

# Community Connections

# RSU 34

Alton • Bradley • Old Town

**OLD TOWN DEBATE CLUB**  
**OLD TOWN YEARBOOK COYOTES**  
**OLD TOWN TRIVIA TEAM**  
**OLD TOWN COYOTES MATH TEAM**  
**OLD TOWN COYOTES JMG**  
**OLD TOWN ROBOTICS TEAM**  
**OLD TOWN NHS TUTORIAL SERVICES**  
**OLD TOWN COYOTES CIVIL RIGHTS**  
**OLD TOWN COYOTE GSA**  
**OLD TOWN COYOTES JAZZ ENSEMBLE**  
**OLD TOWN CT KEY CLUB**  
**OLD TOWN CT STU. CO.**  
**OLD TOWN COYOTES BAND**

**WE ARE OTHS**



## WHERE YOU BELONG

**OLD TOWN HIGH SCHOOL SWIM TEAM**  
**OLD TOWN CHEERING**  
**OLD TOWN SOCCER**  
**OLD TOWN FOOTBALL**  
**OLD TOWN GOLF**  
**OLD TOWN HOCKEY**  
**OLD TOWN WRESTLING**  
**OLD TOWN SOFTBALL**  
**OLD TOWN BASEBALL**  
**OLD TOWN CROSS COUNTRY**

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**Superintendent's Message**

The simple early morning message, "there will be no school today in RSU #34 Alton, Bradley and Old Town," is music to the ears of some while an unwelcome challenge for others. I am always amazed when someone recognizes my voice as the guy who calls early in the morning when there is no school.

So, how do I go about the business of making the decision to close schools? It is the question most often asked when I visit elementary classrooms. This is how it works. I subscribe to various weather advisory outlets including the National Weather Service (NWS) office in Caribou. The folks at NWS do a fantastic job of providing twice daily advisory information, four o'clock AM and four o'clock PM, when a storm is heading our way. This information is specific to our region and I have found it to be very accurate and reliable with regards to onset times and amounts of ice, snow, and wind. Those three factors are critical in our ability to transport your student(s) safely and for parents and students to be safe on the road to and from schools. What has become a challenge is the greater Old Town area, very often, seems to be on the line where it is difficult to predict how much will be snow and how much might be freezing rain or just plain rain. So, first, I look at the travel plans for our athletic and extra-curricular activities. Depending on the event location and event times, taking into consideration the predicted storm onset in our area, a decision is made with regards to afterschool and evening events for the current day. With the 4pm NWS advisory in hand I wait for the 11pm local news for a final indication that the storm is proceeding as planned or if there has been a change in any of the variables. I prepare the coffee maker and set my alarm for 4am and wait for morning. At 4am, I review the latest NWS advisory and tune in to the local morning news and weather. My laptop is open watching a string of emails from area superintendents sharing conditions in their area and their thoughts on school cancellations. On my tablet I monitor all area cancellations. My phone is at hand and by 5am I am talking with Dave Cosenze at Cyr Bus. By 5am, Dave has been up already for a few hours, has traveled the roads and has communicated with area road crews. I always attempt to decide in a timely manner to provide adequate notice to students, parents, and staff so that alternative plans,

including childcare may be made if necessary.

Sometimes the decision is a "no brainer" but more often than not, I am weighing multiple variables with student safety being at the top of the list in the decision-making process. You can be sure, I will always err on the side of caution and safety.

Once a decision is made, I shift to notification mode. NO-SCHOOL announcements are made using our phone, text and email notification systems including our app for those who have downloaded and allowed notifications as well as posted the cancellation on our website [www.rsu34.org](http://www.rsu34.org). I also notify area television stations that accept early morning school closing notifications. Some of those stations also have weather apps that provide notification of cancellations if you wish.

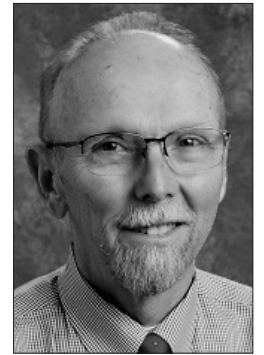
Regardless of our decision to open or not open schools, I respect the right of parents to make the final decision not to send your child(ren) to school when you feel their safety is at risk due to travel conditions. In these cases, the absence will be excused when we receive a note from you stating you chose to keep your child at home for safety reasons.

Under most circumstances, children are kept in school for the full day once they have reported to school. Early dismissal of students would occur only when weather conditions would appear to be too hazardous to remain the full day, loss of power for an extended period or when travel conditions are predicted to significantly worsen prior to normal dismissal

times. In this case, students would be dismissed early. Parents who are not at home during the day should make early dismissal plans for their child(ren) and make the school aware of these emergency plans. Planning for a neighbor, friend, or family member to care for your child(ren) if they are dismissed early is critical. We may also delay the start of school if travel conditions so warrant. This too might require advance planning on your part if your child(ren) are not boarding the bus at their usual time and/or the school is not open to accept students until a later time.

Winter in Maine can be challenging in many ways. I understand the challenges families have with

changes in routine resulting from school cancellations, early dismissals, and delays. Feel free to call my office (827-7171) or any of the school offices if you have questions or if we can assist you with making plans for your child(ren). The safety and wellbeing of your child(ren) is most important to us. I am confident I will be preparing the coffee maker and setting the alarm for 4am a few more times before spring arrives!



David Walker

## Family & Community Guide to Great School Communication

Our RSU #34 staff works hard to communicate well with families and our community, sharing celebrations, progress, and needs! Here we share some tips for initiating communication with staff.

Email addresses and staff phone numbers are all on [www.rsu34.org](http://www.rsu34.org)  
 School Office phone numbers are: Alton Elementary School (394-2331), Leonard Middle School (827-3900), Old Town Elementary School (827-1544), Old Town High School (827-3910), and Viola Rand School (827-2508)

<b>Communicating Celebrations</b>	→	Please share good news with us! We work hard to help your children develop academically, socially, and emotionally...whether the child is 4 or 18, it means a lot to hear stories of the results!
<b>Questions about Activities</b>	→	<b>Ask away!</b> Whoever is leading the activity or the school secretary is a great place to start with questions.
<b>Questions about Learning</b>	→	<b>Ask away!</b> Please start with the educator directly involved. Your child's teacher can also help you start referrals if you think extra supports, extensions, or enrichment would be helpful.
<b>Other Questions &amp; Concerns</b>	→	<b>Ask away!</b> Please start with the educator or coach closest to the action - they're best positioned to provide information or act on your question / concern.

Many forms can be found at [www.rsu34.org](http://www.rsu34.org), such as Facilities Use Requests & Volunteer Applications

## Class of 2020 Acceptances Pouring In From Across the Nation

OTHS students are encouraged to let the Guidance Office know of their acceptance letters to post-secondary institutions. Mrs. St. Louis keeps an inspirational board up to date with the students' pictures and opportunities.

As of press time, the OTHS Class of 2020 had shared acceptance letters from across the nation. These include Maine opportunities such as CMCC, Colby College, EMCC, Husson University, KVCC, NMCC, Unity, University of New England, and the University of Maine System including UMaine Augusta, UMaine Fort Kent, UMaine Machias, UMaine Farmington, University of Southern Maine and the flagship campus.

Students are also receiving acceptances from institutions across the U.S. such as: The Art Academy of Cincinnati, Colby-Sawyer, Johnson & Wales, Kings College, Regis, The University of New Hampshire, University of Vermont, and Wentworth Institute of Technology. We also have students who have enlisted in the US Army National Guard and the Marines.

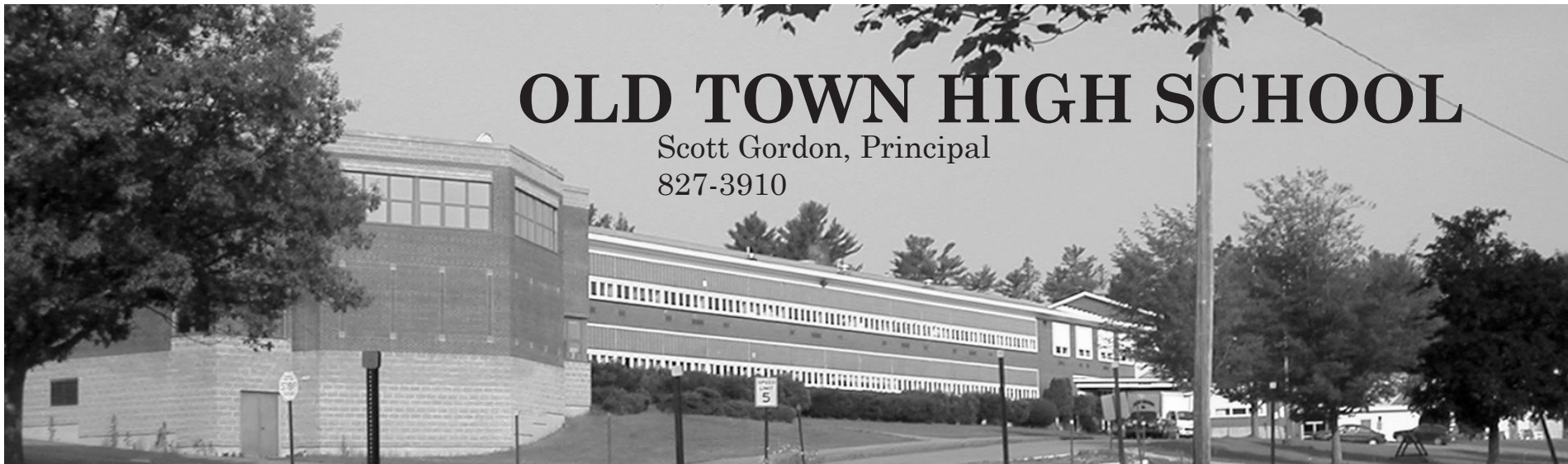
Congratulations to our students!

**RSU 34 COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS**

is published by Regional School Unit 34 for the citizens of Alton, Bradley, and Old Town.

**David Walker, Superintendent of Schools**  
**Dr. Jon Doty, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment**

Many thanks to the teachers, administrators, students, and parents who contributed to the successful publication of this issue with articles and photos. To persons unidentified we apologize. Each contribution is greatly appreciated.



# OLD TOWN HIGH SCHOOL

Scott Gordon, Principal  
827-3910



## JMG Tours Nine Dragons Mill

By JMG Student Austin Wickett  
On October 15th, Old Town High School JMG students took a tour of the Nine Dragons Paper mill. The Mill, which has been known as the backbone of Old Town's economy, has recently gone back into business after being bought by the Mainland China based company, Nine Dragons Paper.

mill and also to see all of the different jobs that go into making a mill successful.

Some of the jobs that we learned about were IT, Automotive, Welding, Electricians, Mechanical Engineers, Project Managers, Database Administrators and many more.

Here, students learned about the worldwide operations that are taking place right here in Old Town! It was a great opportunity to see what Nine Dragons Paper was all about, the cultural influence that the Chinese company has on the

In the past year, they have put about 50 million dollars into reviving the mill and have been successful in bringing 131 jobs back to our town. This tour hopefully sparked some appreciation and interest for students in getting this booming business back up and running!

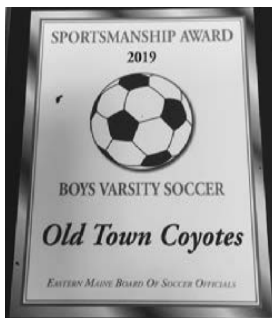


JMG students had a great opportunity to learn about the world wide operations that are taking place right here in OT! In the past year, ND has put about 50 million dollars into reviving the mill and have been successful in bringing 131 jobs back to our town. This tour hopefully sparked some appreciation and interest in what was once the backbone of Old Town's economy!



## Sportsmanship Award

Congratulations to the OTHS Boys Soccer Team, honored with the 2019 MPA Class B North Boys Sportsmanship Award. In addition the boys also were awarded the Eastern Maine Board of Soccer Officials 2019 Sportmanship Award. This is the 8th EMBSO award in Coach Graffam's 20 years of coaching varsity.



OTHS inducted the 8th class of coaches and athletes into the OTHS Athletic Hall of Fame - welcome to Adam St. John ('81), Rick Burgess(84), Gene Fadrigan ('63), Zach Gasaway ('97), Jaret Lizzotte ('97), Kendra Hayward ('13)

## Calling All Alums!

Our alumni are all over the world, doing wonderful things and celebrating life milestones! Find out what our alumni are doing now in our Alumni Updates feature, where we share news that comes our way in

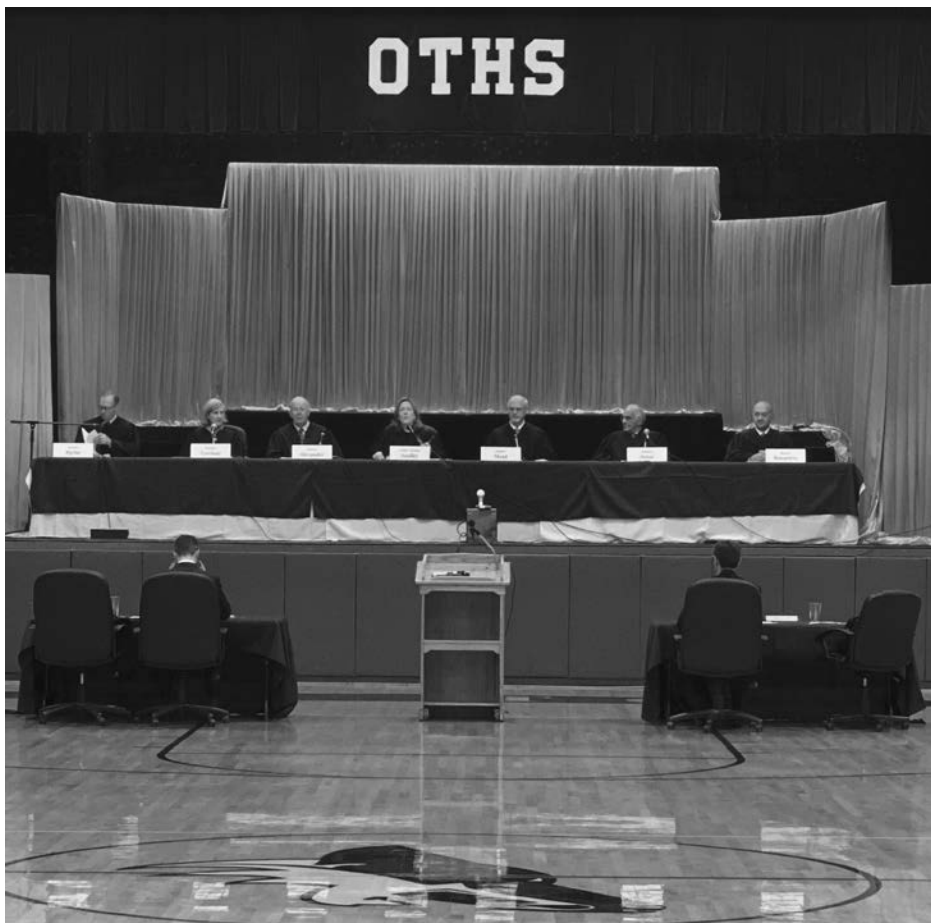
every issue. The feature is organized by graduating class. If you have an update to share for our next issue, please email Amy.McFalls@rsu34.org



JMG would like to thank everyone that came out to support the JMG/NHS/GSA/ Civil Rights Haunted High! We raised about \$200 from our collections at the door and then added another \$100 after a generous donation from Mahan's Redemption, bringing us to \$300 that will go towards maintaining our Memorial Garden. This would not have been possible without the unbelievable support that we received from Old Town students, staff, and our amazing community! Thank you all for your continuous support of JMG!

## OTHS Hosts Maine Supreme Court

Old Town High School was honored to host the Maine Supreme Court on October 9th. Students were able to hear oral arguments in three cases, and ask questions of the lawyers after each case. The attorney Q&A period was hosted by Zachary Brandmeir, Esq., OTHS Class of 1999.



OTHS Key Club attended The Yellow Tulip Project ceremony at the Bangor Y. They will be planting a yellow tulip garden at OTHS to create hope and to support mental health awareness #smashthestigma



Congratulations to Elle McPhee for a very successful weekend representing OTHS at the 2020 Maine All-State Music Festival. Elle was selected to perform in the All-State Jazz Band on Baritone Sax. The Maine All-State Jazz Band is made up of other Maine music students from all over the State.

## Spencer Earns Coach Ken Libbey Scholarship

Jared Spencer is the first OTHS football player to have earned a \$1000 scholarship from the Coach Ken Libbey Memorial Scholarship Program. (Kim Libbey's late husband) This award has been in place for 5 years now and is open for application to players who attend the Northern Maine Football Academy in June. Applications are reviewed by a small committee, and the students who win these awards must complete a semester of post secondary schooling, earn a GPA of at least 2.0, and be enrolled in the second semester as well, before receiving their scholarship check. To date, this Scholarship has awarded

\$15,000, with an additional \$2000 to be awarded this year to two other players in the state.



Great to be able to partner with our local communities and businesses to support OT athletics. Thank you Darlings Ford and softball / baseball teams for earning \$4490.00 in funds for your teams!



## Good Sportsmanship Award

Congratulations to the OTHS Boys Cross Country Team; the team was honored with the 2019 Northern Maine Good Sportsmanship Award. Old Town was chosen for the constant support and involvement in the development of the sport.



JMG Career Association Officers did an amazing job representing OTHS at the Leadership Education Conference! Students worked collaboratively to pitch their business idea, learn about the marketing and management that goes into running a business, and compete in a STEAM Competition.



## A "Snazzy Group of Professionals"

Congratulations to OTHS JMG Students for conducting a great opening ceremony!

# OTHS JROTC EARNS "HONOR UNIT WITH DISTINCTION"

On October 7th, Colonel Frederick Toti of the U. S. Army announced that Old Town High School JROTC has earned "Honor Unit with Distinction" status. OTHS is one of only two Army JROTC programs

in the state to earn this honor, and has held the honor continuously since 2006.

The distinction was awarded "for maintaining exceptionally high standards of performance in all

areas of the program," according to Col. Toti's announcement. OTHS earned very high points through the JROTC Program Accreditation visit, and maxed out possible points for participation in program activi-

ties.

OTHS JROTC has 83 cadets, led by student Battalion Commander Gracie Sanborn. Staff leaders are LTC Szewc and 1SG Peaslee.

Congratulations JROTC!



## Coyote Battalion Fall Review

The Coyote Battalion got off to a fast start during the fall semester with Drill and Color Guard events starting the first week of school. The Battalion Drill Team saw marked improvement this year finishing in the top third in multiple competitions and events. Sophomore Lilli Powers had an outstanding drill season with second and third place finishes in the Individual Drill and Review event. In addition to competitions Cadets provided the Color Guard at home football games and multiple school board meetings.

The battalion continues to grow. There was a 26% increase in enrollment this fall! In addition to classroom curriculum that focuses on citizenship and leadership, students are offered a variety of activities outside of the classroom. In September they were able to negoti-



ate the UMaine Ropes Course and challenge themselves on the indoor climbing wall at Maine Bound. This was a huge confidence

Barnett commented, "I loved having a break from the normal school day and learning new things and having fun doing it."

In addition to marching in the Riverfest Parade, cadets were given the unique opportunity to partner with VFW Post 3381 during activities on the waterfront. For the past several years cadets have joined

with the post to provide games and events for children at Riverfest. The VFW has been a longtime supporter of the Coyote Battalion, providing scholarships to deserving seniors and most recently purchasing a much-needed banner for the battalion. This new banner was proudly on display at both the Riverfest and Bangor Veterans Day Parades.

Select cadets completed water confidence training at UMaine in November. This event is hosted by the UMaine Senior ROTC program, and helps to build confidence in the water. In addition to evaluat-

ing swimming abilities the training is used to give practical application in the event someone finds themselves unexpectedly in the water.



It stresses remaining calm, removing equipment or clothing that may be hindering you, and maintaining your bearing while getting to safety.

Soldiers from the Maine Army National Guard brought

the Chamberlain Challenge to campus. The purpose of this event was to give young leaders an opportunity to rise above their peers in a competitive environment. Cadets competed as teams to com-



plete the scenario. This included constructing a makeshift dolly to move "supplies" and negotiating low lying obstacles while carry a weight bearing load. The favorite event was negotiating a "minefield" with a casualty on a stretcher while blindfolded. The casualty was the only individual not blindfolded and gave directions to the team.

The Coyote Battalion retained its Honor Unit with Distinction designation. This is an honor he battalion has held since 2006; one of only two schools in the State of Maine to do so. This is a reflection of the Cadets in the battalion and the support from the administration throughout the years. We look forward to the spring semester and continued growth.



## Cadet Service-Learning

Each year the Coyote Battalion conducts a Service-Learning Project. This year the cadets are working a project to honor fallen service members. The project centers around "Operation Gothic Serpent" commonly referred to as "Black Hawk Down" that occurred in Somalia October 3-4, 1993.

During this mission, Task Force Ranger comprised of 160 US Special Operations Forces conducted an operation to detain key leaders of the Somali National Alliance in order to reduce Mohamed Farrah Aidid's grip on the war-torn nation. Fierce fighting broke out as this elite force was surrounded by Habr Gidr militia and thousands of civilians. While ground forces moved to

secure a downed Blackhawk helicopter a second Blackhawk, Super Six Four, piloted by Warrant Officer Michael Durant was also shot down. Friendly forces were unable to move to the second crash site and the surviving crew. In an act of selfless service, Delta Operators Master Sergeant Gary Gordon and Sergeant First Class Randy Shughart volunteered to be inserted into the crash site of Super Six Four. Upon arriving at the site, they aided the crewmembers and established a perimeter to defend their position. Ultimately their position was overrun

by hostile forces, and Warrant Officer Durant was the only survivor at the crash site. He was captured by the Somalis and held for 11 days before being released to U.S. forces. Master Sergeant Gordon and Sergeant First Class Shughart were posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for their heroic actions that saved the life of Warrant officer Durant and represented the oath that they and their peers carried into battle that day.

In honor of Master Sergeant Gary Gordon, a native of Lincoln, Maine, the Coyote Battalion renamed its annual drill

competition the "Gary Gordon Invitational". At the renaming ceremony Master Sergeant Gordon's mother and sister were present to unveil a picture and citation that is currently displayed in the JROTC classroom commemorating his sacrifice. Additionally, cadets are raising funds to contribute towards a memorial that will be erected in Lincoln in his honor. Thanks to the generosity of Five Guys and Dairy Queen, we have currently raised over \$800 toward their goal of \$1,200. Cadets continue to work other related in class projects that focus on leadership skills, values, and decision making.



## OTHS Band Performs at the Collins Center for the Arts

The OTHS Band received great praise following their performance at the Collins Center for the Arts.

Dear Mr. Priest,  
Please let your band know how impressive their performance was. From the opening Galop to the closing march, it was a well prepared, well played program. I heard a well balanced ensemble sound with details emerging as you adjusted to the hall in the warm ups. The

concert showed further adjustments and details in the sound. I especially appreciated the clarity that was present in so many sections of the pieces you did. Your students also should be commended on their character and representation of OTHS. They were outstanding representatives of your school. Please extend

my heartfelt thanks to Sophie for reading the poetry during Into the Silent Land. No doubt one of the most powerful music moments I have had the privilege of conducting, and she did a great job making that possible. I look forward to hearing them again and I wish you the best during this holiday season.

Sincerely,  
--  
Christopher G. White  
Symphonic Band Director  
Sports Band Director  
Maine Summer Youth Music Camp Director  
University of Maine



OTHS  
T  
LEADERS  
M

Alton  
Bradley  
Old Town  
RSU #34

Anatomy and Physiology students work to understand the heart and the components that combine to make the heart strong. Thanks Mrs. Stevens for the experience!

## Our Students Are Our Credentials! Mini-Profiles of A Few Members of the Class of 2020

As our seniors from the Class of 2020 turn the corner and hit the homestretch of their final semester with us, we thought it would be a great time to celebrate their successes and share their plans for life after Old Town High School. Elsewhere in this issue you've seen a list of the many post-secondary institutions to which members of the Class of 2020 have already been accepted, and more acceptance letters pour in every day.

As usual, we have students closing out great careers at OTHS who have done some remarkable things in classrooms, on athletic fields and beyond over the course of four years. Here are just a few of the great stories that the Class of 2020 has to tell.

Claudia Damboise  
Hometown: Old Town



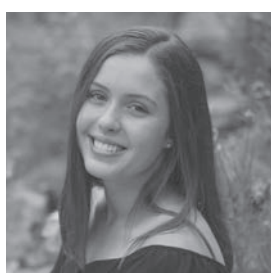
**Aspirations:** Claudia intends to attend the University of Maine to pursue a career in Civil Engineering.

**Celebrations & Honors:** Claudia is currently 3rd in her class with a GPA over 100. She will earn an Honors/STEM diploma from OTHS in June of this year. She has earned highest honors every quarter of every year she has been at OTHS. She has participated in soccer, basketball and outdoor track and served as Captain for soccer and basketball this year. She is the Historian for National Honor Society and has also been involved in Key Club and Student Council. She volunteered at Eastern Maine Medical Center (now Northern Lights) all four summers and enjoys snowmobiling in the winter. As of this writing, she is hoping for more snow to fall this winter in order to make that a possibility around her already busy schedule.

**Thankful for:** Claudia shared that she has been blessed with a loving and supportive family, which has made participating in and finding success in a variety of activities that much easier. She greatly appreciates all of the opportunities that they have provided for her.

**Advice for Future Students:** Don't wish the years away - because time flies! Everyone tells you how fast four years of high school will go, but you won't believe it - until it happens to you and it will. Make the most of your time here at OTHS!

Grace Harvey  
Hometown: Old Town



**Aspirations:** To work in a profession that helps people. She is headed to Colby College to pursue a degree

toward a career in Pediatric Oncology.

**Celebrations & Honors:** Grace sports a GPA which is north of the 100 mark and has earned highest honors for every single quarter of her high school career. She will graduate in June with an Honors & STEM diploma. She was a student representative on the RSU 34 School Board and she was named a representative from Old Town High School to Dirigo Girls' State. She currently serves as President of the National Honor Society and is the Secretary of both Student Council and Key Club. In her "spare time," she played soccer and ran both indoor and outdoor track, being Captain on each of those squads.

**Thankful for:** A supportive family and a wonderful circle of friends. She appreciated the opportunity to serve as a student representative on the RSU 34 School Board. She also appreciated the academic opportunities afforded to her, including taking college classes early, which paved the way for her acceptance to Colby College.

**Advice for Future Students:** Her advice to future students would be to learn how to break the habit of procrastination, which so many students fall into. She would also recommend that students believe in themselves more and don't stress about grades. If she had to do it over again, she would not sacrifice things that she is passionate about for grades.

Mikaela Kenny  
Hometown: Old Town



**Aspirations:** Earn an undergraduate degree in Neuroscience and then go on to medical school.

**Celebrations & Honors:** Will earn and STEM and Honors Diploma, a member of National Honor Society, Most Promising Scholar Award, Phi Beta Kappa Academic Award.

**Organizations/Activities:** National Honor Society, soccer, swimming, softball, EPSCor internship.

**Thankful for:** The opportunities that Old Town High School and the community has provided me with, and for the constant encouragement received from family and friends.

**Advice for Future Students:** Take every opportunity given to you, work towards your goals, and don't forget to enjoy your high school experience.

Abigail McKinley  
Hometown: Old Town



**Aspirations:** Major in Psychology.

**Celebrations & Honors:** Honor Roll - Highest Honors 14

quarters, Academic Letter, Varsity letter, completed a Psychology internship with U.Maine.

**Organizations/Activities:** Field Hockey all four years, played two instruments in band throughout high school, member of Key Club and National Honor Society.

**Thankful for:** How supportive the teachers are and that they truly want us to succeed.

**Advice for Future Students:** Pay attention in class, do your homework, and try hard - It will all pay off. Also, have good relationships with your teachers, it will come in handy as those are the ones who will write your letters of recommendation.

Sydney Sheehan  
Hometown: Old Town



**Aspirations:** My first four years I plan on attending the University of Maine, majoring in biomedical engineering.

I then plan on going to medical school to become a pathologist.

**Celebrations & Honors:** I have been accepted into UMaine, Husson and Stevenson University, receiving the presidential scholarship at all three. I have made highest honors all four years of high school and was given the opportunity to attend Maine Youth Leadership and Girl State as well. Recently, I was chosen as a candidate for the Presidential Scholar Program.

**Organizations/Activities:** Student Council, Key Club, National Honor Society, field hockey, indoor track, softball and band.

**Thankful for:** All my friends who have pushed me all these years to be the best person and friend I can be. I am thankful to all the teachers who put in all the extra time and energy to mold me into the person I am today. Special thanks to Mr. Bernie Lucas, Mr. Kenneth Akiha, Ms. Natalie Davis and Ms. Brenda Gardner. But I would not be where I am today without the love and support of my parents or having my older brother to look up to.

**Advice for future Students:** These years go by faster than you know! You enter high school and you'll never believe how fast all the moments become memories, so take advantage of every opportunity given to you.

Brooke Sossong  
Hometown: Old Town



**Aspirations:** To figure out what I'm passionate about and to be successful in college and in life.

**Celebrations and**

**Honors:** I've received several acceptances and merit scholarships from colleges including King's College's top merit scholarship and the Presidential scholarship from U. Maine. I have applied to a couple of colleges that I am waiting to hear back from but all of the colleges that I have heard from I've been accepted to.

**Thankful for:** I am thankful for the many opportunities and mentors I've had throughout my high school career. I've had many people in my life who I owe much of my success to. The guidance I've received to push myself and to be the best version of myself I can be has been so helpful to me in the past four years. I'm also thankful for the wide variety of opportunities and

friendships that I've experienced throughout my life.

**Advice for Future Students:** Don't be afraid to do what makes you happy. If you're passionate about something or even a little curious about an opportunity, take it. High School is only four short years so don't waste time being scared to try new things. Make all the memories you can because you only go through High School once.

Gabriel Talon  
Hometown: Old Town



**Aspirations:** I plan to attend the University Of Maine when I will be studying Environmental Science and Ecology.

From there I would like to find a job where I would be doing research around the world.

**Celebrations and Honors:** I have been selected to be part of the National Honors Society at Old Town High School. Getting accepted to UMaine was a very big honor as they have a wonderful environmental program, which can open many doors for me in my future. I have also been a three-sport athlete at Old Town, participating in soccer, hockey, and baseball. I was a part of many successful hockey seasons which includes a state championship.

**Thankful for:** I am thankful for my teachers who have seen my potential and helped me to reach it. My coaches, who have taught me more than just the game, teaching me about how to be a well rounded, respectful adult and skills I will need when I take on my first job. Lastly, my parents and family who have been there for me every step of the way and giving me many opportunities.

**Advice:** The most important advice I can give is to have fun and enjoy your four short years of high school. Do not get stressed over little things, instead enjoy the bigger moments, things you will remember for years to come. Take every opportunity that comes your way, you never know where it will take you.





# OLD TOWN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Dr. Jeanna Tuell  
Principal

827-1544



## 3rd Graders Grow Award-Winning Super Cabbage!

This summer, OTES third graders put their green thumbs to the test as part of a national super cabbage growing competition. In 1996, Bonnie Plants started the Third Grade Cabbage Program in Alabama. The competition has since spread to all 48 contiguous states, sending over one million free O. S. Cross, or “oversized” super cabbages to 3rd grade classrooms across the country each year. The program’s purpose is to promote kids’ love of gardening and appreciation for growing healthy food.

In addition, the program awards a \$1,000 scholarship to one winner in each state.

Each third grade student at OTES received an O. S. Cross (“oversized variety”) cabbage seedling donated by the American Takii Seed



Company in June. Some students planted the seedling and nurtured it during the summer in hopes of growing a monster cabbage and winning the scholarship. At the end of the growing season, each participant submitted a “cabbage selfie.” Entries were judged on cabbage size and appearance. The best entries from each participating classroom were entered into a drawing, and a winner was chosen from each state.

And...we have a winner! Maine’s winning entry

was our very own Kelan Plourde! The head of Kelan’s super cabbage clocked in at 11.3 pounds! OTES honorable mentions include entries from Timothy Ouellette, Tyler Lilly, Jack Degrasse, and Nevaeh Manos.



## Kindergartners and Worms Partner for Nutrient-Rich Soils!

Kindergartners at OTES have been caring for worms in their classroom for the last couple years as their

Kindergarten service learning project. Students feed the worms compostable fruit and vegetable scraps

from their snacks. Worms eat those scraps and create castings. Kindergartners help harvest those castings

and then use those castings to spread in the school garden to provide nutrients for the soil and crops.



Students work to revamp the worm bins after harvesting the castings.



Kindergartners spread their harvested worm castings in the school garden! The Kindergarten Service Learning Project is to feed and care for worms throughout the year and harvest worm castings to use to add nutrients to the school gardens.



John Bear Mitchell did a wonderful presentation for Kindergarten during this fall's Diversity week on Penonscot Nation's traditions.



Through the Peace Corps World-Wise program, Mrs. White's 3rd grade has been paired with a sister classroom in Ghana, South Africa. The teacher, Peace Corps volunteer Jennifer Doiron, visited OTES while back for the holidays to share her experience with us. She presented a video and slide show so we could get to know her students, and we sent her home to Ghana with letters and small gifts for her class. We look forward to hearing back from them soon!



### New Robots, New Fun!



### Global Read-Aloud

Mrs. White's 3rd grade classroom participated in the Global Read Aloud again this year, reading a common book and then corresponding about that book and learning about other cultures with classrooms all over the world.

This year, just like at our school, the theme was diversity. The book was: Stella Diaz Has Something to Say by Angela Dominguez. We sent and received letters from approximately 70 classrooms. Nearly all US states were represented, as well as few classrooms from Canada, Mexico, Guatemala, and Brazil.



### All Are Welcome!

With diversity being our focus this year at Old Town Elementary School, it became our school's mission to not only highlight diversity in our school, but also within our surrounding community. The idea was to not only showcase the beauty of all that is different, but also continue to foster an inclusive environment for our students and families. Inspiration came from our own student population, as well as children's books highlighting diversity. Soon the phrase, ALL ARE WELCOME was born.

These were not just words from a children's text, but words that inspired diversity week during the month of October. Soon the school counseling team began reaching out to connections within the school and local communities to find a way to showcase the various parts that made us a whole. This included reaching out to families of current and former students, students and

faculty at the University of Maine, as well as local businesses to sponsor a Diversity Night. As time progressed and October approached, presenters were scheduled and

what started as an idea, became reality.

Presentations were not only informative, but interactive and included cultural readings, music and dancing. Students were provided with visuals, and the opportunity to dig deeper into cultures unlike their own. In this process of exploring differences, one can also

understand the underlying similarities from culture to culture. Diversity night and cultural open house was an opportunity to bring multiple ideas and groups of people together. Food, music, games, dancing and socializing brought nearly 80-100 people together in the OTEC cafeteria. It was this evening that gave us all an opportunity to learn from each other and appreciate one another.



Kindergarteners are fortunate enough to be able to walk up to the UMaine Witter Farm every fall after studying about the farm. They love petting the cows!

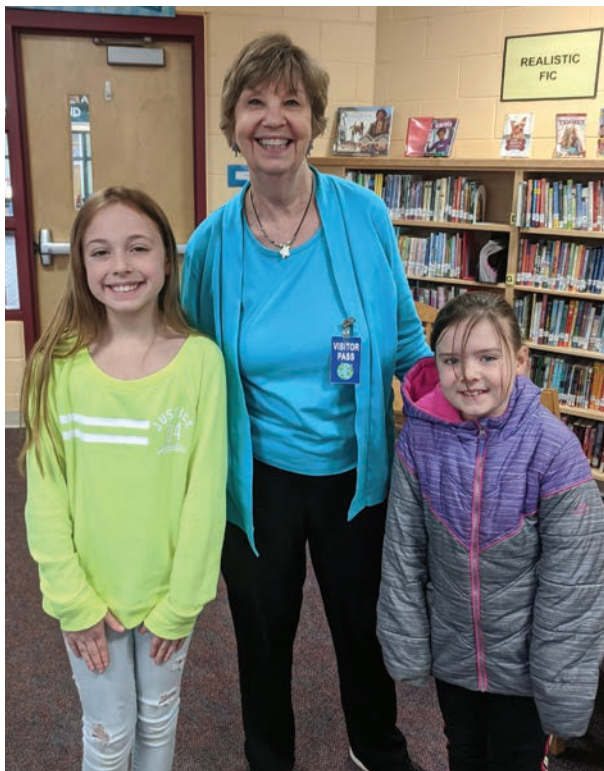


### AUTHORS ARE REAL!

Throughout the year, our Parent Teacher organization sponsors many great events for our students. On January 14, they provided the opportunity for students to meet two prolific Maine authors: Mary Cerullo and Anne Sibley O'Brien. Author visits provide students with insights into the lives of the authors, their passions, and the actual creation of their books. Meeting an author brings books and writing up close and personal. One student said, "Now we know she's real!"

Aspiring scientists enjoyed lunch with Mary Cerullo while Civil Rights Team members spoke with Anne Sibley O'Brien. Over 80 students were able to purchase books by the authors, and 20 lucky students won free books. All books were signed by the authors.

We hope students are inspired to record stories of their own lives, and be patient and creative with the process of writing. As O'Brien told students, "I have piles of papers with sketches I do not use in the final version of my books." Cerullo told students to have a catchy beginning sentence, such as, "Did you know the dolphin sleeps with one eye open?"



## Library Crew

Just ask any member of the OTES Library Crew, and they'll tell you that our library IS kind of a big deal. It's such a big deal that Library Crew members are willing to attend six weeks of after-school sessions and give up recess time in order to help our wonderful library.

Thirteen fifth graders have participated, and earned a 'Library Crew' T-shirt. They learn to shelve books and each student selects a

project that benefits students. Some students painted the large library window, others created a Japan display of books, bookmarks, or a library behavior incentive program. During our recent author visit, members assisted by delivering signed author books to students.

Fourth graders will be invited to participate in the spring session.

Yeah, our library is kind of a big deal!



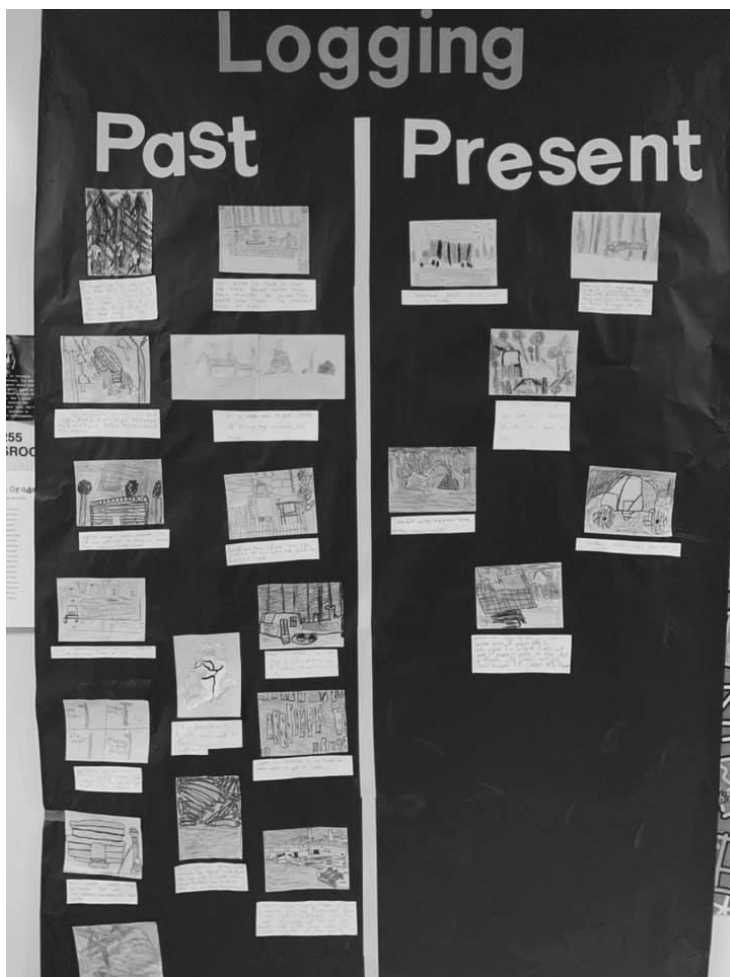
## 3rd Grade Loggers

3rd Graders learn about Logging and its important role in Old Town's history. Recently, Mrs. Sullivan's 3rd Graders were in the woods and decided to build a rollaway with brush they collected.

Loggers created rollaways by stacking logs beside streams in the winter, then pushing them into the water in the spring to start their journey down the river. Students tried to recreate the look of serious, hard-working loggers from the 1830's in this photo.

They also created a display to illustrate changes in the Logging industry from the 1830's to the present day. Mrs. Sullivan's students consider

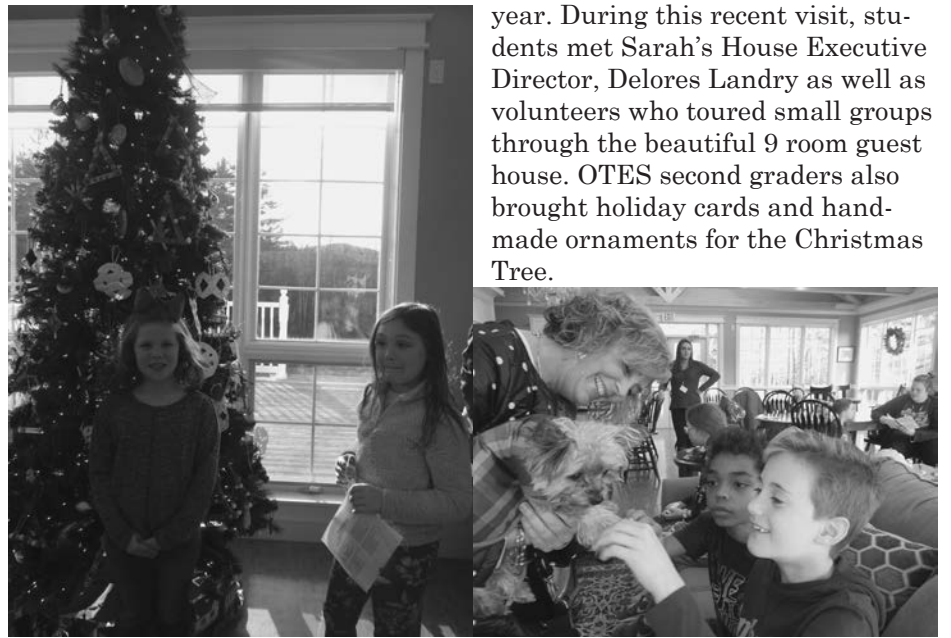
the outdoors an extension of their classroom and feel lucky to have such wonderful learning spaces surrounding OTES!



## Second Grade Sarah's House Service Learning

In December, Old Town Elementary Second Graders embarked on the 3rd year of Service Learning

with Sarah's House of Maine. Students will make two trips to Sarah's House during the school year. During this recent visit, students met Sarah's House Executive Director, Delores Landry as well as volunteers who toured small groups through the beautiful 9 room guest house. OTES second graders also brought holiday cards and handmade ornaments for the Christmas Tree.



## Veteran's Day Connections



3rd Graders in Mrs. Sullivan's 3rd Grade recognized Veterans Day by Face Timing with USMC Sergeant Tyler Byther. He is currently serving in Saudi Arabia and is Mrs. Sullivan's son! Sgt Byther answered questions about his service, his experiences at OTES, LMS, and OTHS, as well as the places he's traveled during his five years as a Marine. They also had speakers from the Air Force and the Coast Guard to celebrate Veterans Day.

## Alum Returns as a Growth Mindset Mentor

CJ Moody attended OTES and graduated from OTHS in 2015. In May, he will graduate from the University of Southern Maine with a degree in Nursing. CJ went to USM to play soccer but decided to focus on track and field, specifically the decathlon, during his sophomore year. When CJ was 21, he was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes, which came as a complete surprise to him given his healthy lifestyle. Recently CJ returned to OTES to speak

to Mrs. Sullivan's 3rd Graders about the importance of maintaining a Growth Mindset after his diagnosis. He talked about his treatment, his commitment to mindfulness, and the rewards of working hard. Last spring, CJ, an All-American athlete, placed nationally as a decathlete at the NCAA Division 3 National Meet. CJ is a Growth Mindset Hero, a positive role model, and a RSU 34 alumnus that makes our community proud!



# ALTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Cheryl Leonard, Principal  
394-2331



As part of their Diversity of Living Things Unit in Science, 1st & 2nd Grade students explore animal tracks and set up their own scent station with a trail camera to capture photos of local wildlife.



First and second graders made posters with facts about diverse living environments and animals gathered from our research project on the desert and rainforest. Students used online resources and books from our school and classroom libraries to complete this project.



OTHS STEM Leaders students taught Alton students to use telescopes!

## Community Helpers

1st and 2nd Grade are learning about community helpers and how to help the community! Students started their service learning project this year during Fire Prevention Week by making a fire safety poster for our AES lobby. We then learned about people in our community who have jobs that contribute to the greater good. Our project



was to help the Old Town Animal Shelter and Bangor Humane Society. We made cat and dogs toys and treats. Finally, we took a field trip to the Old Town Animal Shelter and Old Town Fire and Police Department. We also had a visitor from Bangor Humane Society bring special guests.



In November the Kindergarten class celebrated a month long unit on Families. We painted pictures of our families, made family trees, graphed our family members, and created a class family book. Our big event was a family breakfast where each student had their family come in and enjoy a big breakfast together. We ate and shared family stories. It was a great time!

## Pumpkin Catapults!

PreK used pumpkin catapults with Mrs. Daniel this fall. Miss Moody and Ms. Lees made larger ones (with big popsicle sticks) and Mrs. Daniel made smaller ones. The class hypothesized which catapults would launch the candy pumpkins the furthest (most students said the big ones). The students broke off into small groups and tried out one size catapult first and switched halfway to test the other size. After they all had a chance with each size catapult, we gathered around to try out each size as a group.

We launched pumpkins with the small catapult first - three times to collect data. It made it all the way to the end of our line! We then used the larger catapult - 3 tries here too! We quickly realized our pumpkins were not launching nearly as far. By the end of testing, we all voted again, with almost everyone determining that it was actually the catapult made with smaller sticks that launched our pumpkins the farthest! What a fun way to wrap up learning about pumpkins and force and motion!



Sometimes you get the paint, sometimes the paint gets you! Mrs. Wilcox shows off the latest fashion in teacher-wear.



# VIOLA RAND SCHOOL, BRADLEY

Cheryl Leonard, Principal  
827-2508



## Falling into Pre-K

By Marion Talon  
A collection of photos to show how the four year old children in our community fell into Pre-K with style. Many activities were shared

and loved by all; sink and float of pumpkins and other items (science), making a spider web (team work building), making a spider (math and fine motor skills-counting 8

legs), learning and performing the play of Five Little Pumpkins (language skills) and of course we can't forget the Turkey Trot with Mrs.

Gifford to keep our bodies healthy. So many things to do and so little time. Falling into Pre-K is so much fun!



## A fun-and tasty-fall field trip to Treworgy Orchards!





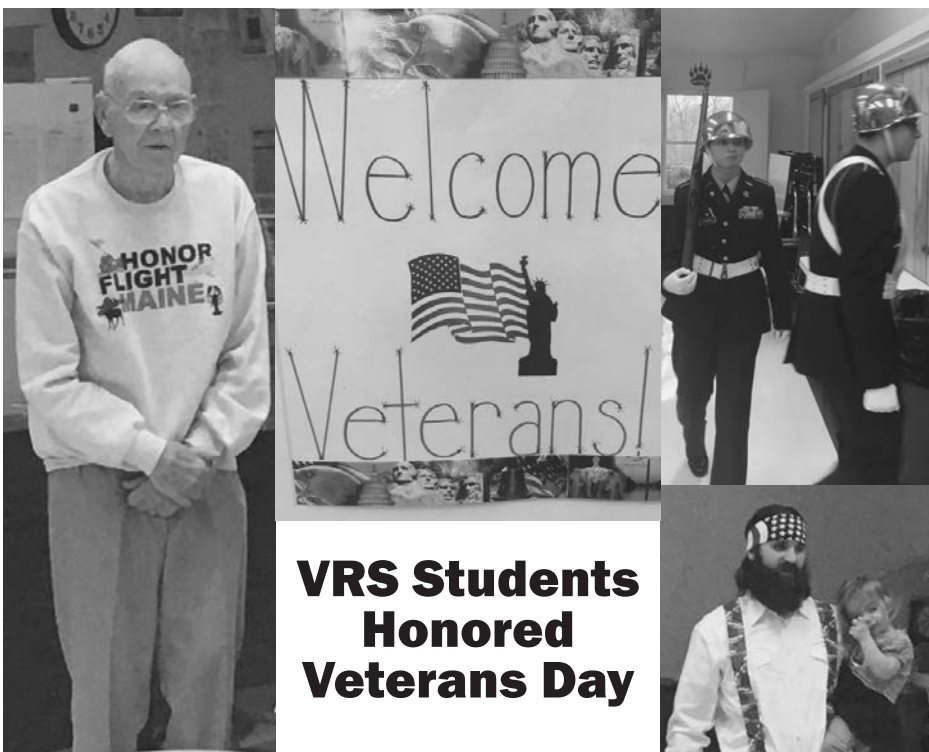
The VRS 1st Grade Cooking Club had a great time with Chef Josh making dehydrated fruit! Pineapple was the biggest hit.



Not to be outdone by the first graders, the kindergartners cut up fresh apples to make homemade applesauce.



Male Athletes Against Violence visited to talk and read with the students.



**VRS Students Honored Veterans Day**



**The VRS Winter Concert was a hit!**



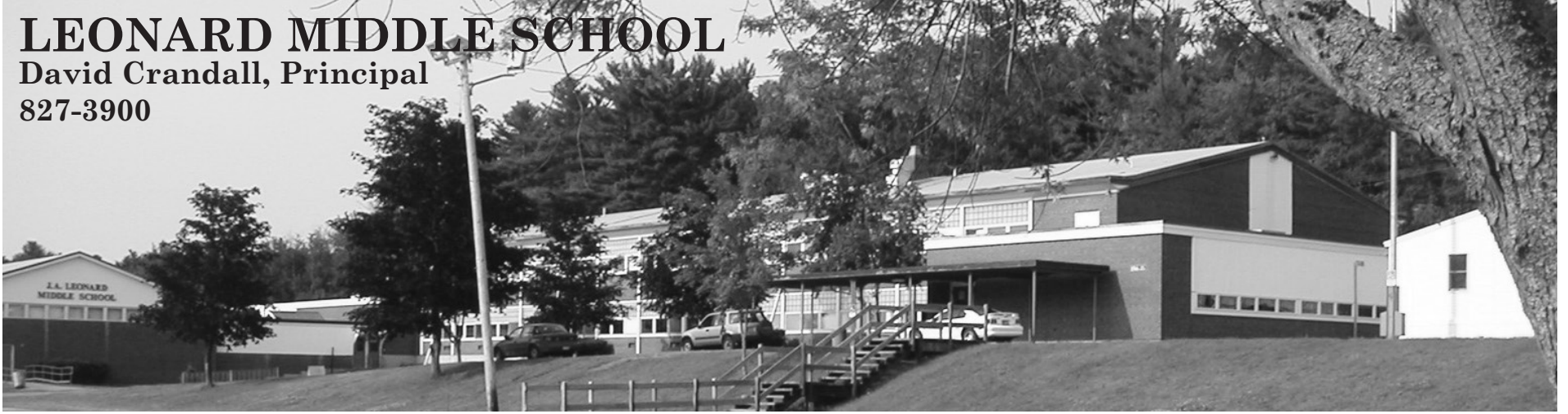
It's not every day you get to spend snack time watching a Maine astronaut make history! Mrs. Gasaway's first graders asked #askNASA what happens if an astronaut drops a bolt during a spacewalk, and how they sleep on the space station.



# LEONARD MIDDLE SCHOOL

David Crandall, Principal

827-3900



In December LMS Team Pamola visited the traveling Holocaust Human Rights Center and the Statehouse.



Our 6th graders played human chess with Ms. Whedon and Mr. Kirkland during one of the Friday electives.



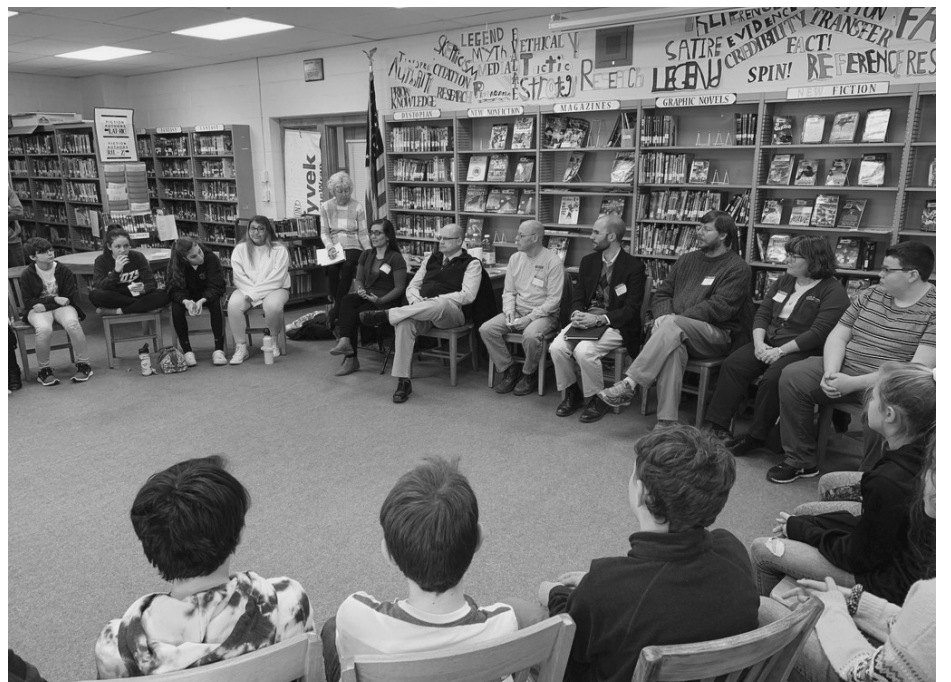
8th Grade musicians performed at Dirigo Pines at Christmas time.



Congratulations to the following LMS musicians who had a great month of December. We'd like to thank these students for their hard work, leadership, improvement, and musical talents. 8th Grade: Sidney Staples, Clive Haverkamp 7th Grade: Mikayla Johnston, Cameron Rackliffe 6th Grade: Maya Boyington, Cooper Neely



LMS engineers design a working spinner, using the pen as a conductor.



Leonard Middle School is proud to participate in Operation Breaking Stereotypes with Orono Middle School and Indian Island School. Here, the members from each school talk with community leaders.



LMS Monthly Assembly Winners

### Celebration Assemblies

We've established a new tradition at Leonard Middle School this year.

learning and the good of the school community. We also recognize our Students of the Month, who are chosen for an exceptional month. In addition to their picture and a description in the Penobscot Times, they also earn a hoodie designed only for them. If you see a student wearing a black hoodie with "Coyote Pride" printed on the back, feel free to offer your congratulations.



A portion of each assembly is dedicated to celebrating the learning at LMS. It might include a presentation by a team, an essay written and read by a student, or a slideshow representing the month's work all around the school.

Every month for 30-40 minutes, we have a Celebration Assembly to build our school community and recognize the exceptional work of our teachers and students.

Our assemblies are rounded out with some fun community-building activities. In our "Minute to Win It", student and/or teacher representatives from each team compete in a

Our monthly assemblies include a message from Mr. Crandall and Dr. Nesin about good news from the school, and something we would like to improve on in the coming month. For example, we have talked about improving our Habits of Mind and Citizenship and about adding privileges for our "Do the Right Thing" students.



Speaking of "Do the Right Thing", these are students chosen monthly because they consistently set a high standard for work, learning, and citizenship. Each homeroom teacher chooses up to two students each month. Those students are called up at the assembly and get a coyote paw pin. We draw two from each grade level to also receive a Dairy Queen gift card. We are very proud of these students and their choices every day to commit to their own

short game led by Mr. Grinnell. Ms. Dickinson leads the whole school in a movement break challenge. And each month we end with a line dance the students have learned during the month. So far we have done the Cha Cha Slide, Cupid Shuffle, Cotton-Eyed Joe, Twist, and Macarena. What dance will be next? Our "Do the Right Thing" students will decide.



The LMS Chorus performed its winter concert at Minsky Hall, accompanied by ukelele.



Ian Dutra and Jeremiah Graves are learning how to repair 3D printers in STEM class!



6th-grade snail team students have been working diligently on researching, designing, building and testing an insulating device out of around the room items. Their class challenge was to create the device that lost the least amount of heat!



Do you want to build a snowman? Our 8th graders spent their recess building this one!



Not to be outdone...



Some LMS 8th Graders post writing goals in their lockers...others manage to write while hula hooping!



Just Monkeying Around



LMS Boys Basketball



## RSU #34 & Riverside Adult Education

<https://www.rsu34.org/adult-education-18>

RSU #34 partners with several neighboring school districts to offer a comprehensive Adult Education program. Programming includes academic classes, the HiSET diploma program, a College Transitions program, Accuplacer prep and testing, and enrichment classes. Our Riverside Adult Ed Partnership is directed by Rebecca Cross, ([rcross@rsu26.org](mailto:rcross@rsu26.org)). Our local site coordinator is Sue St. Louis at Old Town High School ([Sue.StLouis@rsu34.org](mailto:Sue.StLouis@rsu34.org) or 827-3906).

**College Transitions** Our College Transitions program is designed to help students successfully prepare for and navigate college. Contact us if you would like to discuss College Transitions services such as career path advising, college readiness courses, Accuplacer prep and testing, or college application assistance. We may also provide Algebra, Biology, or Writing for College courses.

**Winter / Spring Academic Classes** Contact us for academic classes, such as English, Learning Lab, Math Lab, HiSET Prep and Testing, or Social Studies. Classes are offered at three local high schools. Please contact us for a schedule.

**Winter/Spring Classes in Health / Wellness / Fitness:** DanceFit-Fam, Heart Rhythm Meditation, Seasonal Affective Disorder (Is it really a thing?), Gentle Yoga, Steel Mace Flow Fitness, Square Dancing Basics, Strong, Winter Walking Club, PiYo Live, HA Fitness Center, Yoga, Meditation, Hospice Training, Basic First Aid, CPR

**Winter/Spring General Enrichment Classes:** Financial Aid Essentials, Creating a Resume That Gets You Hired, History of the Holocaust, Canine Ownership / Obedience Training, Introduction to Fly Fishing, Save Energy / Save Money / Help the Environment, Basic Fly Casting, PetTech Pet First Aid and

CPR Course, Hobby Farming, Legalized Marijuana (What does that mean for our kids? Informational Presentation), Grant Writing 101, Native Plants for the Home Landscape, History of Hampden Mines, Managing Your Woodlot for Wildlife, American Sign Language

**Winter/Spring Cooking, Baking, & Food Preparation Classes:** Cooking Healthy Vegetarian Indian Food, Culinary Knife Skills 101, Preserving Herbs, Kids in the Kitchen (Pizza, Pizza, Pizza!), Chinese Cooking, Dining on a Budget, Delectable Doggie Treats

**Winter/Spring Technology Classes:** Introduction to G Suite

(Google Apps for Everyday Use), How to Get the Most Out of the Internet (A Guide)

**Winter / Spring Arts & Crafts Classes:** Quilting, Snowman Paint Night, Misty Island Paint Night, Introduction to Digital Photography (Designed for the Beginning Digital Photographer), Beginning / Intermediate Color with Watercolor, DIY Maine Pack Basket (Backpack Style), Character Design for Cartooning and Illustrating, Applique Class, Primitive Rug Hooking, Intro to Clay Handbuilding, Parent & Child Valentine's Craft, Still Life Painting (Skulls & Flowers), Bath Bombs, Resin Jewelry

Please contact us for more information or to enroll for classes!



**The RSU 34 Education Foundation solicits nominations for  
The OTHS Athletic Hall of Fame**  
(contact [Scott.Gordon@rsu34.org](mailto:Scott.Gordon@rsu34.org) for a nomination form)  
**and**  
**The OTHS Achievement Hall of Fame**  
(contact [Jeanna.Tuell@rsu34.org](mailto:Jeanna.Tuell@rsu34.org) for a nomination form)



VRS Students Put a Winter Spin on their Learning by Experimenting with Hot Cocoa Recipes and Making Gingerbread!



### In A World Where You Can Be Anything, Be Kind

The RSU #34 school counselors work diligently to not only provide individual and group supports for their students, but also implement classroom curricula and conduct regular staff trainings, including Child Sexual Abuse Prevention and Suicide Prevention.

Thanks to our dedicated school

counseling team!

Alton Elementary: Trysha Lunn  
Viola Rand School: Trysha Lunn  
Old Town Elementary: Vicki Wilcox and Trysha Lunn  
Leonard Middle School: Tracey O'Connell  
Old Town High School: Kim Ketch and Jami Martell

### Thank You For Your Service!

In December, long time School Board member Donna Conary of Old Town made the motion to adjourn the meeting for the last time after 20+ years of dedicated service to the RSU #34 community. Mrs. Conary was recognized by the Board for her dedicated service.

