refrain from throwing candy or any other items from cars or toward the parade.

Gorham Schools’ technology director, Dennis Crowe, was able to procure free laptops for all students in grades K-3 from the Maine Department of Education. These Chromebooks were distributed between May 11-22 to students in these grades. Having these laptops for the last few weeks of the “normal” school calendar helps to ensure all students have equal access to distance learning. The Gorham community is also allowing all families in current grades K-11 to keep their laptop for the last few weeks of the school year. Gorham also is allowing all families in current grades K-11 to keep their laptops over the summer so that they will have easier access to any online summer learning opportunities that may be needed to assist them in their learning.

Recognition for Gorham’s 2024 & 2027 Classes

Principals of the three Gorham Elementary Schools said they will also have parades for fifth graders (Class of 2027) who are moving on to GMS next year. Zoom meetings with parents, slide presentations, t-shirts, virtual talent shows, and other creative measures will take the place of the usual end-of-year activities.

The Great Falls fifth grade recognition parade will be held Friday, June 12, at 2 p.m. The route will begin at the Public Works parking lot at 80 Huston Rd. Cars can begin lining up at 1:30 p.m. If vehicles are to be decorated, it should be done so prior to arrival. Occupants remain safely inside the vehicle and pass the cars driving in so students can see each other and cheer their friends on. Students will have their names on a sign on the passenger side of their car to help identify them.

The plan is to have music; the Gorham Police Department, the Gorham Fire Department, and all of GMS’ teachers spaced out cheering the cars on as they approach. Assistant principal Tom Smith and principal Quinnon Downabue will read student names over a speaker system and hand out certificates and bags with the path of the procession through the bus loop decorated with congratulatory signs and support.

Students should sit on the right side of the vehicle. When vehicles arrive at the front of the school, the fifth grade student’s name will be announced. The classroom teacher will approach the vehicle for a quick, socially-distanced photo that will be shared with families.

Each fifth grade class was assigned a color to identify which class community they belong to. The colored paper was given out when students arrived to pick up their materials at Great Falls. The student’s name should be on the colored paper and it should be displayed on the passenger’s side of the windshield. This will allow staff to prepare for each arriving student.

Only teachers and Great Falls staff are allowed outside of vehicles while on school property. Masks will be worn by all staff participating in the recognition ceremony.

Village will be continuing its tradition of providing each student with a special t-shirt and a fifth grade slideshow. This year’s slideshow will include pictures of students learning from home and teachers will host virtual “watch parties” with their classes the week of June 8.

Additionally, Mark Curtis, from Gorham Sand and Gravel, donated a large boulder to the school for fifth graders to sign. The boulder will serve as a special memorial for these students who thrived despite the unexpected shift to distance learning.

As a final celebration, Village will host a fifth grade drive-by parade on Wednesday, June 10, from 9:30 a.m. Families are invited to drive through the bus loop as Village staff members cheer and say goodbye - from a safe distance. Narragansett will be having a fifth grade celebratory parade through the bus loop on Wednesday, June 10, at 6 p.m. to honor its 35 fifth graders.
Maine’s chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI Maine) announced the launch of a Teen Text Support Line, a new mental health program for Maine youth between the ages of 14-20, which aims to provide mental health support during the coronavirus crisis and beyond.

The Text Line can be reached at (207) 515-8398 (TEXT) and operates from noon-10 p.m. each day. It provides adolescents who may need additional mental health support with a safe space to talk with another young person. Staff providing support via the Teen Text Line are between 19 and 25 years old.

According to the 2019 Maine KIDS COUNT Data Book, Maine’s youth have the highest rate of diagnosed anxiety in the nation, and the country’s third highest rate of diagnosed depression among children aged 5 to 17.

The Teen Text Line is not a crisis line. If someone is in crisis, contact the Maine Crisis Line by phone or text at (888) 568-1112.

For more information, visit www.namimaine.org/page/teentextline, or contact NAMI Maine’s CEO Jenna Mehner at (207) 907-0303 or jenna@namimaine.org.
At the last regular School Committee (SC) meeting, held on Zoom, Superintendent Heather Perry reminded everyone that Governor Mills’ phased reopening did not include schools. Some outdoor facilities may be opened for use in June, but distance-learning will continue until the end of the school year. Devices that students are using will not be collected over the summer. She announced that the Maine Department of Education has provided 900 Chromebooks for grades K-3.

Perry reported that all district staff is working and at least 97% of their students are receiving instruction from their teachers. Only 80 students are not in communication. The staff is preparing 400 meals daily and 100 backpack lunches every week. Some of the meals are for residents in Avesta housing.

The SC attended a workshop with the Town Council (TC) on May 12 to discuss the proposed FY21 budget. The TC expressed concern over increasing the mil rate at this time so a second workshop was scheduled for May 27. The TC must vote on the budget by mid-June for it to be included on the July 14 ballot for voter approval.

All SC members thanked the district staff for their work under difficult circumstances. Darryl Wright asked what the district is doing to reach out to the students who are not participating in distance learning. Perry reported that teachers, guidance counselors, social workers, and principals are making every effort to reach these students. She also assured Phyllis Gagnon that there are no eligibility requirements for receiving meals.

Principal John Donahue described parades for their fifth graders who will be going next year to Gorham Middle School (GMS). Zoom meetings with parents, slide presentations, T-shirts, virtual talent shows, and other creative measures will take place the week of the usual end-of-year activities. Welcoming programming is underway for the 100 students who will be transferring to Narragansett School. Orientation for incoming Kindergarten students is still in the planning stage.

Principal Quinton Donahue described orientation plans for fifth grade students who will be entering GMS in the fall. Staff has prepared a slide show that explains middle school and GMS is offering a virtual building tour. All students will learn about their teams, schedules, and advisors by mid-June. Eighth graders who will be attending Gorham High School (GHS) in the fall will be recognized with a car procession, T-shirts, and music on June 11. GHS principal Brian Jandreau announced that incoming ninth graders and their parents have had information sessions. Students will receive master schedules, view videos from teachers, and will sign summer reading assignments. He outlined plans for the Class of 2020 graduation that will permit students to graduate with friends and parents in small, spread-out groups. It will be followed by a parade through Gorham. The SC gave a shout-out to Jandreau and his team for coming up with an exceptionally creative substitute for a traditional graduation celebration.

The Finance Committee reported discussing the fund balance for 2021, the purchase of two buses for which the district will pay only 20% of the cost, and the possibility of receiving stimulus funds. The Facilities Committee is going forward with its capital improvements project list and has discussed the effect it would have on the budget or a potential bond referendum.

Votes were taken on three minor changes in school policies (7-0), approval of step-ups for probationary teachers (7-0), and a State requirement on retaining principals (7-0). The SC also voted on three hirings (6-1, Gagnon) and to permit the superintendent to transfer funds from one cost center to another if they total no more that 5% of the budget and have no effect on the total budget figure (6-1, Gagnon). Gagnon cited procedural objections to both motions he did not support.

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OPENING JUNE 2ND FOR INSIDE SEATING WITH COVID CURRENT GUIDELINES

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GMS District 1 Honors Band and Chorus Festival Musicians

TRACY WILLIAMSON
GMS Music/Chorus Teacher

Earlier this year, Gorham Middle School (GMS) musicians celebrated their instrumental and vocal talent at the 2020 Maine Music Educators Association District 1 Honors Band and Chorus Festivals.

On February 28 and 29, the 7th and 8th grade District 1 Honors Band and Chorus came together for a weekend of music at South Portland Schools.

This year’s 7th and 8th grade Honors Chorus was directed by Thornton Academy choral director Catherine Murray while the 7th and 8th grade Honors Band had the opportunity to work with University of Southern Maine band director, Jackie Townsend.

Students auditioned in the fall to be accepted to the 7th and 8th grade Honors Festival and had an amazing weekend seeing old friends, making new friends, and creating beautiful music with students from all over Southern Maine.

On March 7, 6th graders from Southern Maine came together for the District 1 6th grade Honors Band.
GMS District 1 Honors Band and Chorus Festival Musicians  

Continued from Page 8

and Chorus Festival at Gorham High School (GHS). Students from Cape Elizabeth, Westbrook, Scarborough, Gorham, South Portland, and Bonny Eagle were nominated by their school band and choral directors to participate in the festival.

The Honors Chorus learned some fantastic music while working with guest conductor Heather Guilfoyle from Massabesic High School and the Honors Band had the privilege of working with the Maine Music Educators Association President, Ben Porvin. Both groups performed a wonderful concert for the public in the McCormack Performing Arts Center at GHS that afternoon.

There were many other music festivals and events scheduled for this school year that unfortunately have had to be cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic. It was fortunate to have had the opportunity for these two middle school honors festivals and concerts this year.

Congratulations to all GMS musicians who auditioned for, were nominated for, and participated in the 2020 Honors Festivals.

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When There Are No Sports To Watch

DESTINY COOK
Sports Editor

About a year ago I wrote an article about being a sports fan. It was so much fun for me to write. I got to stroll down memory lane thinking of my Papa, my children being little in their colored jerseys, and most of all, the thought of all the memories I would make with family and friends in the future. Fast forward to March of 2020 when for a sports fan, the unthinkable happens; every sport is cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Some of the big ones include the Summer Olympics, March Madness, NBA, NHL, and the MLB, and that’s just to name a few.

For many of us, sports gives us an escape from our everyday lives; we look forward to seasons beginning and ending and all that comes with it. In my article last year I mentioned my “crew.” We go to a lot of Patriots and Sea Dogs games together, and we discuss current sporting events via text almost weekly. I asked my Gorham group their thoughts on what sports mean to them and how they are feeling as we navigate this unchartered territory as fans.

Travis Emerson (GHS ’17) is one of my favorite football fans. He has been coming to Patriots games with us for five years. No matter the weather or the outcome of the game, he just wants to have as much fun as possible and he enjoys staying until the very end of the game. He said, “I love the whole production; the atmosphere from pre-events is unmatched. There is nothing like watching on TV or experiencing in person when the crowd erupts in cheers as your favorite team scores a game winning touchdown or sinks a big shot.”

A week prior to the complete shutdown, Travis attended a Celtics game. “If this pandemic had not occurred, I planned to attend numerous spring games together. We can’t wait to be in the crowd again.” Travis said, “It will definitely be a different experience, as we begin to try to recover from the pandemic, but these sacrifices will have to be made in order to bring back our precious sporting events.”

Mike (Grizz) Tangay and I have also been sports buddies since college. One of my favorite college memories was during March Madness when I lurked in the background enjoying the energy of Grizz and all the guys watching the games in the main lobby of our dorm. After college, when I first moved to Gorham, I lived with Grizz and his wife Lori. Upon my arrival, she was very excited that he had someone who loved sports as much as she did.

Grizz has followed the four major U.S. sports and NASCAR for at least 40 years. While he admits it’s not realistic to watch every game, he tries to catch as many as he can. As each sport ends and another begins he said, “There’s the anticipation of the start of the season, discovering the talents level that your team has as the season rolls on and then, hopefully, the expectation is for a long run through the playoffs.” Before the unexpected cancellation, he said this was the best season for his favorites, the Bruins and Celtics.

“Both were having strong seasons in 2019-20. Then came COVID-19 and the first shoe to drop was the NBA’s postponement of the season, followed quickly by the NHL, NASCAR and nearly everything else in society,” he shared.

Grizz has followed a long list of sports, including the sport of nautical sailing. “I felt the unprecedented absence of sports in 2020 was going on. All that mattered was that Mark Sanchez (the former NY Jets Quarterback) ran directly into the buns of another gentleman on his own team, dropped the ball, and gave up a touch down to the Pats.”

Sports is a temporary distraction from the troubles of the world. While Seth feels the unprecedented absence of sports is so devastating, at the same time he understands that the safety of players, fans, and workers is top priority.

Through my conversations with several of my friends, I have learned that all the time in the world and having no sports to watch feels like taking a surprise trip to the Bahamas only to find out that all the beaches are closed. I have to think that if we had sports, we’d all be a little more sane,” he said.

My crew understands what had to be done. We know that things most definitely won’t look the same should the seasons start again this year, and we also understand that it may never be the same. We simply look forward to the start of each sports season, whatever it may look like, so we can get back to watching games together. We can’t wait to go to the movies and discuss the latest topics in the sports world. These small things would bring an incredible sense of normalcy to sports fans.

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COMMUNITY

GRADUATIONS
Ian Lander, Ocean Engineering, University of New Hampshire, Durham, New Hampshire

DEAN’S LIST
Kelly Aube, University of New England, Biddeford and Portland, Maine
Kyrene Bettencourt, Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts
Nathan Brown, University of New England, Biddeford and Portland, Maine
Allison Bunker, University of New England, Biddeford and Portland, Maine
May Callahan, University of New England, Biddeford and Portland, Maine
Kristen Carlisle, University of New England, Biddeford and Portland, Maine
Anthony Chase, University of New England, Biddeford and Portland, Maine
Jenna Cowan, University of New England, Biddeford and Portland, Maine
Saorise Herlihy, Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts
Jack Lament, University of New England, Biddeford and Portland, Maine
Grace Libby, University of New England, Biddeford and Portland, Maine
Hannah Libby, University of New England, Biddeford and Portland, Maine
Andy Pham, University of New England, Biddeford and Portland, Maine
Katelyn Smith, University of New England, Biddeford and Portland, Maine
Brenden Waterman, University of New England, Biddeford and Portland, Maine
Alex York, University of New England, Biddeford and Portland, Maine

OF INTEREST

Girl Scout Troop 68 held a video chat to share the bird houses that they each made at home. They had big plans that were canceled this spring due to the pandemic, but are staying connected!

The Gorham Lions gathered on May 16, with the help of Carl Phillips from Phillips Towing and the Gorham Police Department, to raise nearly 100 Stars and Stripes on Main Street, School Street, South Street and Gray Road. The Gorham Lions are pleased to be of assistance with this effort that they have done for a number of years. They hope their contribution to our community will also raise local spirits during these difficult times. New members are always welcome. FMI 929-9182.

The 96th North Gorham Cemetery Association Annual meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 2, at 7 p.m. at the North Gorham Church located on Standish Neck Road in North Gorham. FMI, please contact Ben Gilman at bgilman@mainechamber.org or 838-7564 or Kathy Corbett at kcorbett@aol.com or 892-4290.

Veterans of Foreign Wars, Gorham Memorial Post 10879, will meet on June 9 at 5:30 pm. The location is to be determined. Any interested veterans may contact the post at vfw-post10879@gmail.com.

The Gorham Fire Department will be holding a sprinkler inspection class on Saturday, June 13, at Central Station’s Training Room starting at 8:30 am. The anticipated duration of the class is approximately three hours. As an annual test/inspection of a sprinkler’s suppression system is required, this class provides homeowners with the training required to conduct their own test/inspection (except for portions of systems having anti-freeze solution). Participants are encouraged to call 222-1618 or email cjarrett@gorham.me.us with questions and/or confirmation of attendance.

Gorham Community Access Media (GoCAM) has 216 videos online about local Gorham events. Check them all out at vimeo.com/user17448809.

Neighbors helping neighbors. Remember, everyone has a computer to keep them connected. But neighbors are connected to neighbors who are connected, (and so on) and can help each other find what they need. Reach out and let someone know if you need something.

Gorham’s small businesses need our support. Visit Gorham Strong, gorhamstrong.org to help support Gorham Businesses in a variety of ways.

CLASSIFIEDS

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M-F Maverick Ashley.

CALENDAR

THURSDAY, MAY 28
Librarian Grab Bag Discovery Time, 9:30 a.m., Baxter Memorial Library

SATURDAY, MAY 30
Gorham Farmer’s Market, Municipal Parking Lot, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
* The first half an hour is slotted for elderly and immunocompromised people.

TUESDAY, JUNE 2
Librarian Grab Bag Discovery Time, 9:30 a.m., Baxter Memorial Library

THURSDAY, JUNE 4
Librarian Grab Bag Discovery Time, 9:30 a.m., Baxter Memorial Library

SATURDAY, JUNE 6
Gorham Farmer’s Market, Municipal Parking Lot, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
* The first half an hour is slotted for elderly and immunocompromised people.

TUESDAY, JUNE 9
Librarian Grab Bag Discovery Time, 9:30 a.m., Baxter Memorial Library

Veterans of Foreign Wars Meeting, 5:30 p.m. Location TBD.

The Gorham Food Pantry open hours are every Thursday from 10 a.m.–noon with curbside drive through procedures in place. Any Gorham resident can take advantage of the Gorham Food Pantry; clients need only visit during pantry hours with proof of residency (a water bill, electric bill with your name and your Gorham address on it). With weekly changes, it’s important to follow Gorham Food Pantry Friends on Facebook for the latest info. Message via Facebook or email director@gor-hamfoodpantry.org for particulars. For elderly, immunocompromised, or those who need to explore other arrangements, please reach out to Facebook messenger for alternatives to shopping at the pantry. The most pressing needs are large toothpaste, pancake mix and syrup, ramen noodles, mac & cheese, pizza sauce, laundry detergent, microwave popcorn. Hand sanitizer for the volunteers is always needed. Financial donations can be made at www.gorhamfoodpantry.org and help the pantry make purchases to fill in any gaps.

LIBRARY NEWS

At the Baxter Memorial Library, all programs are virtual (online). Some of the programs take place on Facebook, some programs on Zoom, and some on the library website. All of the details can be found at baxterlibrary.org. The Librarian Grab Bag Discovery Time takes place on Facebook on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:30 a.m. You’ll never know which Youth Services staff member will be performing. It could be a Musical Mr. Jeff, an Artistic Ms. Dani, a Movement Moment Deb, a Yoga Ms. Heidi, or an Artistic Ms. Becky. Tune in and collect them all!

Starting on June 15, kids will be able to sign up for the Baxter Memorial Library Summer Reading and Discovery Program. Also, save the date for a Nature Walk and Scavenger Hunt on June 17 at 10:30 a.m. exploring one of Gorham’s many beautiful trails with a fun filled hunt created by Mr. Jeff. Also coming up is Baby Yoga on June 19 at 9:30 a.m. for babies 6 weeks old to new walkers. This program will focus on nurturing the baby/caregiver bond through gentle massage, stretching, and singing, and restorative poses for the caregiver. Learn more about all of these programs in the next Gorham Times issue, or online at baxterlibrary.org.

USM NOTES

When the pandemic struck, the USM Composers Ensemble, directed by Dan Sonenberg, had just completed writing repertoire for their Spring 2020 concert. They were preparing for an April performance of all world premieres. Instead, social distancing took hold, school went on-line, and ensemble performance became impossible. The loss of the spring concert was particularly painful, since this exact combination of 20 players and instruments will never be duplicated again. Working remotely, the group spent the rest of the semester creating an album, “Will There Be a Spring.” The album was released on Bandcamp in conjunction with a live Zoom release party on Wednesday, May 27. FMI, visit https://usm.maine.edu/music/will-there-be-spring-album-release-party

The University of Southern Maine is open virtually, running classes, and preparing students for their courses of study. The Office of Admissions is available to meet with prospective students online. Learn more at usm.maine.edu/admissions, write to adm@usm.maine.edu, or call 780-5646.

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Tiffany Libby: 207-712-4242
Samarantha Provenchal: 207-313-6039
info@libbystarnesteam.com
Facebook.com/LibbyStarnesTeam

207-809-9461
389 US Route 1, Suite 2D, Scarborough, ME 04074
Keeping Up with Reggie

Gorham resident Jenny Brackett-Gagnon started a new Facebook page called “Reggie: The Life of a Misunderstood Duck” which follows the plight of the wandering White Rock area duck and his partner, Babette. Brackett-Gagnon said, “In light of recent shenanigans and the giggles it brought to a few, this page was created to help shed light into the often complicated life of Reggie, the most misunderstood duck of our times. Born a Muscovy, or meat duck, Reggie’s past is checkered with narrow escapes, unsavory women and a plethora of bad decisions. Reggie can fly straight, but chooses not to. So, if you see him, just smile, wave, and keep on a trucking. He’s 30 lbs of pure testosterone with a great hairdo, a bad attitude and most recently, a semi-permanent residence in the dog house.”

Goodbye From a Distance

The Zahn family of Gorham said a bittersweet goodbye to friends on May 13 after learning that dad, Chief Petty Officer Chris Zahn of the U.S. Coast Guard, was being re-stationed to Minnesota. Chris, along with his wife Jordan Kovach, and their two sons, Sam and Emmett, were treated to a goodbye parade which was organized by friends and included Jordan’s coworkers from the Gorham Fire Department. Pictured above are Chris and Sean Rumery with their homemade sign.