COVID-19 Vaccinations Begin in Gorham

KATHY CORBETT
Staff Writer

Residents and staff of Gorham House and The Inn at Village Square, two Gorham long-time care facilities, have received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine. These facilities have partnered with pharmacies which are dispensing one-third of the vaccines allocated for Maine residents as part of Phase 1A, a category which also includes health care workers.

Staff from Walgreens pharmacy began vaccinating Gorham House residents and staff on January 5. Ninety-nine percent of residents and at least 70% of staff have received the Pfizer vaccine, according to Michelle Belhumeur, executive director. Walgreens will return twice to administer second shots and vaccinate more staff.

Since the start of the pandemic, Gorham House has had three COVID-19 cases, all staff, Belhumeur reported last week. “We still are not permitting visitors from outside,” she said, “but the staff is offering bingo and crafts in an area where masked residents can stay six feet apart, and we work with them to visit with family by Portal.”

The Inn at Village Square, an assisted-living facility, is partnering with Bangor Drug. Director Sara Forgione said pharmacy staff gave the first round of the Moderna vaccine on January 12. “The vast majority of residents and staff have agreed to be vaccinated,” she said, “and we will get second doses in four weeks.” The Inn is testing staff and residents weekly. “We had some positive cases in December, but currently have no positive cases,” she said.

At the regular January Town Council meeting, Darryl Wright, Gorham School Committee chair, reported that as of January 4, “Gorham Schools have had a total of 28 positive cases of COVID-19 since schools were reopened back in September. All 28 of these originated outside of our schools.” He said, “This data clearly indicates that our safety protocols are working and that our schools are safe environments.”

Although plans are still in flux, Gorham residents aged 70 and older, as well adults with high-risk medical conditions, can expect vaccination to begin by February, according to Dr. Nirav Shah, director of the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Essential front-line workers are also in this 1B group. Shah announced that plans are underway for high-volume vaccination sites and advanced registration. “Constraints are due to supply of vaccine, not so much as our ability to get it out,” he said.

Data from the CDC website posted on January 10 showed that there have been 497 COVID-19 cases in the Gorham Zip Code since March, just under 3% of 17,859 residents. In both Windham and Westbrook Zip Codes slightly higher percentages of their populations have tested positive.

Gorham Sightings

Do you know where in Gorham this photo was taken? Join our visual trivia discussion by entering your best guess on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/gorhamtimes or email us at gorhamtimes@gmail.com. The photo in the January 7 issue is on top of the Adventure Daycare building which is the old Congregational Chapel.
Getting To Work For Gorham, For Maine

REP. KYLE BAILEY

It is an honor and a privilege to represent our community in the Maine House of Representatives. Thank you for the opportunity to serve alongside the incredible representatives of public offices, Rep. Mo Terry, D-Gorham, and Sen. Stacy Brenner, D-Cumberland, and work with people across the political spectrum to work up solutions to the challenges we face.

When I campaigned for State Representative last year, Gorham voters told me that we needed to do more to protect our democracy for future generations, especially when it comes to civics education. To that end, I have submitted legislation, “An Act To Promote Civics Education in Schools,” to change Maine’s graduation requirements to elevate the importance of democracy and citizenship education in schools.

In his inaugural address to Congress in 1797, John Adams warned the nation that the schools “were the only means of preserving our constitution from its natural enemies,” which he named as “sophistry [fake news], “party” [partisan politics], “moral” [moral turpitude], “profligacy” [recklessness], “corruption” and “foreign influence.”

Generations of Americans were educated in schools to understand this warning, value the awesome responsibilities of American citizenship and keep a watchful eye over our nation. Unfortunately, democracy and citizenship education has been demoted as a priority over the decades due to competing obligations imposed on schools by society and the state.

My civics bill proposes to pull “civics” and “government” out from underneath the “history” section of the graduation requirements and award a new category for the democracy and citizenship life skills that are already detailed in the Maine Learning Results: citizenship, government, personal finance and entrepreneurship. This simple fix elevates the importance of civics education without imposing a new course mandate on schools, without negatively impacting the American history requirement, and without increasing the total minimum basic requirements. Because I share the concerns of Gorham citizens who are passionate about the need to address racial and social injustice in our society, my bill also includes language to ensure that the history of American history incorporates the histories of “religious and racial minorities, women, and LGBT people.”

In addition to civics education, I have proposed legislation this session to create competitive grant programs for sustainable economic development and carbon reduction initiatives at the municipal level, to bond for an international custom facility at the Portland International Jetport that will generate tourism and economic growth in our region during the months and years following the pandemic; to study tax incentives for residential sprinklers that would make this life-saving investment more affordable for homeowners; to prevent landowners from repealing laws approved by Maine voters for a period of two years and allow only technical fixes; to reestablish the Maine planning office to assist towns and counties with better planning for the future, and to codify changes to absentee voting that were made this year, thereby making it easier for voters to participate in our democracy.

In addition to these bills, I am working with colleagues on legislation that range in scope from promoting volunteer service to making college more affordable. The committee on which I serve, the Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business Committee, will begin meeting on January 18 and will hear bills ranging from business licensing to workforce development. My committee will play an important role in finding creative solutions to the economic challenges facing our business and families as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

I welcome the opportunity to hear from you on these and other issues that matter to you. Please contact me with any concerns or questions.

Rep. Kyle Bailey, D-Gorham, is serving his first term in the Maine House of Representatives. He owns his own business and is a member of the Gorham Business Exchange. He serves on the Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business Committee. You can reach him by emailing: kyle.bailey@legislature. maine.gov or calling (207) 939-8600. For immediate assistance, please send a text message.

LOCAL SHOPPING

Public Works in Gorham, by the town trash schedule. The full bucket is exchanged weekly for a clean one. You can request a bucket of compost for your garden as another benefit. I have heard a lot of complaints about the cost of tags and trash bags. I know their service at $15 a month would save money for me. You can go to their website and fill out a form to request the service in Gorham. They have to have a number of people requesting the service to be able to come to Gorham. It would be so good to know more of our trash is being responsibly composted! Sincerely, Kathleen Kadi

Dear Editor,

Lately I have noticed an excessive amount of trash along the roadsides of Gorham. I do not know if it is just my mind playing tricks on me, but there is more trash being thrown out on our roadways. I guess it matters not, but this garbage is littering our landscape. Travel any route with pockets of open space and you will see bottles, cans, take out paper plates, plastic cutlery and cups, plastic bags, boxes, and even car parts. Simply put, it is disgusting.

In the spirit of trying to make a positive difference in life, I decided to pick up some of the trash in and around my own neighborhood. Maybe it is only a few bags, but it is trash nonetheless that will no longer be an eyesore nor harm the environment.

I have taken to keeping trash bags and gloves in my car now. I will pull over when I see conspicuous amounts of garbage. It is quick and easy to drive past once you start—I have found out.

Public Works in Gorham, by the way, kindly took the bags of trash I collected. Maybe we all could look around our own neighborhoods to do a little trash pickup if needed. You may get your hands a little dirty, but you will feel good knowing you made a difference in the community.

Sincerely,

Tina M. Ruel

Dear Editor,

I have been wanting to see Garbage to Garden come to Gorham for a long time. They compost all food trash, cooked and raw, as well as things like pet hair, dry dirt, paper, and used cooking oil, pits, shells and bones. I know when I clean out my refrigerator every week there is always something that goes into a trash bag. I can compost some of it, but not all.

Garbage to Garden provides a bucket for $5 and picks up your trash in a bucket. The full bucket is exchanged weekly for a clean one. You can request a bucket of compost for $5. I can exchange the full bucket for a clean one. They compost all food trash, cooked and raw, as well as things like pet hair, dry dirt, paper, and used cooking oil, pits, shells and bones. I know when I clean out my refrigerator every week there is always something that goes into a trash bag. I can compost some of it, but not all.

Garbage to Garden provides a bucket for $5 and picks up your trash in a bucket. The full bucket is exchanged weekly for a clean one. You can request a bucket of compost for $5. I can exchange the full bucket for a clean one.
Winning Waste Management

CATHY WALTER  
Staff Writer

Many people are trying to reduce their trash to limit the impact on the planet these days. Most of us now recycle our paper and plastic products. Some collect food scraps and compost them. When grocery shopping, many make lists to avoid buying more than needed and buy bulk to reduce packaging. All of this is just good home waste management. But did you know that companies, organizations and universities are also climbing on board to capture waste generated on their premises that used to end up in landfills and then channel it to alternate recycling streams?

The University of Southern Maine (USM) is a shining example of an early adopter of exploring new and inventive ways that waste can be reduced at the source, recycled, or composted. Their waste management program, which services the Gorham, Portland and Lewiston/Auburn campuses, has come a long way from the day when they tried composting onsite, which dive bombing gulls thwarted and when a pig farmer picked up bags of food waste that had to be painstakingly sorted for the health of the pigs but made collection error prone. Still, even back in 2012, they managed to divert twenty-nine tons of waste from landfills.

By 2019, USM was able to almost quadruple that by recovering a whopping 111.2 tons of waste with the implementation of creative ideas, some initiated by the students. For example, they placed liquid collection containers next to the recycling bins so anyone could dump out the rest of their coffee and then recycle the cup rather than toss it all in the trash. In the dining halls, they switched to paper straws, and introduced programs to reduce food waste at prep, as well as collecting waste at the dishwashing station. They even created a food cupboard for students in need where they funnel viable food that is no longer needed in the kitchens. The University still composts too, but now oftline.

USM works with a highly awarded local start up company, Garbage to Garden, that collects waste, turns it into compost and resells it to gardeners. Check them out here: https://garbagetogarden.org/ if you are interested in curbside pickup at your home to help close the farm-to-table loop.

To encourage innovative waste management practices, in 2013 the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) initiated a challenge to prevent and divert wasted food. “EPA’s Food Recovery Challenge is a voluntary incentive program in which organizations and businesses set data-driven goals, implement targeted strategies to reduce wasted food in their operations, and report results to compete for annual recognition from EPA.” https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/learn-about-food-recovery-challenge-frc.

The University of Southern Maine picked up that challenge and won six of those awards by successfully reimagining sustainable materials management of their waste stream over its entire lifecycle.

“Our original goal was reducing waste production by composting and recycling more on a limited budget. But we quickly learned that reducing food wastes and also wasted food going into the trash resulted in real cost savings which allowed us to grow our program”, said Steve Sweeney, University of Southern Maine’s Resource Recovery Supervisor overseeing the trash recycling and waste management program since 2011.

It may surprise you to learn that the current estimation is that 30% of food is sent to the trash—enough to feed all of the hungry in our country today. 30% of all trash in our landfills is food, with plastic at 18%, and paper at 12% of the total. This means two-thirds of the waste in our landfills could be diverted.

If you are looking for a way to reduce your environmental impact this year you may want to emulate USM and create your own unique waste management plan.

Photo credit Steven Sweeney

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 10 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
GorhamWomensClub@gmail.com
Correction

In the January 7, 2021 edition we omitted the photograph and Feature Write Bio that should have gone with the article titled "Gorham's Rooftop Navigational Marker". We sincerely regret this error.

Pictured above is an aerial view of Corthell Hall’s rooftop navigational marker circa 1930. Greg Cuffey is an avid history detective living in Gorham. He is a past Pres. of the Gorham & Newfield Historical Society’s and the current Pres. of Skyline Farm in N. Yarmouth and the New England Region Carriage Assoc. of America. He can be reached at sphomaine@hotmail.com.

119 Lot Subdivision Proposal

Compiled by Sheri Faber
Staff Writer

Chase Custom Homes of Windham has presented a proposal to the Planning Board for a housing development off South Street. The project was first proposed in 2003, and the latest plan was discussed at the Planning Board meeting on January 4. Roads in the development would connect with South Street (Rt. 114) as well as Crestwood Drive and Waterhouse Road. Because the project will have both public water and sewer, it meets the Town’s criteria for high density housing. As one condition of approval for the project, $975,000 would be paid into a Town fund with the money being used for saving open space elsewhere in town. It is anticipated that a project of this size will take months to get through the Planning Board process. A second meeting was scheduled for January 11th with traffic impact being one of the issues to be discussed.

Got Milk?

Dairy farming, an essential part of Gorham’s history, still continues on several local farms. Over the years, many have diversified to become pick-your-own fruit and/or veggies farms. Others specialize in maple products, organic fertilizers, hops, or Christmas trees and lumber. In addition to providing ready access to locally sourced food, an invaluable benefit granted by all of Gorham’s farms, is the protection of open spaces which give Gorham its beautiful, rural nature.

This article is about four dairy farms clustered near one another on Fort Hill Road close to Gorham Village during the last century. Only one of them remains today. The Fort Hill Farm sat at the crest of the highest point of land in Gorham and gave its name to the housing development now occupying this land. Frank Gould Sr. purchased the property from one of its many previous owners and farmed there until the mid 1940’s, raising registered Jerseys. The buildings at Fort Hill Farm were sometimes used for Farm Bureau meetings and cattle judging contests. In the fall of 1941, fire destroyed two large barns, the tie up and the milk room, as well as two large silos. The barns were rebuilt and dairy operations continued.

During World War II, Bolling Bryd, daughter of Rear Admiral Richard Byrd, along with her classmate at Windsor School in Boston, Edith Hall, helped with the war effort by working as milk maids at Fort Hill Farm. They cared for a herd that had grown to 80 Jersey cows. Gould taught them the milking process and they shared farm work, including washing the milk cans and keeping milk records. The girls lived as members of the Gould family and were paid $1 a day.

In 1977, the family farm home was destroyed by a fire that was believed to be suspicious.

The Martin Farm, across the street and just down the hill, is still in operation today as the Martin-Place... CONTINUED ON PAGE 5
Town Council Meeting
JANUARY 5, 2021

JACOB ADAMS

Allison L. and Ingridd S. of Crestwood Drive expressed their concerns about the new Sawyer Estates Proposal and encouraged the Council to take action to slow down the project. Councilor Hartwell expressed his concerns on the project by Chase and pointed out that the TDR fund protects land elsewhere from being developed and suggested these funds could be used to buy land, buy a conservation easement, or work with Presumpscot Land Trust and/or Maine Farm Land Trust to leverage funds even further to buy Development rights. He also noted that he would like to sponsor an item next month for a policy change to have more conventional looking police cruisers.

Councilor Hager reported that the Finance Committee will meet on January 25th. He also noted that EcoMaine has extended an offer, based on the Town recycling tonnage, to have an additional board member.

Councilor Shepard reported that the Ordinance Committee met on December 15th and discussed topics on noise abatement, identifying setbacks on structures and the mixed use in Mosher’s Corner. These items will come to the Ordinance Committee at their next meeting on January 19th.

Councilor Phillips reported that there will be a Capital Improvements Committee meeting on January 19th. Chairman Pratt reported that the Industrial Parks Steering Committee met on December 21st and discussed phasing, naming, landscape buffering, and had a discussion with the commercial brokers to discuss remaining funds. Town Manager Paraschak noted that the Town is now using Town trash tags and are no longer selling Town trash bags. Any bags that are still in circulation will be honored. He also reminded citizens that the Clerk’s Office is open by appointment only. Most services can be conducted online. There is also an overnight parking ban on all roads in the Town during the winter months.

Town Council approved a renewal liquor license for Gorham House of Pizza, located at 2 State Street. (6 years)

The following residents were appointed to the Board of Heath: Dr. Colby Wyatt: Three-year term Melissa VanMeter: Two-year term Jennifer Toms: One-year term

The Town Council amended the Land Use and Development code to allow for varied density for mixed-use development in the Gorham Village and Urban Commercial Zoning Districts. (6 years)

The full amendments can be found online at www.gorham-me.org-minutes-and-agendas

A proposal to add agricultural event centers and agricultural tourism uses to the Land Use & Development Code was forwarded to the Ordinance Committee for their review and recommendation. (6 years)

A proposal to permit certain private driveways in the Land Use & Development Code was sent to the Ordinance Committee for their review and recommendation. (6 years)

A proposal to add allowed uses to home occupations in the Land Use & Development Code was forwarded to the Ordinance Committee for their review and recommendation. (6 years)

The Town Council voted to table an

Continued on Page 6

TOWN/MUNICIPAL

REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS

Continued from Page 4

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Multi Million Dollar Top Producers
Masters Emerald Winner 2018

Kelley Skelly-Smith, Broker 380 Main Street, Gorham ME 207-632-0813 kelley@heels207.com #KeiSells207

Meet BRUNO!

Realtor Kelley Pup’s of the Month

5% of my real estate commissions generated from this ad will be donated to “Helping Paws Maine.”

Realtor Kelley Pup’s of the Month

5% of my real estate commissions generated from this ad will be donated to “Helping Paws Maine.”

Realtor Kelley Pup’s of the Month

5% of my real estate commissions generated from this ad will be donated to “Helping Paws Maine.”

Marietta H. Realestate Animal Rescue www.mariettarealestateanimalrescue.org

Meet BRUNO!

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Meet BRUNO!
Chief Sanborn Reports

Officer Sanborn to the Gorham PD.

Gorham PD congratulates and welcomes Sanborn as attending the Maine Criminal Justice Basic Training Program as well as attending the Maine Criminal Justice Basic Law Enforcement Training Program. He will be assigned to work the midnight patrol shift.

Planning Board Results 1/4/21

Proposed amendments to the Land Use and Development Code regarding allowing medical marijuana growing as a home occupation use and to allow medical marijuana cultivation, manufacturing and testing was discussed and referred to the Planning Board’s Ordinance Subcommittee for review and recommendations.

A proposed amendment to the Land Use and Development Code in the Narragansett Mixed Use Development District modifying side and rear setbacks and adding personal services as an allowed use was discussed and referred to the Board’s Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee for review and recommendations.

Gorham ME, LLC’s request for approval of a ground mounted solar energy generation facility on 35 acres, located at 17 Nonesuch Road, was discussed and tabled with a drone site walk to be scheduled.

Gorham Solar 1, LLC’s request for approval of a PV solar ground array with associated equipment, gravel access and a perimeter fence, located on 18.4 acres at 135 Brackett Road was approved with findings of fact and conditions of approval.

Gorham Savings Bank’s request for approval for a ground mounted photovoltaic project located at 10 Wentworth Drive was approved.

Robert Kolodgez’s request for approval to subdivide lot 3 into two lots at 97 Burnham Road was approved.

Sawyer Estates request for approval of a 118 lot residential subdivision on 103.95 acres located off South Street was discussed.

A request for approval to extend Plowman Road approximately 950 feet and to widen the existing drive to the current 26.5’ lot private way standard was not heard. It was continued to the 1/11/21 Planning Board meeting.

Town Council

Thank you to our loyal readers who advertise yard sales, car sales, personal care services, both needed and wanted, land seekers, condo and apartment rentals, rock-and-roll band members wanted and more!

THANK YOU

We gratefully acknowledge the companies, organizations and readers who advertised in the Gorham Times in 2020, even during the pandemic. Since 1995, our team of volunteers have brought the news to all of Gorham.

We couldn’t do it without your support. Thank you!

Gorham Youth Travel Basketball
Grand Central Wine Bar
Grandma's Attic Treasures
H & R Block
Holistic Pathways
Home Instead
Junction Bowl
Northern Light Health – Mercy Hospital
Kerin Chiropractic
KM Landscaping
Knights of Columbus
Laferrie Heating
Laferrie Electrical Services
Legacy Properties Sotheby’s International Realty
Life Church
Liz Berks Massage Therapist
Lord and Stephens Funeral Home
Maine Power Wash Pros
Maplewood Dental Arts
LifeLine Screening
Mooody’s Collision Centers
Nappi Distributors
New Year Gorham
Ocean Gardens
Plummer’s Ace Hardware
Po-Go Realty
Project Graduation
Real Estate Done Nicely - Keith Nicely
Robbins Property Service
Shaw Earthworks
Solar Power New England
Spectrum Portland
Stacy Breiner Campaign
Station Square at 7 Railroad Ave.
Sturgis Plumbing & Heating LLC
Susan Collins Campaign
Sweet Life
The Libby Starnes Team
The Opportunity Alliance
Trading Places Self Storage
Tufts Eyebrow Threading
USM Craft Show
V&M Rental Center
Village Builders
Village Hearing Care
Village Physical Therapy
White Rock Stamp Grindng
Wilks Real Estate
Wyman's Auto Inc
Young Life

Thank you to our loyal readers who advertised yard sales, car sales, personal care services, both needed and wanted, land seekers, condo and apartment rentals, rock-and-roll band members wanted and more!
Robots Teams Kick Off 2021 Season

Mikaela Pellerin
GHS Student Intern

The Gorham Falmouth Robotics Team (Team 172) recently had a kickoff event to begin their season. Each year FIRST®, a nonprofit organization, develops a new game for teams to compete in. The goal of FIRST Robotics is to inspire young people to be science and technology leaders and innovators. Although the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has made it challenging for two schools to connect, the team has managed to create ways to safely and effectively work together.

“Since we are a two-school team, our mentors felt that it wasn’t possible to safely coordinate large in-person meetings yet,” said Hunter Pellerin, a Gorham High School (GHS) junior. “We have managed to stay connected and set up a distance using online meetings two or three days each week. This gives the whole team and smaller sub teams the ability to meet with each other safely and quickly.”

During a typical year, the team would be preparing for a regional competition by now. A game challenge would be revealed at the start of January and they would spend six weeks designing and building a robot. If they do well at the first competition, they would move onto District Championships and eventually World Championships (which they have made it to in past years).

This year, FIRST has created three new “at home” challenges. First, the INFINITE RECHARGE at Home Challenge is where last year’s robot is used and must perform five particular challenge, students can build and program a mini bot. In addition to those three, FIRST is offering a fourth challenge called the BAE Systems Challenge. In this challenge, students can build and program a mini bot. Students are placed on one of the four challenges with at least two lead mentors who will guide students through each challenge. Since gathering in person is not an option, these challenges will be submitted into competition in a variety of ways. Students can submit videos; written documents; slideshows; send in an objective score; or deliver a pitch to a team of judges to score online.

Precautions are also being taken to ensure that everyone who is a part of this team is safe. Every team mentor has been registered with FIRST and has completed a safety training, which includes online and COVID-19 safety. For now, students are meeting in large and small groups to collaborate and work on challenges using the platform Zoom.

“COVID-19 has kind of given us the chance to step back and look at how strong the bond within our team is, and it is truly amazing that we are able to continue having fun and learning while also staying safe,” said Shrusi Joshi, a senior from Falmouth High School.

Overall, the robotics team is enthusiastic about being able to still have a season together this year, despite the challenges of COVID-19.
Chalmers Helping Neighbors

Gorham Times Staff

Chalmers Insurance Group has implemented a Community Champion role where they help bridge the gap between Chalmers’ work and the needs of their neighbors. Additionally, they have been working on a podcast called The Community Cast where they feature local leaders in their communities and give them a chance to share their successes, lessons learned, and how they pay it forward.

“We are extremely grateful to Chalmers for their continued support of the Gorham BackPack Program,” said Heather Whitaker, GMS alternative education teacher. “Funds donated by Chalmers will be used to purchase food items for our Weekend Bags. We have seen an increase in participants this year and greatly appreciate Chalmers’ donation.”

Chalmers believes that how they do business is just as important as the business they do. That is why they created a Community Champion in each office. Carissa Chipman, in the Gorham office, who fills that role, is passionate about her community and helping bridge the gap between Chalmers’ work and the needs of her neighbors.

GMS teacher Heather Whitaker (left) accepts a donation from Carissa Chipman, Chalmers Community Champion, to help the BackPack program. Chalmers has been involved with the BackPack program since its inception.

GHS Grad News

Whitney Libby (GHS ’00) has recently become a member of the Forbes Human Resources Council, an invitation-only organization whose members are respected leaders and executives selected for the council based on the depth and diversity of experience as leaders in the human resources field.

Libby is currently HR director for Schimenti Construction, located in Ridgefield CT & NY. She is also CEO and founder of her own company, Next Level Events LLC. She can be reached at Whitney@nextlevelevents.org.

School Committee Report 1/13/21

Keith Corbett

Staff Writer

At the regular January 13, 2021 meeting of the Gorham School Committee (SC), Superintendent Heather Perry announced that the district will be receiving about $750,000 from new government stimulus funding. Uses permitted for the new allocation will be more flexible, but the monies cannot be used to back-fill lost revenue. She also reported that 15 students from Gorham Middle School (GMS) and Gorham High School (GHS) are returning from remote learning to hybrid classes.

Maine will no longer be using SAT testing in Maine high schools, she said, and there is a change in the test the state uses that should produce the same data, but more quickly than before.

School Committee members thanked teachers and staff for their work this fall under difficult conditions. They appreciated the opportunity to get parent feedback at the Partners in Education (PIE) meetings at the elementary schools. James Brockenbrough thanked Perry for the message she circulated about the events of January 6, 2020 in Washington D.C.

Phil Gagnon announced that the new Narragansett Elementary School kitchen will be completed by February.

Assistant Superintendent Chris Record presented an overview of results from the recent Thought Exchange that focused on feedback from students, parents, and teachers after 14 weeks of hybrid learning. Although there were only 614 participants, Record said, “The feedback will be valuable in making decisions.”

Themes that emerged from student responses included concerns about heavy workloads, communication with teachers, and a desire for more personalized videos. One student’s comment, “I don’t like COVID. It is ruining everything,” echoed many students’ thoughts. However, students are happy with flexible Fridays.

Most parent responses included appreciation for the dedicated efforts of Gorham teachers. They too liked Friday flex days, but also wanted students to be in school more. Some felt there was too little work on remote learning days and wanted more communication with teachers.

The thoughts expressed by teachers reflected feeling stressed and exhausted. They appreciated the smaller class sizes and having Fridays for planning and communication. Although they feel more comfortable with hybrid teaching, they want more conversation with administrators.

Record said that the District Leadership Team would give immediate attention to many of the concerns, which include reducing stress and providing emotional and social support by increasing communication with staff, students, and parents. Improving remote instruction will be ongoing with an emphasis on helping students collaborate with their peers. A detailed summary of the Thought Exchange results will be posted on Perry’s blog, accessible from gorhamsuperintendent.blogspot.com.

In other business, the SC approved (7-0) the purchase of Phase 3 modulars for Narragansett.

Happy Retirement to Jeff & Jane Mason!

Congratulations on 50 years with Po-Go Realty!

pogorealty.com (207) 839-3300 39 Main Street, Gorham
Video games have gotten a bad rap in recent years. Instead of playing outside until dark, kids, it seems, would rather be online with their friends playing games like Rocket League or Call of Duty. Due to Covid-19 and restrictions placed on sports, Esports has emerged as a way to remain competitive as well as a way to stay in touch when kids can’t physically compete or get together.

According to Travis Grant, Programmer at Gorham Recreation Department, Esports is essentially organized video gaming. “It is a good way to connect people and create relationships while competing alongside or against each other. This is something that the Rec Department has been trying to get into for a while, and what better time than during a pandemic. Individuals can compete from their own homes.” he said.

Even the MPA (Maine Principals Association) has jumped on the bandwagon, making Esports a varsity sport. What makes this interesting, is that participation isn’t just from athletes, but also students who are interested in gaming. This summer, Dayton Crockett, a current freshman at GHS, was going through a very difficult time. He emailed Principal Jandreau to ask if GHS could participate in the program. While it is just beginning, they have given me something to look forward to. I miss playing the games and I miss having something to look forward to. Esports has given me something to look forward to. I’m excited for the competition,” Beaulieu said. He likes Esports because the Rec will be playing Rocket League, which is his game of choice.

While we still want to encourage the kids to get outside and enjoy some fresh air, Esports is an option those who are missing their particular sport, their teammates or the need to compete. In a time where we are staying home, Esports may be just what you’re looking for as a social and competitive escape.

Pictured above, Keegan Beaulieu plays Rocket League, the game he looks forward to playing on Esports. His sister Haley cheers him on. Inset picture is of Dayton Crockett.
**COMMUNITY**

**GRADUATIONS**
Mikayla Richman, Cum Laude, double major in health sciences and nursing, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, Virginia

**PRESIDENT’S LIST**
Emily Murray, Southern New Hampshire University, Manchester, New Hampshire

**DEAN’S LIST**
Emma Astbury, University of New England, Biddeford and Portland

**BUSINESS DIRECTORY**

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<th>Business Name</th>
<th>Services</th>
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<td>Gorham, ME</td>
<td>839-7955</td>
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<td>Community Newspaper</td>
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<td>Restaurant</td>
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<td>207-839-4759</td>
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<tr>
<td>Village Hearing Care</td>
<td>Audiologist</td>
<td>Gorham, ME</td>
<td>839-8400</td>
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**OF INTEREST**
Presumpscot Regional Land Trust is hosting a week-long winter animal tracks family event that will be both online and self-guided in the field. Maine Master Naturalist Marion Sprague will help to identify the tracks. Due to lack of snow, it will begin on January 23rd instead of the 16th at the Land Preserves. Visit prit.org for a full list of our Preserves with maps, walk the trails, look for tracks, and then share photos and information about the tracks. This program is free, but registration is required to receive a laminated pocket card of Greater Portland Animals Tracks for the event. Visit prit.org/event to register.

On January 23 from 6 – 10 p.m. enjoy a double feature, “The Incredibles” (PG) and “Ghostbusters” (PG-13) at Drive-In Movie Night in the Gorham High School parking lot, coordinated with Gorham Outdoors Club, USM Outdoor Adventure and Gorham Rec Departments. FREE, but registration is required for parking your car early. Parking lot opens at 5 p.m. for those registered, and first come, first served after 5:30 p.m. for those not registered. Register at FMI gorhamoutdoors@gmail.com.

On January 23rd and 24th, Baxter Memorial Library will host a Family Workshop where you can learn how to identify animal tracks. Due to lack of snow, it will begin on January 23rd instead of the 16th at the Land Preserves. Visit prit.org for a full list of our Preserves with maps, walk the trails, look for tracks, and then share photos and information about the tracks. This program is free, but registration is required to receive a laminated pocket card of Greater Portland Animals Tracks for the event. Visit prit.org/event to register.

**FOOD PANTRY UPDATE**
The Gorham Food Pantry still has needs for baking items, baked beans, flour, sugar, spices, cooking oil, pudding, toothbrushes and toothpaste, ramen noodles, kids snacks and personal hygiene products and diapers size 5-6. The Gorham Food Pantry is open every Thursday from 10-12 noon. Check the website at www.gorhamfoodpantry.org for further updates on the other days they are open. "Thanks again to the Gorham Community for your generous donations throughout the year."

**CONTACTED ON PAGE 11**
series of online ukulele lessons to support patrons as they learn how to use the instrument. Youth Services Library Assistant Jeffrey Knox taught himself to play the ukulele in order to lead this program. He is creating a growing series of tutorial videos that are posted to our Facebook page. You can view the videos on your own time, at your own pace, and in your own homes. This makes this program flexible and convenient for both children and adults. Mr. Jeff began by creating a set of four tutorial videos explaining the basics of how to play the ukulele. He is now adding to the library of videos by learning popular songs. Check out the library.org and this issue’s calendar for this and other awesome programs! In addition to the usual Discovery Times in Facebook, get ready for gift giving with after-holiday sales on fabric and Ms. Deb’s STEAM Cloth Gift Bag activity on January 27, 10 a.m., and make some yummy and healthy breakfast cookies on February 3 at 10 a.m. And, please stop by the library any time to pick up your Harry Potter craft kit to celebrate the Harry Potter (Virtual) Book Night on Thursday, February 4 at 6 p.m. The library’s favorite English librarian, Kathy Stevens, will read the first chapter of Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone. A magical prize will be awarded to the witch or wizard with the most correct answers.

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 contactless parking lot pickup is also available. Visit us on the web at north-gorham.lib.me.us.

USM NOTES
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.

The USM Art Department’s “Open Studios,” typically held on the last Friday of classes, is now online. The second “Virtual Open Studios” shares the Fall 2020 work of USM’s resilient students in a variety of modalities, including 2-D Art, Drawing Art, Media and Strategies, Ceramics, Visual Books, Paintings, Photography, Digital Art and Design, and Advanced Problems in Art. Visit the studio at usm.maine.edu/art.

The USM School of Music has many videos online from Fall 2020 performances at facebook.com/MusicUSM. A lineup of upcoming performances can be found at the website, usm.maine.edu/music. Learn how the USM Department of Theatre has continued to explore and create in the time of COVID at USM.maine.edu/theatre, Department of Athletics at usm.maine.edu/athletics, and much more. The University of Southern Maine is a wealth of varied communities with a vibrant community in Gorham. Learn more at usm.maine.edu.

Community

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Gorham Times

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Baxter Memorial Library, STEAM Breakfast Cookies with Ms. Deb on Facebook. (K-5), 10 a.m.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 28
Baxter Memorial Library, Toddler Discovery Time with Ms. Dani on Facebook. (ages 3-5), 9:30 a.m.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 30
Living Waters Church, Haddock Supper Buffet, Parker Farm Road, Buxton, 5 p.m., $8/$4/$20

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2
Baxter Memorial Library, Preschool Discovery Time with Ms. Heidi on Facebook. (ages 3-5), 9:30 a.m.

WEEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3
Baxter Memorial Library, STEAM Breakfast Cookies with Ms. Deb on Facebook. (K-5), 10 a.m.

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Baxter Memorial Library, STEAM Breakfast Cookies with Ms. Deb on Facebook. (K-5), 10 a.m.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 23
Presumpscot River Land Trust “Animal Tracks” weeklong family event begins.

Gorham High School Drive-In Movie Night, 6 p.m. Register at gorhamrec.com. FMG.gorhamoutdoors@gmail.com

TUESDAY, JANUARY 26
Baxter Memorial Library, Preschool Discovery Time with Ms. Heidi on Facebook. (ages 3-5), 9:30 a.m.

Gorham Lions regular dinner meeting, Moody’s Collision Center, 6:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27
Baxter Memorial Library, STEAM Cloth Gift Bags with Ms. Deb on Facebook. (K-5), 10 a.m.

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