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Community Connections

RSU 34
Alton • Bradley • Old Town

FEB 2023



Spirit & Heart



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2023-24 BUDGET - PG 2

Superintendent Matt Cyr: 2023-24 a challenging budget year

As you know, RSU #34 operates a comprehensive program to be proud of in our five schools. We provide our students and teachers with reasonable class sizes in which high-impact strategies can be used and in which kids get individual attention. We have a diverse set of electives, specials, and Unified Arts classes such as art, music, physical education, health, STEM, and World Languages/Cultures. Our students with different temporary or long-term needs are served well by academic interventions and extensions/enrichment. Our efforts are supplemented by an extensive co-curricular and extra-curricular program with a great history of results, such as our bands, competitive robotics teams, musical/theater performances, and athletics.



Matt Cyr

We are now rolling up our sleeves and digging into budget development for the 2023-2024 school year (Fiscal Year 24, or "FY24"). As I describe below, this will be

ED279 Subsidy Report for 2023 - 2024

Maine public schools recently received ED279 subsidy reports for the 2023-2024 fiscal year (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024). These numbers are based on the \$1.37 billion in General Purpose Aid funding recommended by Governor Janet Mills in her biennial budget.

As expected, our decline in student enrollment and the shift to pre-COVID staffing ratios negatively impacted our funding for the next school year. In addition, the shift to pre-COVID weighting and an 11% decrease in our documented number of economically disadvantaged pupils resulted in a loss of more than \$350,000 in state funding (these are the forms we diligently try to have all families complete at the start of every school year).

There were adjustments made to teacher salary and benefit allocations within the EPS formula that helped all schools in Maine. Unfortunately, these positive changes were not enough to offset our district demographics (enrollment decline and drop in reportable disadvantaged students).

This translates to a \$254,025.20 reduction in state funding when comparing next year's budget to that of the current.

Property Valuations & Mil Expectations

Part of our funding formula takes into account the three-year average of State Valuation for each of our communities (Alton, Bradley, and Old Town). As one would expect, a booming real estate market increases the value of property—this has happened in most, if not all, communities in Maine.

Valuations for Alton, Bradley, and Old Town all increased significantly. The collective increase in property values of cities/towns that make up a school district tells the State that the cities/towns can afford to pay for a greater portion of their education costs.

A key multiplier in this formula is the State mil

rate. As we look to next year, the State mil expectation will increase by 0.19. For RSU #34, this will result in a 2.51% shift of responsibility from the State to local tax payers in Alton, Bradley, and Old Town (due to changes in the mil rate & valuations).

This means that even before we begin working on the school budget, taxpayers of Alton, Bradley, and Old Town will be expected to shoulder a greater portion of the total cost of education as required by the Essential Programs and Services (EPS) funding formula.

(We know locally, of course, that unless you sell your house, increased valuation doesn't help you pay your taxes.)

a challenging budget year, but our team is confident that our staff and community will continue to work together to find efficiencies, enact creative ideas, and contribute the resources to continue providing all of our students, PK-12, with great opportunity.

* * *

We began engaging our community stakeholders much earlier in the budget process this year, as we (correctly) anticipated that a "perfect storm" of factors would negatively impact the amount we receive in state subsidy and in allocated federal funds.

In brief, lower birth rates have caused an enrollment decline at the elementary level, our documented number of economically disadvantaged students has declined, the state is removing several COVID-era adjustments that positively benefited our funding, and the COVID-era federal funds are soon to end.

These challenges are felt statewide, not just by RSU #34. All-told, our state subsidy will be at least \$254,000 less next school year than this year, with other financial pressures increasing.

We know that our community sees those same financial pressures at home, with rising costs for energy, food, and much more.

* * *

This fall's efforts included surveys and visits to parent-teacher groups to identify the needs and interests of our community. We worked with our team of educators to identify what student needs are well-met, and where we need to re-direct efforts. We initiated a Long-Range Facilities Advisory Group, with invited members representing each municipality, that looked at enrollment trends, regional housing projects, and facility audits in an attempt to identify district programming efficiencies. Assistant Superintendent Doty and I used this information to share a draft proposal of a possible redistricting approach

aimed at addressing most of our identified needs and interests. We then led several workshops and public forums providing time and opportunity for stakeholder feedback.

We appreciate those who provided us with feedback and engaged in the discussion! Based on the feedback we

Important to note

The current fiscal year marks our final debt service payment for the Old Town Elementary School construction project. This can be deceiving when looking at the bottom line of next year's operating budget as it gives the appearance of a budget reduction—in this case a little more than \$400,000. In reality, it is a 'pass-through' model (money in, money out) since the state makes that payment. Keep this in mind when we review warrant articles at the public budget meeting this spring.

On a related note, this does bring some good news for the City of Old Town. When we became an RSU, Old Town maintained the local-additional share of the cost for the OTEES project. That additional payment is soon to go away.

generated seven models that furthered the discussion about the student and financial needs of the entire district while supporting the interests of varied stakeholders.

Some of those approaches suggested to us, for example, include scaling back some or all of our federally funded positions over the next two years, and others suggest we approach district structuring that reflects our elementary setup prior to the pandemic. In February we began a series of School Board budget workshops and Board meetings that will extend through the spring, working together to synthesize the needs and interests into a cohesive program and responsible budget.

What does this mean?

A budget with a \$254,025.20 funding shortfall as its starting point presents a major challenge.

We must also consider rising utility/transportation costs, contracted salary / benefit adjustments for employees, and several soon-to-expire grant funded programs that have become cornerstones for our students and communities (School-Community Coordinator, River Runners, Coyote Co-Op).

We must also be mindful of how we will navigate roughly \$750,000 in positions that are paid for by federal COVID grant funds which expire in 1.5 years.

The RSU #34 School Board and leadership team are committed to building a budget for next year that will address the

"The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new."
—Socrates

RSU 34 COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

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

Matthew D. Cyr, Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Jon Doty, Assistant Superintendent of Schools

David C. Wollstadt (www.schoolnewsletters.net), Editor

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. Cover design by Corina Larsen.

Coyote Girls Basketball Team undefeated, ranked No. 1

By Jeremy Bousquet
 Director of Athletics/
 Assistant Principal
 Old Town High School

Moving into a season the hope is always high for the success of a program. As a lifelong NY Giants fan, I know this well as every October I imagine celebrating in February another Super Bowl Championship!

This year was different for the 2022-2023 Girl's Basketball Team, as we knew they had unfinished business from last year's end to the season.

The team started very strong with a tough beginning of the schedule and never looked back. The coaching staff of Heather Richards, Courtney Lanham, and the legendary Dana Maxim have focused the girls on the simple task of playing for themselves and playing for each other, and working hard every day. These girls are special, they are motivated, and they are a family that has been playing together for years.

On February 7th at a game hosted in Orono, the OTHS Girl's Basketball team joined only one other team in OTHS girls' basketball history to have an undefeated regular season. The girls went 18-0 in the Class B North season, the second team behind the 1979 Girl's Basketball team to achieve this accomplishment.

The Coyotes will now enter the MPA Northern Regional Championship tournament ranked #1 and will hopefully represent the Class B North in the State Championship game.

You can see the Coyotes in action on Saturday, February 18th at 10:30 a.m. at the Cross Center in Bangor as they work toward the goals of the season.



Front row (l. to r.): Makayla Emerson, Alexis Degrasse, Taylor Loring, Karina Dumond, Taylor Madden, and Elizabeth Magoon.
 Second row: Haylie Madden, Sage Evans, Gabb Cody, and Izabella Damboise, Third row: Mallory Willey and Abigail Swedberg, managers.



1979 Old Town Girls Basketball Team, which was undefeated. First row: T. Miller and A. Marquis, managers.
 Second row, from left: L. Roy, G. Randall, L. Bresnahan, C. St. Thomas, K. Baillargeon, D. Perkins, L. Morgan, T. Cavanaugh, C. Taylor, V. LaPlante, K. O'Connor, T. Higgins, and A. Michaud

concerns outlined above while also anticipating needs and interests of tomorrow. We will focus our collective energies to responsibly provide programs and services, and continue to strive for excellence.

Budget Schedule

At our February 15 School Board meeting, we are scheduled to set additional budget workshop dates for March and April (if needed).

Work on the FY24 budget will continue during these budget workshops along with regular scheduled Board meetings. During the May 17 School Board meeting the RSU #34 Board will vote to adopt a budget. On May 31, RSU #34 will host a public 'Budget Meeting' where citizens of our communities are presented with and vote on the budget by individual warrant article. On June 13, 2023, Alton, Bradley and Old Town will run the Budget Validation Referendum.

We encourage RSU #34 citizens to be engaged early in the process; we post the dates and locations for each School Board meeting and budget workshop at RSU34.org.

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OLD TOWN HIGH SCHOOL
Scott Gordon, Principal, 827-3910

OTHS media program rebuilding, now offers Digital Media, Photography, Video Production, Filmmaking classes

By Vasia Markides
Digital Media Teacher

In 2021, the Old Town High School media program was revived after several years in hibernation.

Students at OTHS now have the opportunity to take Digital Media, Photography and Video Production/Filmmaking classes. These classes will equip them with the tools needed to creatively express themselves through images, video, sound and other digital formats.

These skills can prove useful in many professional areas, and can offer them many income opportunities.

* * *

In video production, students have been learning to write their own short film scripts, to storyboard their ideas from start to finish, and to film and edit their own short films using cameras, audio recorders, and Premiere Pro editing software.

Digital Media students have made their own podcasts using professional recording equipment and Adobe Premiere Pro editing software.

In Photography, students have been learning about photo composition, how to operate DSLR cameras and how to edit their pictures to create imaginative worlds in Photoshop. They have taken studio portraits using three-point lighting, learned to set up their own commercial photoshoots using a light box, and have loved acting as photojournalists around the school, capturing the action taking place in different classrooms and administrative offices.

* * *

The best thing about the media lab and all the classes OTHS has available are the strong bonds that form in the classroom. Friendships and creative partnerships emerge, which can last a lifetime. Students learn to be self-directed, how to troubleshoot and problem-solve together, and how to work collaboratively, a skill that will serve them well in life.

There is a lot of talent amongst the students at our school, and I hope that as the program continues to grow, we will see that talent blossom and magnify.

Some examples of student work can be seen on this page.



Christmas card photo collaboration by (left to right) Top row: Benjamin Roby, Lily Young, Grace Willey; Bottom row: Kendall Dyer, Taylor Dow



Photo by Cadence Chase (Photojournalism assignment)



Photo by Nikolas Harvey (Abstract Photography)



Photo by Zander Dana



Photo by Ash Napoli



Photo by Chase Dodge

OTHS Library holds first juried art contest to display student paintings

The Old Town High School Library held its inaugural juried art contest to display a student painting in the library for the 2022-2023 school year.

The theme for the contest was books and reading and we had eight very creative students enter their paintings:

They were:

- Hailey Bard, *Wonder*
- Isabella Bouchard, *Another World*
- Gabe Curtis, *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe*
- Kaden Gray, *Bloody Cave*
- Martie LeClair, *Percy Jackson*
- Amaya McCue, *Gowther*
- Clay Slauenwhite, *Anemone's Power*
- Joshua Smart, *Moon Walk*

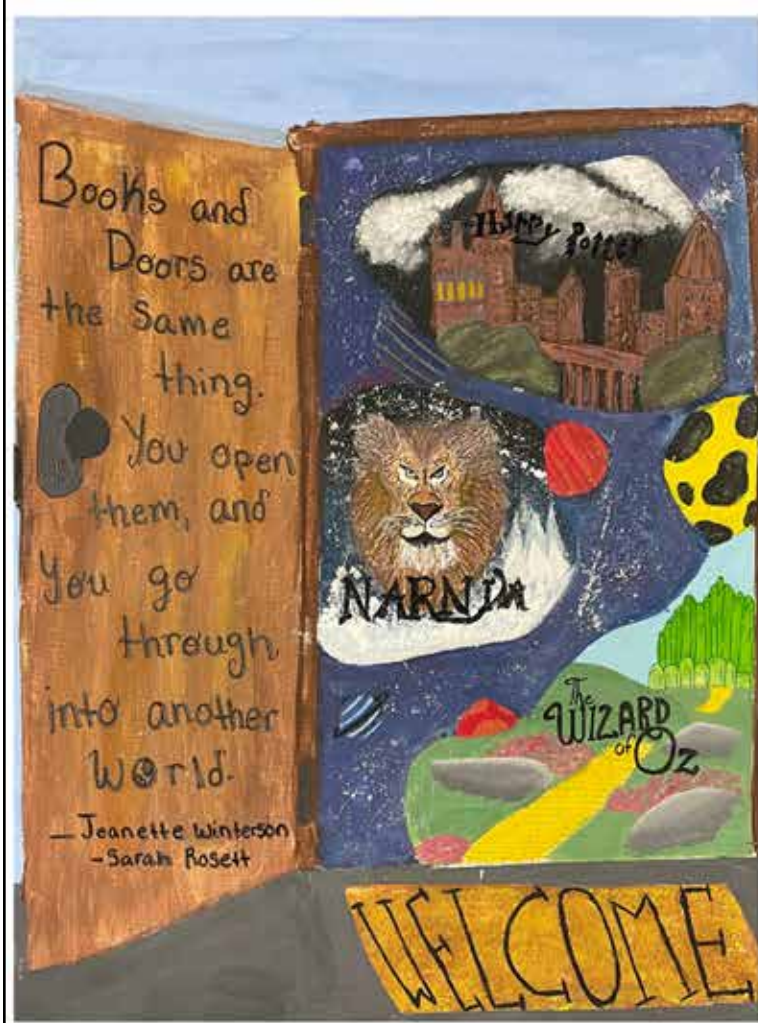
The jury was composed of six teachers—Krista Culina, Natalie Davis, Brenda Gardner, Courtney Thompson, Megan Woodard, and Dakota Wright. They deliberated and rated each painting based on three criteria:

- Representation of theme
- Creativity
- Presentation

The judges had a very difficult time choosing a winner from all the amazing entries, but after careful consideration, they chose Isabella Bouchard's painting, *Another World*, as the winner.

The judges were impressed with her creativity and how she incorporated different books with the quote as well as her attention to details.

Isabella's painting will be displayed prominently in the library for the entire school year.



Another World
by Isabella Bouchard



Wonder
by Hailey Bard



Percy Jackson
by Martie LeClair



Moon Walk
by Joshua Smart



The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe
by Gabe Curtis



Gowther
by Amaya McCue



Bloody Cave
by Kaden Gray



Anemone's Power
by Clay Slauenwhite

Fund-raising underway for OTHS Class of 23 Project Graduation

The seniors of 2023 and their parents have been busy with fund-raising activities to provide a safe and fun graduation celebration experience for the students.

Some of the activities have included a bake sale, two bottle drives, a candle sale, scratch off ticket frames, and a holiday night at Hamel Lane.

An ongoing event has been an IGA \$500.00 or 5 minute shopping spree that was drawn on February 1. The tickets were \$10.00 each.

A bottle drive is being held at Mahan's Redemption Center, where you can drop bottles off at any time throughout the school year. There are sure to be many more activities to come in the near future; please keep an ear out to hear what we are up to.

* * *

We have made some organization changes and are excited for our new partnership with RSU #34 Educa-

tion Foundation. We are now in a position to ensure long term success and sustainability of Project Graduation for years to come. The funds raised will go towards the celebration following graduation on June 9th.

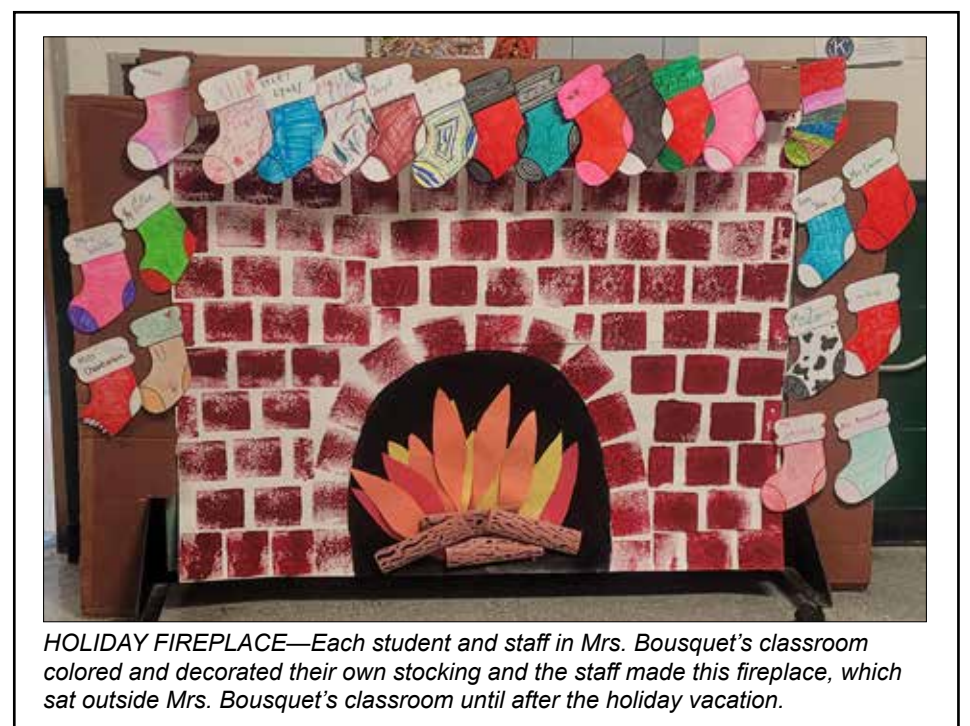
This year our students will be celebrating at the University of Maine Campus Rec building, with all sports activities included. There will be a photo booth, food trucks, and other fun activities for the students to participate in, with the possibilities of laser tag and a dance. The plans are still in the works with more to come. Prizes and gifts for our seniors will be part of the celebration.

If anyone in the community would like to donate to the Senior Class of 2023 please reach out to the co-chairs above or send your donation to Old Town High School Project Graduation, Attn. Terri Brown and Lynda Ellis, Old Town

Elementary School, 576 Stillwater Ave., Old Town, ME 04468.

We sincerely thank all who have

helped us in our fundraising efforts thus far. It truly will be a great night for our kids.



HOLIDAY FIREPLACE—Each student and staff in Mrs. Bousquet's classroom colored and decorated their own stocking and the staff made this fireplace, which sat outside Mrs. Bousquet's classroom until after the holiday vacation.



NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY at Old Town High School—Front row (l. to r.): Katelyn Young, Noah Nickerson, Charlotte Smallwood, Emma Sirois, Norah Sanborn, Allison Bond, Cadence Freeman, Alexis DeGrasse, Makayla Emerson, and Superintendent Matt Cyr. Second row: Principal Scott Gordon, Zoe Yerxa, Grace Willey, Anna Roach,

Gabrielle Cody, Olivia Neely, Abigail Talon, Isabella Bouchard, Keeara Dutton, and Keegan Plourde. Back row: Saige Evans, Olivia Small, Cassidy Rackliffe, Caleb Thacker, Eva Holt, Myah Worster, Patrick Sylantys, Kayleigh Johnston, Gabriel Gifford, Livia Lynch, Izabella Damboise, Haylie Madden, and Avery Redding.

National Honor Society inducts 18 new members at OTHS

By Olivia Small

President, NHS, OTHS, 2022-23

On November 9, 2022, 18 new members were inducted into Old Town High School's National Honor Society.

NHS is proud to have accepted these new

members into our chapter of excellence that we represent for our school and community.

The pillars that hold up the organization and determine membership are scholarship, service, leadership, and character.

The guest speaker for the event was Superin-

tendent Mr. Cyr. He spoke on the importance of being a good role model to those around you.

We would like to congratulate the new inductees on becoming members of the National Honor Society!

Coyote Theater fills seats for 3 days of 'A Christmas Carol'

By Eric Dewley
English Teacher, OTHS

Coyote Theater was at it again!

In November, Coyote Theater put on its second annual fall production! There was great success, and community support over the three days of plays!

The seats were full all three days of the performances of *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens (adapted for the stage by Ed Monk). They hope that their play was able to invoke the holiday spirit in our community as we all kicked off the holiday season before Thanksgiving break.

Our theater troupe worked extremely hard through the months of September, October, and November.

Many late practices and tech projects kept them all busy as they moved closer and closer to opening night. The air was electric with the anticipatory energy of our young actors and technicians on opening night.

They were able to carry that energy over through the course of the production weekend. Each performance was better than the last. It is amazing to see what our theater troupe has been able to achieve this year and last.

Coyote Theater will be back to work soon as they prepare for the regional one act competition in March of 2023, so wish them luck! They plan on bringing the first-place prize back to Old Town High School.

Coyote Theater will also produce a musical this spring for the community to view. Please



come out to see them in the spring and to support the performing arts in our RSU#34 community. Coyote Theater would like to wish you all a

wonderful new year and to extend a heart felt thank you to all that have come to see them perform!



AP Prep students designed their own small hallway to display their, "When Eye Reflect" series.



OTHS Art students work hard to fill hallways with drawings, paintings

By Courtney Thompson
OTHS Art Teacher

OTHS Art Students have been working really hard this year to create art exhibits for the school hallways.

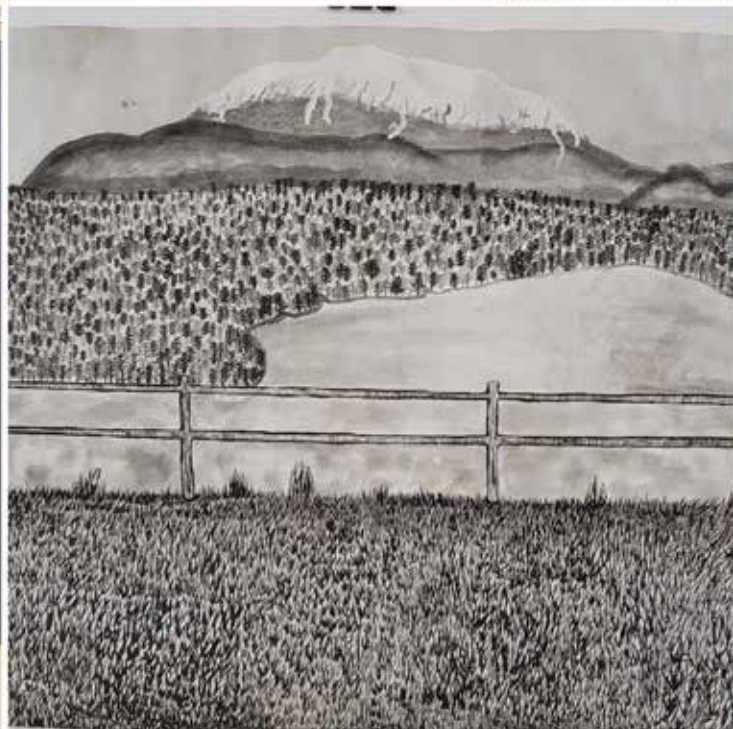
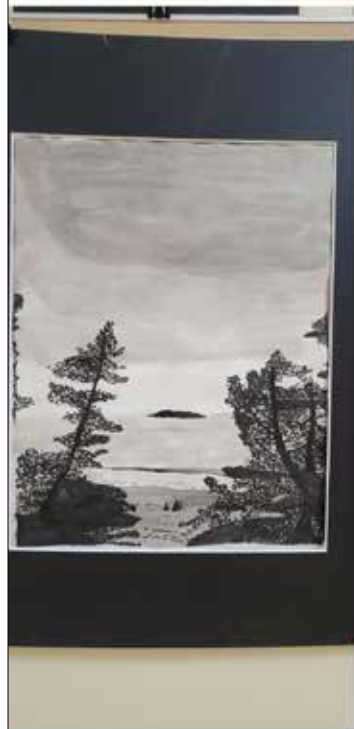
After creating their "M.C. Escher Inspired Portraits", Studio Art put their charcoal drawing skills to the test in a large scale eye portrait for their "Our Eyes are a Window Series".

AP Prep students are learning to take part in studio exhibition. They designed their own small hallway display of their "When Eye Reflect" series.

To further explore the process of curating, we took an annual trip to the Zillman Art Museum. While at the museum we took notes and are working on our version of one of the museum displays titled Flock Together. In the museum's Flock Together exhibition, we got to see a famous painting from the famous artist, Pablo Picasso, and many other local and internationally renowned artists. The hyper realistic eye is a graphite drawing by one of OTHS's aspiring AP Prep artists.

In the process of beautifying our school hallways, Painting Techniques explored a personal landscape or place of value in their "Value in The Landscape" series.

We studied the history of Chinese Landscape, specifically the art of the Literati painters. We used



traditional India Ink and used our photography skills to capture black and white photos to use as refer-

ence.

Many of the landscapes students chose to represent were local scenes.

Do you recognize what mountain many students depicted in their value landscapes?





JROTC Cadets host 3rd Annual Mogadishu Mile

By Andrew Koch

Old Town High School JROTC Cadets hosted the 3rd Annual Mogadishu Mile on October 3, 2022. This is a fitness challenge commemorating the 29th anniversary of Operation Gothic Serpent and the 19 service members who had lost their lives that day and raise awareness of the sacrifice made.

Since the event's inception three years ago, the Mogadishu Mile has continued to grow, doubling in size this year with 34 participants.

This was the first year that the event was open to participants outside of the Coyote Battalion. Participants

included faculty and student body members of OTHS as well as JROTC Cadets from Bangor High School and Army ROTC Cadets from the University of Maine.

This year's Mogadishu Mile started at 6:30 a.m. at Victory Field. The challenge consisted of a one mile walk/run, a series of calisthenics,



followed by another one mile run/walk. The walk/run and calisthenics were done while carrying a 20-30 pound pack.

The Mogadishu Mile is an optional event for Old Town JROTC Cadets, with uniform ribbons for those completing the challenge in under 80 minutes and medals

awarded to the top finishers.

It was an extraordinary effort by all who accepted the challenge.

The top male finishers were:

1. Daniel Desmond, OTHS JROTC, Class of 2023.
2. Colby Hatch, OTHS JROTC, Class of 2023.
3. Garret Engstrom, UMaine

Army ROTC, OTHS Class of 2021.

The top female finishers were:

1. Kristina Littlehales, UMaine Army ROTC.
2. Kerry Lefebvre, UMaine Army ROTC.
3. Eva Coombs, Bangor High School JROTC.

Kevin Murray named Cadet of the Month for October, Keeara Dutton for November

By Cadet Cadence Freeman
OTHS Grade 11

Last spring the Cadets of the Coyote Battalion started to develop a Cadet of the Month program to recognize individuals who contribute positively to the battalion and their school community. It has taken a while to get it off the ground, but they have finally got the program rolling. The monthly board is a "paper" board, Cadets are nominated by their peers and scored on a rubric.

At the end of each semester the monthly recipients will appear in person to compete for Cadet of the Semester and eventually Cadet of the year. In addition to earning an award to wear on their uniform, they will also receive a gift card.

* * *

Kevin Murray, Class of 2025, is the Cadet of the Month for October.

Kevin is an active member of the Drill, Marksmanship, and Raiders teams. He is always willing to step up and do whatever is asked of him



Kevin Murray

to make the team successful. He finished third in the Individual Drill Review during the October 26th drill competition. He also was the



Keeara Dutton

commander of the First Place Color Guard team at the final drill competition. Kevin is also a representative on the Student Council.

* * *

Keeara Dutton, Class of 2023, is the Cadet of the Month for November.

As the Battalion Commander she is responsible for all things JROTC. During her short tenure as Commander, the battalion has seen an increase in extracurricular activity participation, including a 50% increase in Drill Team members and a doubling of the participants in the Mogadishu Mile.

Keeara is involved in our Drill, Marksmanship, and Raiders teams. In addition to her JROTC activities, she is the Student Council Vice President and a member of the National Honor Society.

She is one of three Cadets who recently earned the National Fitness Award for scoring in the 50th percentile or higher during the Cadet Challenge Fitness Assessment.

Additionally, she is a Junior Firefighter in Milford and earned her EMT license.



Coyote Battalion 2022 Drill Season

By Keeara Dutton and Cadence Freeman

The Coyote Battalion had their most competitive Drill season in at least five years and saw a 50% growth in team members.

The Coyotes competed in multiple competitions against rivals Nokomis and Bangor. Each meet is comprised of six events: Squad Drill, Squad with Arms (rifles), Platoon, Platoon with Arms, Inspection, and Color Guard.

Additionally, there is an Individual Drill and Review (IDR) event, which provides Cadets with an opportunity to compete as individuals in a “knock out” type of event. The teams were evenly matched with many events being decided by 1-4 points.

The season kicked off with Bangor High School hosting on October 19th. The Coyotes placed second in all events at Bangor. At OTHS on October 26 the team also finished second overall, with first place finishes in the Platoon and Squad Armed events. Cadence Freeman finished second in IDR w/Arms, and Kevin Murray finished 3rd in that event.

On November 3rd they traveled to Nokomis. Again, a second place team finish. They earned first place trophies in the Platoon Armed and Color Guard events, the two hardest events. Cadence Freeman and Brianna Engstrom finished first and second respectively in IDR, while Izzy Bouchard had another second place IDR w/Arms finish.

Nokomis also recognized graduating seniors with a Senior IDR event. Cadence Freeman finished first and Izzy Bouchard third in that event.

It was a productive season that saw a lot of growth, and with the returning Cadets a lot of potential for next fall.



Jobs for Maine Graduates

In the first half of JMG we have been doing career explorations and learning the importance of making good first impressions.

Pictures here show students learning to Dress for Success. In class they learned the difference between business casual and business professional, how to tie a tie and how to sew a button on a shirt.



Above: Students presenting at the Old Town Rotary Club.



Left to right: Kate Garland, Jenn Goodwin, and Christina Lannan at UMaine's Rogers Farm, educating students about the various aspects of the farm.

Old Town Alternative Education, Gardening, and Food

Over the last 3 school years, the Old Town Alternative Education program has been working towards engaging students with various gardening and food exploration opportunities.

The opportunities include: volunteering within the community, initiating and maintaining a flower and herb garden, expanding their vegetable garden, monitoring frost levels in their gardens, and much more.

To this point, during the 2022-23 school year, the program has volunteered nearly 150 hours between the Caring Community Cupboard food pantry and the Rogers Farm at the University of Maine.

In addition to the volunteer work at Caring Community Cupboard, the program also regularly contrib-

utes microgreens and herbs to be given out.

While at Rogers Farm, students have helped to harvest over 500 lbs of food, all of which has been given to area organizations for distribution.

These opportunities would not be possible without the following supporters:

- Old Town Rotary Club (purchased a greenhouse and provided a gift card to allow for purchases of materials for ongoing gardening projects)
- Maine Environmental Education Association (provided grant for purchase of equipment and materials)
- UMaine Cooperative Extension (advice, donation of a grow table/lights, soil, seeds, pots, etc.)

- General Rental Center (donation of equipment)
- Mahan's Redemption (donation of lumber)
- Brad Goody (donation of materials)
- David Brawn (donation of raised beds)
- RSU34 Facilities (assistance with ground-work)
- Rogers Farm (volunteer site)
- Caring Community Cupboard (volunteer site)

If you are interested in learning more about the Old Town Alternative Education program and/or would like to get involved/volunteer, please contact Bryan Murphy, Program Coordinator, at bryan.murphy@rsu34.org.



Above (l. to r.): Abby Talon, Gabby Cody, Kaleigh Johnston, and Olivia Small. Not pictured: Bella Damboise and Isabella Bouchard

OTHS STEM interns visit OTES

Over the past few months OTES has been visited by some OTHS STEM Interns working toward their STEM Diploma.

These students are working with Mrs. Daniel in the STEM Room. They have created plans for DASH and Beebot robots, helped organize different robotics kits, and participated in many other activities related to STEM. These ladies

have even worked inside the classroom and have seen their plans in action.

The interns plan to use their knowledge from the STEM room and the students that they have interacted with in their future experiences. Through this opportunity, they have gained insight into the different ways STEM can be taught and integrated across the curriculum to make learning fun!



Above: Team drivers Noah Nickerson and Kaegan York pose with the trophy and the two OTHS robots. Cassidy Rackliffe and Ian Dutra who were important teammates that were unable to make it to the tournament.

Old Town High School wins Robotics Tournaments

On Saturday, January 7, the Old Town High School Robotics Team brought home a tournament championship trophy after two OTHS teams competed in 47 qualification matches against 22 teams from other Maine high schools.

Both teams made it through the quarterfinals. Team 20734A was eliminated in the semifinals and Team 20734C allied with an All Saints Middle School team and emerged victorious over a John Bapst and Hampden Academy alliance.

OTHS' Team 20734C's victory qualifies them to compete in the 2023 State Robotics Tournament in South Portland on February 25th.

* * *

On Saturday, February 4, Kaegan York (team 20734A) received the judges award, and Noah Nickerson and Ian Dutra were tournament champions (for the second time).

Also, the team of Landon Hoskins and Anakin Calabrese (team 20734B) ranked 5th.

Ed Techs Wanted

Educational Technician I - \$15.61 - \$16.90/hour

Educational Technician II / III - \$18.11 - \$20/hour

- 32.5-35 hours per week during the school year;
- Health insurance - BCBS Choice Plus (full year) : 95% paid for single coverage
- Dental Insurance : 100% paid (full year)
- Continuing Education/Tuition Reimbursement: Six (6) credits per year
- Eleven (11) paid holidays

Ed Techs work primarily in two areas:

- In special education, Ed Techs work with individual students or small groups of students. Ed Techs may also support individuals or small groups in a regular classroom setting.
- Ed Tech generalists assist the teaching staff by working as interventionists with individuals or small groups of students, in and out of the regular classroom.

Maine Educational Technician Authorization and, *Criminal History Records Check through the Department of Education (we can assist you with this)*. Ed Tech I's must have a minimum of a high school diploma. Ed Tech II's must have at least 2 years of college; additional college credit hours are required for Ed Tech III's.

To apply, fill out a non-teaching application and submit it to the Superintendent of Schools. Applications can be found on the RSU 34 website, www.rsu34.org



Griffin Rhoads, winner of PE teacher for a day.



Ian Carpenter, winner of PE teacher for a day, with PE Teacher Lisa Beaulieu

Griffin Rhoads, Ian Carpenter enjoy being PE Teacher of the Day with Lisa Beaulieu

Ever wonder what it would be like to be a Physical Education teacher?

These two boys were lucky enough to find out as their parents put in the highest bid for PE Teacher for a Day from the PTC online auction.

This past January Griffin Rhoads and Ian Carpenter each got a chance to spend their own day in the gym co-teaching with Mrs. Beaulieu, the OTES Physical Education teacher.

Both boys were nervous to begin, afraid to say the wrong thing or

that someone would give them a hard time. The nerves quickly disappeared after the first period and they had the best day of their life!

One really enjoyed instructing the students on what to do and the other enjoyed spending the day in the gym and eating lunch with the teacher. By the end of the day they were both begging to come back the next day and the next and the next.

We may have inspired some future PE teachers!

Food Service Assistants & Subs Wanted

Food Service Assistants - \$13+/hour

Depending on the number of hours worked, benefits may include some, or all, of the following:

- Health insurance - BCBS Choice Plus (full year) : 85 to 95% paid for single coverage (based on participation in RSU #34 Wellness Program
- Dental Insurance : 100% paid (full year)
- Disability Insurance: 100%
- Life Insurance: 100%
- Retirement with matching funds
- Professional Standards Training
- Earned Paid Leave
- Paid holidays
- Clothing Allowance

Food Service Assistants may be required to work at any of our five schools as needed. Personal requests are considered whenever possible. Hours are generally between 7 am and 2 pm when school is in session except for a limited number of training/cleaning days outside of educational days. Some summer hours may also be available for staff who want additional hours.

Criminal History Records Check through the Department of Education (we can assist you with this). A high school diploma is required and competency in basic math or culinary math is helpful. Certification in Serv-Safe is helpful but is not required. To apply, fill out a non-teaching application and submit it to the Superintendent of Schools. Applications can be found on the RSU 34 website, www.rsu34.org

Substitute Teachers Wanted!!!

If you like children and have, at minimum, a high school diploma, you might well enjoy substitute teaching. You can control your own schedule, work on days (including half-days) when you want to (and not when you have other commitments). You can also tell us which schools, grade levels, age levels, and subjects you prefer.

All this and you earn \$105 per day!

In addition to a high school diploma, you need to obtain a Criminal History Records Check through the Department of Education (we can assist you with this) and fill out an RSU 34 substitute teacher application form, which is available at the Superintendent's office or online at www.rsu34.org.

Please call any of our schools or the Superintendent's Office with any questions you may have.

LEONARD MIDDLE SCHOOL

Dr. Gert Nesin, Principal
827-3900



‘Big Read’ is big success; Jamieson, Mohammed visit LMS

By Alexandra Hinrichs
Library Information Specialist
Leonard Middle School

The second annual LMS Big Read has been a big success!

This year’s book is *When Stars Are Scattered* by Victoria Jamieson and Omar Mohamed.

All students and teachers in grades 5-8 received a copy of the book early this fall. Each grade and team decided how and when they would read it together. Some read it in social studies, some read it in ELA, some read it in homerooms. The Fifth grade read it with Mrs. Reesman in the OTES library.

The book, which is a compelling graphic novel memoir recounting Somali refugee Omar Mohamed’s unsettled childhood years growing up in the Dadaab Refugee Camp in Kenya, sparked meaningful questions and conversations.

In October, we were fortunate to be able to host both authors for visits to our school!

Victoria Jamieson shared her journey to becoming an author-illustrator and gave us useful tips and tricks on drawing.



Omar Mohamed told us even more about his life experience, generously answered questions, and took a whole lot of selfies with students! His overall message—to be kind and open to others—hit home with many of us.

While Omar is working with his nonprofit, Refugee Strong, at Dadaab for three months after

his visit with us (and opening the camp’s first library!), we have been raising money for the organization to help buy supplies for the children in the camp.

The grand finale fundraiser was at the LMS Band Concert on December 15th, which raised almost \$2,000!

As we enter the new year, we

carry Omar’s message of hope and kindness forward with us, and look forward to more Big Read events in the spring!

The LMS Big Read was made possible through funding from the Stephen and Tabitha King Foundation as well as the Maine Arts Commission and Maine Humanities Council.



The LMS Robotics Team Is Back!

After a few years away from the competition table, the FIRST LEGO League Challenge team is back at LMS!

The team is now proudly called the OT Coyote Pack #57689 and is led by Melissa Zabierek, STEM Teacher, and Maija Overturf, World Languages Teacher.

Ten LMS students make up this dynamic team of sixth, seventh, and eighth graders, all of which are working together in a powerful way to solve problems, learn new skills, and raise one another up.

The team met three times per week from October to December to program and design their LEGO robots, research and solve a real-world problem, and build core values around working together as a team.

This year's SUPERPOWERED theme had students investigating the different forms of energy



Team photo at the state competition. Front row (l. to r.): Coach Maija Overturf, Jerimiah Spencer, Jordyn Larrabee, Alex Roach, Colbie Williams, Mason McCann. Back row: Nick Huffman, Aidan Shepard, Henry Sherwood, Ciera McCash, Coach Melissa Zabierek. Missing from photo was BP.

needed to power our world and ways to improve energy usage in our community.

Our students identified an issue of future solar panel waste and developed a solution to reuse glass solar panel components to build local greenhouses. They built a LEGO model of their greenhouse design and created a presentation to communicate their project to others. This project was presented at the Maine State Championship for the FIRST LEGO League Challenge at Spruce Mountain High School in Jay, Maine on Saturday, December 3, 2022. The team participated in the robot game and earned a final high score of 125 points at the competition table. The team earned an Exceeds in the category of Gracious Professionalism for their work at the table.

This team demonstrated the power of teamwork and perseverance throughout the season. We are so proud of their accomplishments during this short season and we look forward to starting the season even earlier next year.

A special thank you to all of the parents and school staff that made this season possible and who showed up to cheer on the team during the competition. Your shared passion is what kept this new team dreaming big and believing that they could succeed!



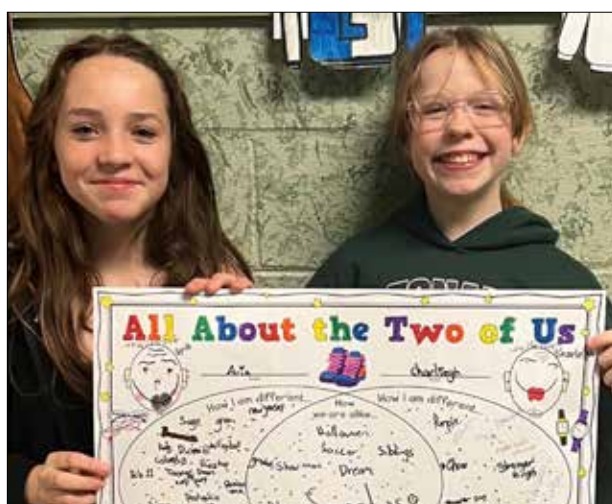
Henry and Jordyn sort their mission parts at a team meeting.



Aidan, Nick, Jordyn, and Mason have just completed their second round at the competition table, earning 125 points.



LEONARD MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND WELCOMES THE HOLIDAYS—The LMS 8th grade band students spent a day in December playing Christmas carols around the community. They spread cheer at Old Town Elementary, Dirigo Pines, The Meadows, and City Hall. All of our hosts were so appreciative! The elementary students loved singing along, two students got to see grandparents, and we were treated to hot cocoa and candy canes at City Hall.



Ms. Stafford and Mrs. Townsend—The Fox Team-Grade 6

The Fox Team in Grade Six had a lot of fun completing a “Get to Know another Fox Team Member” Venn Diagram as part of a community-

building activity. Students were paired with a partner from the other half of the Fox Team to answer a list of questions about themselves. For

example, their favorite color, sports, music, subject in school, type of animals, and lots more. Then as a large group, the partners shared what

they had in common and what they found to be different. This poster activity proved to be a big hit among the students on the Fox Team.



Puffin students at the Cole Land Transportation Museum.



Puffin students trunk or treating.



Puffin students draft a new Puffin Constitution based on the U.S. Constitution.

Busy first half of the year for the LMS Puffin Team

By Doretta Callahan

It's been a busy first half of the year for the LMS 7th grade Puffin Team! September found us celebrating International Dot Day where students made their mark with their own dot, which represented creativity, courage, and collaboration. They also celebrated the International Day of Peace and created their own origami cranes. We rounded out September by attending the Common Ground Fair in Unity where students explored various activities that relate to sustainability—a year-long theme for the Puffin Team. Students also drafted their Puffin Constitution, which was based on the U.S. Constitution, which focused on democracy and having a voice.

In October, the Puffin team participated in the Second Annual Trunk or Treat at LMS. Students had a great time designing 'trunks' and greeting the trick-or-treaters! The Puffins traveled to Cole's Land and Transportation Museum where they were able to talk with many veterans and explore the museum.

In November, Puffins demon-



Puffin students at the Common Ground Fair

strated their understanding of democracy as they held a mock election. They first registered as voters, explored the issues so as to make informed decisions, and then cast their votes on election day. They continued with honoring our veterans by hosting a Veterans Day celebration. They invited the veterans in their life to a program with drinks and cookies, that the students organized. It was great to see so



In December, the Puffins focused on raising funds for Refugee Strong—a program established by Omar Mohammed, a refugee from Somalia, who visited our school in October to support our Big Read, which included *When Stars Are Scattered*, a book that focused on Omar's journey.

many attend! Puffin students also made holiday cards for soldiers stationed over in Saudi Arabia, which they received with much gratitude!

December has found the Puffins to be very, very busy! They have been focusing on raising funds for Refugee Strong—a program established by

Omar Mohammed, a refugee from Somalia, who visited our school in October to support our Big Read, which included *When Stars Are Scattered*, a book that focused on Omar's journey. Students made baskets, sold raffle tickets, made crafts, and baked goodies to support Refugee Strong.

LMS Student Council has busy start, with focus service, leadership

By Doretta Callahan

LMS Student Council has had a busy start to the year! Student Council focuses on service and leadership to the school community. Our year started in September by electing officers - Henry Sherwood, President; Kelsea Fournier, Vice President; and Brooklyn Rand, secretary. Student Council supplied a grant to the middle school for building materials, requested by the 8th grade teams, for games to be used at River Fest. Student Council also donated doughnuts for the open house held at the beginning of the year.

October was busy for student council as they hosted the second annual Trunk or Treat where many members of the community turned out. They also hosted a Halloween dance, where the funds are used for student activities. Red Ribbon Week, which promotes being drug free, was celebrated the last week of October. Students, through change wars, donated money to Bangor Area Recovery Network. Student Council also funded the purchase of a new flag for our school.

November found Student Coun-

cil, along with the Builders Club of LMS and OTEs, having a food drive to support our community. Members of Student Council also formed a student advisory committee with our principal, Dr. Gert

Nesin. Through yearlong fundraising, Student Council was able to fund t-shirts for our LMS Robotics Team before they went to their competition.

December kept Student Council

busy, too, as they shopped for students in need. They have been busy planning events and activities for 2023 - stay tuned to hear about our events! The students involved are becoming true leaders in our school!

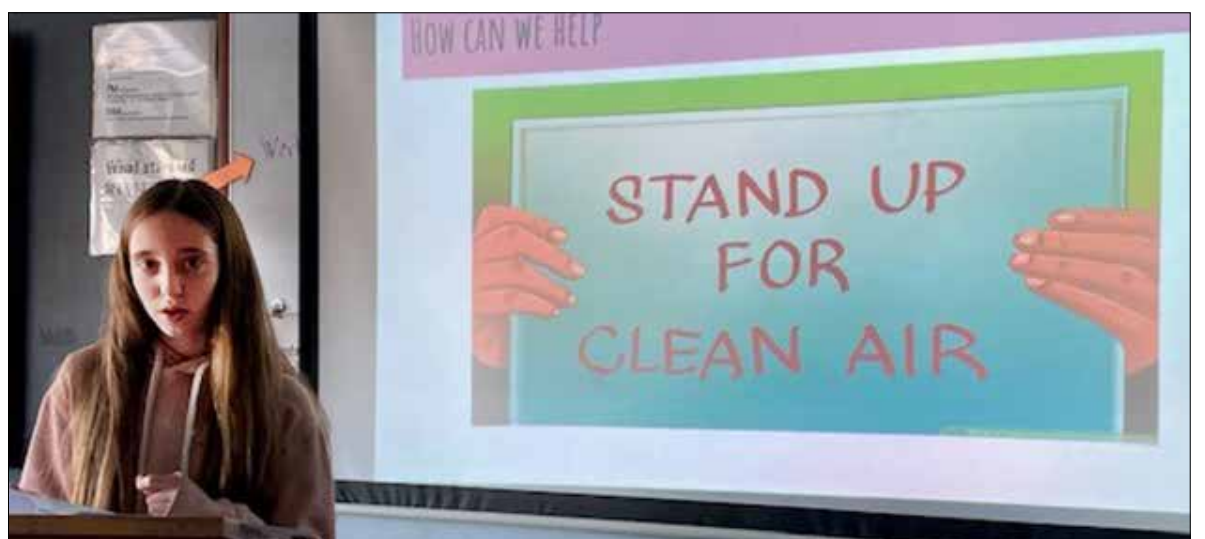
Seventh grade Puffin students present 'Take A Stand' project

By Shelly Tuttle

Puffin students were asked to demonstrate citizenship by raising awareness of a self-selected social issue.

Students developed research questions related to their chosen issue, located and cited appropriate sources, and prepared a presentation for peers.

Each project needed to address explanation of the issue, including cause, effects, and possible solutions. The presentation included



Puffin student Brooklyn Rand presents to her ELA class.

a speech accompanied by a Google slide show. Some issues included climate change, poverty, child

abuse, bullying in schools, freedom of speech, and much more!



Sixth graders volunteer after school to pop popcorn for the band concert.



Sixth grade students at LMS learn to make crystals in science class.

Capybara 6th graders enjoying first year at LMS with many different challenges

The Capybara team had an amazing start to their 6th grade year, AND their first year as students at LMS. We did a lot of team building activities to start our year, including deciding what animal our team should select to represent us as a whole. Students decided on the CAPYBARA. Capybaras are friendly, and get along well with other species. They are also adorable, intelligent, and social. Sounds like an LMS 6th grader!

* * *

Capybara ELA students have been very busy. They just finished writing essays about topics of their choice. They will use these essays as a springboard for writing argumentative essays in the new year. Students have continued to work hard on the 40 Book Challenge.

One purpose of the challenge is to encourage students to read many books across a variety of genres.

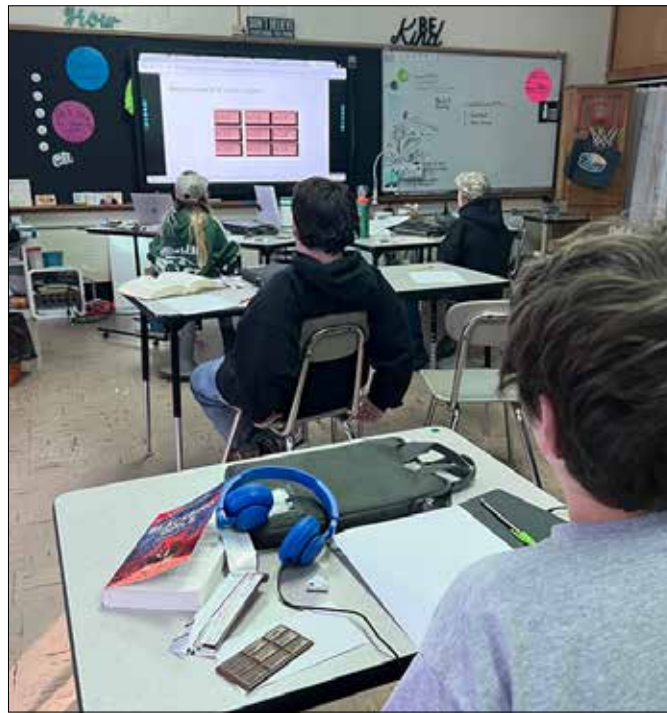
More importantly, the hope is students will make reading a part of their lives, and love doing it.

They should be very proud of all they have read so far this school year!

* * *

We've been having fun in Mrs Murk's math class by using hands-on fractions with Oreos and Hershey bars. It's always easier to understand when we see the process in front of us. We have enjoyed playing various games, including Grudgeball and the Unfair Game to review concepts. When math is fun, we are engaged. When we are connected to the learning we become more confident in our answers.

We had the division question of "Does McDonald's Sell Chicken Burgers?" We found out that they do indeed sell chicken burgers. Now we'll never forget the steps of division.



Mrs. Murcheson's Math class use chocolate bars as they learn about multiplying fractions.

* * *

In science class, the Capybara team has been diving deep into exploring the physical world around us. Students are learning about

physical and chemical properties of matter. We recently explored the crystalline structure of solids by making our own crystals! We are spending time learning about these properties to help students prepare for our next unit on energy.

Students will have to be creative with their understanding of the different types of energy to build their own 'Rube Goldberg Machine' setups. Also in this unit, students' knowledge of thermal energy transfer will be put to the test when they compete as teams to devise the best insulating devices.

* * *

Capybaras prepared and sold popcorn and water at the band's concert on December 15th. The concert was great and our table raised over \$120 to benefit Refugee Strong, a nonprofit we are very passionate about. If you haven't yet, please check out the book we read as a Big Read called *When Stars Are Scattered*.

We were very lucky to have both authors visit our school this fall!

Summer school at LMS



In addition to students reading lots of books from the library, using Beanstack to log their reading and participate in challenges, and the Big Read events, the LMS Library ran its 3rd annual Book Tree contest.

All homerooms that returned all of their overdue books from the library were entered into a drawing to win prize books from the library book tree, and Ms. Murk's homeroom won!

* * *

Ms. Hinrichs and Mrs. Townsend have been teaming up to do some poetry workshops. Students in Mrs. Townsend's classes created spine poetry using words and phrases from the titles printed on book spines.

They then transferred their poems to paper to decorate the library door. The following week we experimented with blackout poetry!

All students used pages from worn out books, circled words and phrases to form a poem, and colored (or blacked out) the rest of the page.

Beautiful work all around!



What do you do when you're supposed to dress up for a basketball game AND it's team spirit day? 8th grade LMS basketball players Tyler Priest, Braden Lee, and Jack Brawn decided to dress up their uniforms! Looking good guys!



OTES students enjoy many outdoor learning activities

By Renee St. Peter
Chapter 104 Teacher

What's new for outdoor learning this year, you might ask?

- Lisa Harvey (another Chapter 104 Teacher) and I will continue with our trimester science lessons.
- New metal signs coming for the perimeter of the outdoor classroom. Identifies the tree, leaf, bark, and fruit.
- New bark mulch path in the maple syrup area with new seating coming for the knoll.
- New seating for the garden table. No more rocking benches.
- Three sisters garden display.
- New game cam in the outdoor classroom.
- New greenhouse bins for clean and dirty kid sized gloves.
- Sensory garden next to Pre-K playground. Smell, look, taste, feel, and touch a variety of plants!
- New wetland space and quadrat.

On Fridays from 1 to 2 pm, we want kids to be involved with chores in the outdoor space. I will send out a sign-up email every Thursday for detailed jobs. Please respond with the number of students, if you are interested.

Please use the outdoor space... it's yours to enjoy! Encourage kids to play, ask questions, and eat in the garden.



Old Town Elementary School has a new seating area for outdoor learning. This space can be accessed by a trail behind the tool shed and greenhouse. The younger students are learning outdoors in a space that is closer to the school and within 1-2 minutes from the school's backdoor. Happy Outdoor Learning!





OTES holds annual Title 1 Literacy and Math Night

On November 17th, Old Town Elementary School held its annual Title 1 Literacy and Math night!

Teachers, in conjunction with students from the University of Maine's Education Department, hosted a night of fun and games for students K-5. Literacy Volunteers of America also helped to round out the evening with free books for students and their families.



OTES Hallway of Flags

By Jeanna Tuell, Principal
Old Town Elementary School

A few years ago Old Town Elementary School reflected on our school's role in expanding the experiences and perspectives of the students and staff in our school.

We realized we had an obligation to make our community aware of the diverse cultures and countries entering through our doors each day and to create a welcoming environment for all people at OTEs. With the University of Maine as our school's neighbor, we often receive students from the University because parents are finishing their degrees or are professors.

We decided to put a flag up for every country represented at OTEs to welcome the family to our school and teach our students about the various cultural differences with each of these new community members.

As a result, our families coming to our school feel immediately welcomed by our gesture of their native country flying in the hallways of the school.

Students and staff are so excited about another country joining this hall of flags and getting to know about the country.

We have found more opportunities to make connections with other countries and to celebrate our diversity.





OTES Civil Rights Team sponsors annual 'Day of Welcome'

By Vicki Wilcox

School Counselor and CRT advisor

The Old Town Elementary School Civil Rights Team has hit the new school year off and running.

The Civil Rights Team is made up of 30-40 fifth graders who meet every other week. We completed our annual DAY OF WELCOME,

which included door/school decorating and book sharing with all grades.

The Maine Humanities Council has donated many amazing books that the CRT is sharing with classrooms.

Our next projects will be more book sharing and interactive theater skits.



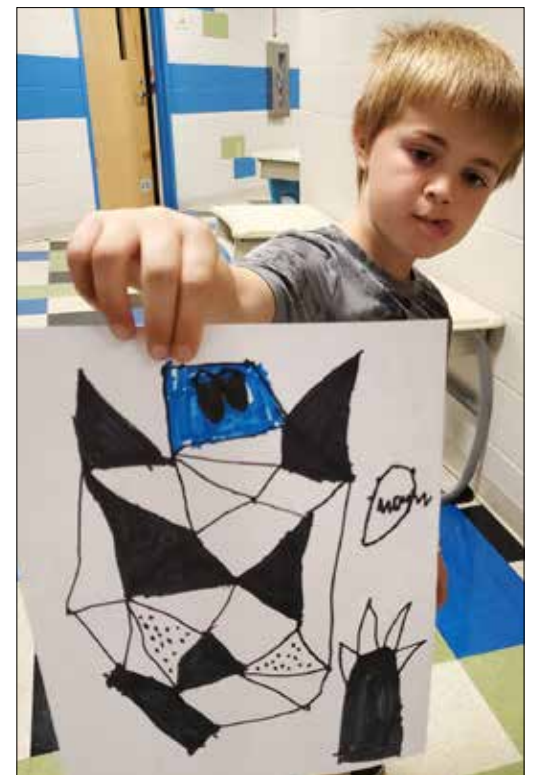
2nd, 3rd graders explore new challenges in OTES art class



Third graders Zoe and Raelynn created an imaginary creature in an art class drawing game. Their creature is a combination of a bird and a pterodactyl.



Third grader Margo practicing kinetic drawing



Second grader Tanner participated in the twenty point challenge during art class. He turned his dots and lines into a cat.



OTES 2nd Graders look, listen, and learn about ways to harvest pumpkin and squash with Master Gardener Christina Lannan



Some cool squash varieties on the garden table for exploring and showing diversity. Student drew pictures, talked about textures, and wrote stories.



Ms. Lolar's class enjoying their ice cream during a garden activity.

OTES students helped plant, water, and harvest 23 different vegetables, including 70 lbs. of carrots, over 100 lbs of onions, and prize pumpkin

As winter brings the usual quota of snow and cold weather, it's great to look back at all that everyone at Old Town Elementary School was able to do during the growing season last summer and fall.

Students helped plant, water and harvest 23 different types of vegetables, including 70 lbs of carrots, over 100 lbs onions, and a prize winning pumpkin.

They created new pollinator habitats and learned about seed dispersal and patterns in nature.

We held our annual plant sale and our first-ever "bug run."

We had 24 weeks of farm stand with 6,371 lbs of fresh local fruits and veggies going out into the community. This week students finished up planting garlic and spring bulbs and they were able turn their attention to lighting up the garden for the holidays.

Thanks to all our volunteers, staff and supporters for helping the garden grow!

The current Kindergarten planted potatoes last school year as Pre-K students.



Second graders Ethan Goody and Gunner Thibodeau plant bulbs.



2nd Graders, Brevin, Morgan and Alex help prepare newly harvested onions for the OTES Farm Stand



Bright Lights at OTES

Everyone enjoys the holiday lights and the warm glow lights radiate to start the holiday season.

The students at OTES have been treated to the Bright Lights project for a second year in a row. Over the course of late November and early December, the school's learning garden and playground areas are transformed into a winter wonderland and start the holiday season off for our students and families.

The students and their families are welcomed to the school's Bright Lights over several weekends in Early December and Early January. Many parent volunteers help to transform the student playground areas into this magical moment for our students.

Hot Cocoa and cookies are



served in our school's greenhouse along with an opportunity to select some books paid for by our Parent-Teacher Organization. This year we were able to put all our lights on a timer so that students could be welcomed in the mornings to the

Bright Lights and families could come anytime during the holiday season to enjoy their family time at our school. We have received a lot of positive comments and it's been a joy to be part of our families holiday traditions.



Harvest Arts festival back at OTES

This fall, after a ten year hiatus, the Harvest Arts festival came back to OTES with a bang! Artists from the school and community shared their talents with students and staff. Here are some of the sessions students participated in.

There were a few whole school presentations. Students had fun watching baton twirlers and getting to try twirling for themselves. The Old Town Jazz Ensemble came to visit the entire school to get them into the holiday spirit. The University of Maine Steiners performed for the entire school and then met with the 5th graders to discuss vocal warm-ups and talk about how you can still participate in music after you graduate from high school.

Classes also had breakout sessions throughout two days. Students practiced Japanese calligraphy with Sayoko Mori. She taught them how to write Old Town and their first name. Students got to use traditional materials, including bamboo calligraphy brushes, Sumi ink, and rice paper. Ms. Palmer led first grade students in an informal introduction to Segni Mossi, movement combined with art. Students rolled on the floor and drew as they rolled, drew circles with one arm seated in a chair, and drew while laying belly down on yoga balls. Ms. Palmer led fifth grade students in a lesson on Oreo cookie relief sculpture. Each student created their own art piece using the filling of the cookie and a toothpick to sculpt with. As a collaborative project, all OTES students decorated Wassily Kandinsky inspired circles to add to a tree in the school lobby. Instructors from the YMCA joined us in the gym to provide students with a variety of fun interactive activities. They provide instruction in Pilates, Tabata and Gymnastics.

Senora Tagg showed students a video on Hispanic tradition and then made a play-doh tamale with students, before they had the opportunity to try a real tamale. Students learned some history behind corn and what makes the colors of the kernels while doing some bead art and trying out blue kernel popcorn. Both Penobscot Theater and Next Generation Theater came to do breakout sessions to teach students how to participate in a theatrical production. Cathy Segee called her friends to join her in performing traditional Irish music for grades 3-5.

This two day Arts Festival made sure fun was had by all, and looking forward to the festival returning again next year!



Wassily Kandinsky Inspired Collaborative Tree Project



Segni Mossi Movement and Art with Leo



John Bear Mitchell drumming



Students with Penobscot Theatre Company



Maine Steiners with 5th grade



Mrs. Gilbert's 3rd Grade Class with Guest Presenter Sayoko Mori



Blue Popcorn fun with Mrs. Reesman



Cathy Segee and Irish band



OTES Students twirling batons



Chris Blackie

Lincoln Mazzei

Chris Blackie, Lincoln Mazzei, helicopters are highlight of OTES World of Work program

Chris Blackie and Lincoln Mazzei, Ranger Pilots for the Maine Forest Service always participate in the Old Town Elementary's World of Work program.

They fly in and land on the playground to provide the students an up-close experience with the helicopter.

They share with the children what their job is and answer lots of questions.

The students really enjoy the presentation and we are very thankful for their participation in this program.

The mission of Forest Protection is to protect Maine's forest resources and homes from wildfire, respond to disasters and emergencies and to enhance the safe, sound, and responsible management of the forest for this and future generations.



Huey water drop sunset



Huey filling porta-tank

The Role of Maine's Forest Protection Air Fleet

The Forest Protection Aviation Branch flew 452 missions in 2020 that included flight response to 117 different fires requiring the use of helicopters for transporting 300 firefighters and 19,000 thousand pounds of supplies.

The primary use of the helicopters is dropping water on fires, which is performed using a flexible bucket attachment to withdraw from ponds, rivers, or lakes and dispense from the air. In 2020, we dropped 289,000 gallons of water on fires.

In addition to firefighting, the fleet has con-

ducted over 1,200 aerial inspections on logging sites, as well as 22 inter-agency Search and Rescue operations with state police, game wardens, and fire departments.

The Aviation Branch also utilizes aircraft to assist other agencies with transport for important scientific sampling and surveying efforts that help conserve and maintain the state's natural resources. For instance, wildlife biologists are transported for moose surveying that directly informs the number of permits issued in different areas.



915 on the go with bucket



407 on a rock 3

Recess bag managers have important role with recess equipment

Pictured at right are some of the recess bag managers who have received training on how to manage their classroom recess bag and its contents.

These managers have an important role in ensuring that equipment in the bag is accounted for and returned to the bag after each recess.

They are also responsible for bringing broken or deflated equipment to the PE teacher so it can be inflated, fixed, or replaced.

The recess bags have been made possible through initial funding from the PTC. This is the second year in which each class has been provided with a bag containing various kinds of equipment, such as basketballs, soccer balls, jump ropes, frisbees, and playground balls. During recess time students can use these items to play games and also to reinforce skills they have learned in Physical Education class.

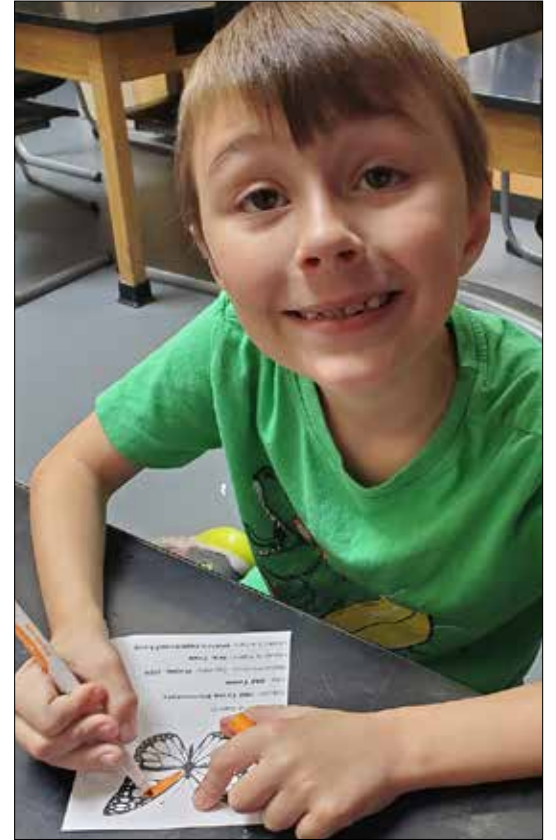




Josie and Zachary decorate a class butterfly to send to Mexico



Elaina colors a class butterfly to send to Mexico



Brevin decorates a butterfly to send to Mexico

2nd graders in Alton, Bradley, Old Town send paper butterflies to Mexico

This fall, six second grade classrooms in Alton, Bradley and Old Town joined thousands of other youth across the U.S. and Canada sending paper butterflies to Mexico as part of the 27th annual “Symbolic Monarch Butterfly Migration.”

The Symbolic Migration project is a partnership project between Journey North, a program of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum, and Monarchs Across Georgia, a committee of The Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia, a 501(c).

This cross-curricular project integrates art, Spanish and science



learning objectives. Students decorated individual paper butterflies using symmetry and styled Ambassador butterflies inspired by famous artists in art classes with teachers

Tiffany Palmer and Pam Dunphy.

In Spanish classes with Señora Kristen Tagg, students learned about the monarch migration to Mexico and the importance of preserving the monarch’s habitat. Students also learned a fun hand clapping game using the Spanish word for butterfly “mariposa.”

In science classes with their classroom teachers, students studied the life cycle of the monarch butterfly as well as learned about pollination.

The \$15 per class “passenger ticket” fee supports school visits in Mexico to deliver the butterflies and

conservation education.

During the winter, the symbolic butterflies will be delivered to schools in Mexico and we will learn about the overwintering sites. The cycle of friendship continues in the spring when each class will receive a cluster of butterflies from over the U.S. and Canada as well as a letter from a Mexican student.

For more information about this exciting project, please visit: Symbolic Monarch Migration

Submitted by: Kristen Tagg, Tiffany Palmer, Pam Dunphy and the 2nd grade team.



Counselors launch YELLOW TULIP PROJECT

RSU #34 school counselors all came together to launch the YELLOW TULIP PROJECT.

The mission of the Yellow Tulip Project is to “prioritize your mental health, stay centered and find a little quiet during these loud and uncertain times”.

Each school planted yellow tulip bulbs (with some other brightly colored flowers) at our schools and in our communities. Our plan is to celebrate hope throughout our long cold winter and to look toward brighter/longer days with the support of our community.

These flowers will bloom in April and May. We will have a gathering at that time to acknowledge our blossoms of hope, while also highlighting our connected



and supportive community.

OTES Leaders and OTHS Key Club students are pictured in the photos.



ALTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Cheryl Leonard, Principal
394-2331



Alton Elementary School names 21 Students of the Month, PreK-5th grade, for October, November, December

Throughout the school year the students at Alton Elementary work hard at being amazing students.

Alton Eagles focus on 5 main characteristic traits, the traits are Respect (yellow), Responsibility (Green), Knowledge (Blue), caring/Kindness (Red), and Honesty (Orange).

Each month since the beginning of the school year, students have worked on one characteristic per month and have earned the cor-

responding color feather. At the end of the month the students are recognized for earning feathers and put on our Eagle bulletin board.

As we go through the months earning each of the 5 feather colors, the student will then be able to earn any of the colors for the

remaining of the school year filling our bulletin board with positive behavior feathers!!!!

October	November	December
Pre-K—Destiny Murray	Pre-K—Raymond Hamlin	Pre-K—Maddox Spencer
Kindergarten—Parker Boyington	Kindergarten—Lola Davenport	Kindergarten—Karson Kennedy
1st—Bankston Martin	1st—Kelsey Green	1st—Kaden Spencer
2nd—Gavin Carroll	2nd—Seth Moreau	2nd—Anastatia Carter
3rd—Kaleb Ellis	3rd—Ella Spencer	3rd—Camryn Carroll
4th—Bryce Boyington	4th—Cheyanne Cyr	4th—Jack Stevens
5th—Irvin Batchelder	5th—Brandon Beals	5th—Julia Desmond

AES kindergarten students hang art on 'Drawing Tree' during 'Forest Fridays'

Every Friday in our Kindergarten classroom we learn and explore in our outdoor classroom. We call it "Forest Fridays." This week we created art and hung it on a large

pine tree in our meeting area. This is our "Drawing Tree." It is there for visitors to look at while walking through our nature trail and for the creatures of the forest to enjoy.



Another Forest Friday activity... Nature Numbers

Here we worked with partners. We each got a number card and a large piece of paper. We collected nature items to match our number and created art with them.

We worked on this with our Pre K friends.



AES 5th grade class runs change drive after reading 'When Stars Are Scattered'

The AES fifth grade class decided to run a change drive after reading *When Stars Are Scattered*, by Victoria Jamieson, which was a BIG READ for 5th and 6th graders at RSU 34.

The graphic novel recapped the experience of Omar Mohamad, a Somali refugee who fled to the camp when he was 4 years old with his 1 year old brother. They resided at the refugee camp for roughly 14 years before being relocated.

As of mid-January, the 5th graders had collected over \$50, almost entirely in coins. They took donations through January 30th. No donation was too small. Students of the fifth grade point out that the spare change that many of us do not bother with can do a lot of good in the refugee camps.

Students had fun working on posters for the fundraiser.



Second graders at Alton Elementary practice their problem-solving skills while they work in groups trying to build the tallest tower out of index cards and paperclips.



Brandon

Jackson

Dipper

Julia

Fifth graders in Elaine LaFrance's class at AES conduct an experiment to determine whether earthworms prefer dry or wet environments and light or dark environments.



AES students enjoy after-school crafts

A handful of AES third and fourth grade students participated in after-school craft sessions. They made holiday cards and ornaments. The creative juices flowed as kids replicated pre-made ornaments with their touches and/or designed their holiday decoration.



FIELD TRIP TO TREWORGY FARMS—Students in first grade at the Alton Elementary School enjoyed their field trip to Treworgy Farm in September. The apples were delicious, the pumpkins were huge, and the goats were fun to feed!



STORING ENERGY AS HEIGHT—4th grade students in Mrs. Ouellette's class at Alton Elementary School have been exploring how energy can be stored as height. Students worked together to build paper roller coasters. They then released marbles down the roller coaster tracks to understand height energy and energy transfer.



Pre-K kids go zoom, zoom, zoom at AES library

AES Pre-K students come to the library in two groups and spend time hearing stories and doing story related crafts and hand rhymes. A favorite unit was about shapes and students used shapes to create rockets. They learned a hand rhyme that starts out, "Zoom, zoom, zoom We're going to the moon!" It is a favorite as they repeatedly ask to sing and act it out! They also had a unit on hats and had fun putting on different hats.



Second graders enjoying the wonderful outside spaces at Alton Elementary School for learning and growing.



2nd graders at AES explore Lego Robotics

Second graders in Alton explore and work together during a Lego Robotics lesson. Second grade is fortunate to have Ms. Daniel to come and help them learn more about programming and coding.

VIOLA RAND SCHOOL, BRADLEY

Cheryl Leonard, Principal
827-2508



Viola Rand students turn in 23 pumpkins in decoration contest

The students at Viola Rand Elementary (VRE) had lots of fun participating in the RSU34 elementary school Book Character Pumpkin Contest.

It was the first year VRE held the contest and the response was most impressive! Twenty-three decorated pumpkins were turned in.

The pumpkins were displayed in the library and all students voted for their favorite pumpkin. All pumpkins received at least one vote!

2nd graders collect supplies for Old Town Animal Orphanage



Ms. Friedman's second grade class collected supply donations for the Old Town Animal Orphanage.

For two weeks the students collected from other VRS families as part of their service-learning unit. It was a fantastic opportunity to learn about volunteering and giving back to the community.

* * *

The second grade at VRS ended their animal habitat with a field trip experience at the Hirundo Wildlife Refuge. They learned about the different animals that live in a stream or a field. The second grade also created beautiful 3-D diorama's that presented one of the multiple habitats studied in our unit.



ONE OF VIOLA RAND SCHOOL'S FAVORITE TRADITIONS is holiday caroling around the Bradley community, bringing holiday cheer to many residents and friends.



Viola Rand School students and staff celebrate a 'Choose Happy' Day.



Viola Rand students welcome local veterans, active service men and women

Viola Rand School welcomed local veterans and active service men and women to our school for breakfast and an assembly for Veterans Day

Veterans were introduced and we had a guest speaker, Richard

Romero, who spoke about his military experiences and visiting countries all over the world.

The students sang "Yankee Doodle" and "America," and a special guest singer, Olivia Romanelli, sang the National Anthem.



Mrs. Berube's 1st grade STEM project

We did our first STEM project of the year this week! The students were excited to work like engineers and architects to create a home out of classroom materials. We started the lesson by reading *Homes Around the World* by Claire Lewis. This book gave examples of all different types of homes in other parts of the world. The students were fascinated by the creative homes such as treehouse homes, mud homes and homes on the water. We talked about what a home means to us and each student wrote a word to describe the feeling of being at home. Some examples included, "cozy," "peaceful," "toys," and "love." The students sketched a blueprint of their home and then explored various materials to build a model of their imaginary home. We had so much fun using science and engineering concepts to design and create! This activity integrated reading, writing, math, social studies and of course, science!





Fun morning of crafts and games at VRS on Dec. 22

Students at the Viola Rand School had a fun morning of crafts and games on the morning of December 22.

They made greeting cards for a nursing home and two snowflake crafts.

Glittery snow play dough and legos were a hit in another classroom.

In the cafeteria, students had a snowball on a spoon relay, played musical chairs and



charades, then built trees with green plastic cups.

During outside time, students did a sleigh pull relay, played Snowman Says and played with snow toys and snow paint.

The students worked in mixed grade groups and had a blast!



The VRS students (grades K-3) really enjoyed the Friday morning Physical Activity Program with Julianna Cleaves, UMaine graduate student.



VRS SUMMER READERS

“Summer reading is critical, not only for helping kids maintain learning while school is out, but also for fostering social-emotional development, discovering the joy of stories, and elevating the importance of lifelong learning.”

Every year we challenge kids to read over the summer and this summer so many kids stepped up and crushed the challenge. All the kids that read either participated in our Summer Reading Logs or the Read to Ride program.

Thank you to everyone who participated and all the grown-ups that read to or with their students.

VRS is a school that loves books!!



Señora Tagg teaches VRS students about Three Kings Day as part of Spanish curriculum

Students at the Viola Rand School learned about Three King’s Day, as part of the Spanish curriculum!

This holiday is celebrated on January 6th in Spanish-speaking countries like Mexico and Spain.

Señora Tagg taught students the tradition of children leaving their shoes out to be

filled with gifts from the Three Wise Men.

Mrs. Berube’s first graders put shoes outside the classroom door, and later found that a sticker and lollipop treat was delivered to each! Students also made crowns while watching slides depicting ways this holiday is celebrated! Thank you, Senora! We love our Spanish lessons!



Lilyan Spear



Kaiya Buck



Nora Racine



Aurora Muncey

50 VRS students go to Penobscot Ice Arena for skating trip

On February 6th, fifty students from the Viola Rand School went to the Penobscot Ice Arena at the end of the day for a skating trip. The older students who have done this for several years are

becoming quite skillful and a new round of beginners got their start! This is an annual trip that the children really enjoy!

Mr. Cyr visits 1st graders at VRS after receiving letters



Mr. Cyr visited first graders at the Viola Rand School, after receiving letters from the students, giving their opinions on whether school should be called off due to snowy weather! He told students about his job as Superintendent of schools, answered questions and read a story to the class. Thanks for coming to meet us Mr. Cyr!



Viola Rand kindergarten student Neveah is excited to try a traditional Mexican "molinillo."



First Graders at VRS showing off their "symmetry snowflakes!"



Winter fun at Viola Rand School!



Walking the "mileage track" at VRS with Mrs. Gifford!



City Manager: Stillwater Bridge, fiber network, CDD landfill, City Brook pipe; City pool, and cemetery drainage updates

By Bill Mayo
City Manager

The City is continuing to work on some major projects and will begin implementing some of those in the 2022/2023 fiscal year;

Llewellyn Estes Bridge (Stillwater Bridge) / Center Street

The Llewellyn Estes Bridge project is being revisited. At this time, the plan is to bid out the road portion only of the bridge project. That proposal will go out to bid in mid-September and will be awarded for a 2023 construction start if the bids come in at MDOT estimates.



This project is currently being reviewed by MDOT and the following areas being discussed as of January 2023:

Brookfield – MDOT met with representatives from Brookfield to discuss their dam rehabilitation project that may be in construction later this summer. Brookfield will be rehabilitating a portion of the dam headwall and flashboards and will be dropping the elevation of the river approximately 3' during this effort. Their discussions centered around schedule and access.

Maintenance of traffic – MDOT Design Consultant, WSP, wrapped up their traffic study in January. That study was to review the MDOT assumptions on potential detour routes, traffic volumes, and intersection adjustments and to consider short and long-term closures during construction.

MDOT will meet with WSP again in the next couple of weeks to review all the findings to move the discussion of closure with detour or temporary bridge further along.

Hydraulics – MDOT is discussing the potential to open the first span to increase the hydraulic opening on the west side of the Stillwater River.

It was determined that a new abutment could be placed further west than the existing abutment to aid in increasing the opening, but the greatest gains would be in moving the island abutment further east. Any reduction in the size of the island has the greatest impact on the hydraulic condition.

Substructure foundations – Drilled shafts appear to be the foundation type of choice at this location due to the depth to ledge and lack of overburden in the river for pile supported structures. The team has identified a typical pile size range and the geotechnical engineers are determining the appropriate size, reinforcing, and depth to fixity.

Alignment – Discussion on an on-alignment and off-alignment replacement options are still on-going.

CDD Landfill

The City has received a permit from the DEP to move the unlined CDD landfill at the transfer station on Gilman Falls Avenue to the Juniper Ridge Landfill. This is an approximately \$800,000 project that will be cost-shared with the State of Maine. Maine DEP will contribute just under \$400,000 to the cost of this project. The project is approximately 90% complete for transferring the CDD waste pile to the Juniper Ridge Landfill.

City Brook Pipe

The City had this stormwater

line videoed last fall and the video is being analyzed for structural integrity and areas of the stormwater line that need to be repaired.

The line begins by the football field at the high school and winds down through the City to an outfall by the Wastewater Plant on Congress Street. This is an approximately 48-inch pipe that carries a large volume of water in the spring. This line was put in around 1965 so it is time to establish the condition of it before there are failures.

The City has received in total \$746,000 in American Recovery Act funds and those will be used to fund this project. The estimate to repair a failed section between Perkins and Pine Street is \$400,000.

The rest of the line is in good working condition currently.

The City has had meetings with the homeowners where replacement of the line may disrupt their property and the project will be going out to bid for construction in 2023.

City Pool

The City has had Weston Sampson conduct a review of the swimming pool. The pool was built in 1968 and there are some maintenance/operational issues that are starting to reoccur on a frequent basis.

After a request for qualifications was conducted in May to assist in the location and construction of a pool, the Council chose to move forward with Weston Sampson to look at 3 possible sites in Old Town for the pool to be located.

Also, the City is including the University of Maine in this discussion and the possibility of having an additional partner in the potential construction of a new pool in Old Town. During the fall Ballard &

King conducted a market study for the pool and the initial draft should be ready for the Council to review in February.

St. Joe's/Lawndale Cemetery

The City has done a request for proposal on drainage projects on each of these cemeteries in the summer/fall of 2022. These 2 cemeteries have water issues in the spring. After having the drainage plan completed in each of the cemeteries this will remove the ponding water issues that currently take place each spring in these cemeteries. This will make the cemeteries much more accessible in the spring for folks who are visiting these cemeteries early in the year. The cost of these 2 projects is \$301,000 and will be funded from the Cemetery Reserve Fund. The Lawndale project is now complete, except for final loam and seeding in the spring, and St. Joe's will begin as soon as practical in the spring once it has gotten drier.

2023/24 Budget

The budget process is just starting internally with department managers. As we move forward, we will take initial requests to the City Council in March and then review where revenues/expenditures are and what changes need to take place to find a budget that fits department requests and keeps the tax rate in a place that is comparable to surrounding communities and tolerable for citizens in Old Town.

Over the past 5 years Old Town has experienced a lot of growth at the mill which has helped stabilize the City's tax base and make the budget process much more predictable.

April Buchanan new City Assessor

By April Buchanan
City Assessor

As the new Assessor for the City of Old Town, I am getting settled in. I have a new office on the first floor and welcome visitors with questions/concerns. Our tax maps and property card information has also been moved to the first floor. If you don't have time to stop by, feel free to email me at abuchanan@old-town.org or call at 207-827-3965 ext. 118. Our website has been updated



April Buchanan

with links added on the Assessor's page for:

- **GIS Mapping**—After clicking on the GIS Mapping link the user is taken to the AxisGIS system for the City of Old Town. We are doing our best to keep this area updated as often as possible.

A user can search in this area by address, map-lot (parcel number), or owner's name. This area gives some of the approximate site dimensions on the map as well as links to look at the sketch and on-line property card information.

- **Exemptions, Tax Deferral, and Tax Stabilization for Seniors**—This area has links to the different types of exemptions available in the State of Maine. The

applications and instructions can be found when clicking on the different PDFs. The potential exemptions are: Blind Exemption, Homestead Exemption, Paraplegic Veteran Exemption, Veteran Exemption, and Tax Stabilization for Senior Citizens. If there are any questions or need clarification on these programs, feel free to reach out to me, April Buchanan 207-827-3965 ext. 118.

- **Real Estate Information**—This section of the website has links to the current Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Tax Commitment Books, as well as previous years Tax Bills. Some of these are large files, which can usually be searched by clicking in the document and then holding

down the "Ctrl" key and the "F" key simultaneously. A box should come up and you can type in what you are search for (i.e. owner name, address, etc.).

- **Tax Maps & Information**—Here you will find a link to the AxisGIS page, Tax Map Index, and each of the individual tax maps. These should be in PDF format.

I look forward to serving the community of Old Town and have already been made to feel right at home.

Asst. City Manager: safety award, Harold Alfond grant, many community events

By Travis Roy
Assistant City Manager

Safety Award - 2022

This past year was a busy one for our employees.

In 2022, all of our departments underwent a “white glove” inspection by the Department of Labor and passed with distinction! This is 100% due to the dedication of our employees to work safe and comply with all DOL directives.



The results of the inspection scored high enough that the City of Old Town was awarded the Safety and Health Award for Public Employees at the highest level – 3 year certification.

We are very thankful for our employees, past and present, that have turned our Safety culture around over the past 10 years.

Efficiency Maine Electric Vehicle Charging Grants

Efficiency Maine released information on a funding opportunity for public electric vehicle car chargers in 2022.

The City of Old Town successfully submitted proposals for and received 90% of the funding for four dual head chargers.

The charging stations will be available to the public and will be accessible via a debit card or common charging app on your smartphone. The chargers will be networked so users can locate them, determine if they are in use, and even schedule the use of a charger.

The chargers will be in the following locations.

- Lower Library Parking lot
- Riverfront parking lot (Across from Tim’s Store)
- Robbins Block Parking lot (also called Sewall Company Parking lot)
- Main Street, adjacent to the public comfort station.

Harold Alfond Center for the Advancement of Maine’s Workforce

The Alfond center offered \$1,200 per employee to ANY employee in the State of Maine for workforce development training in 2022.

City employees took advantage of over \$20,000 of the funding that was offered. The training included college courses, professional trainings, and 2 training events for all the City’s supervisors that were hosted here in town and a presenter came to use from the Portland area.

This funding has definitely allowed for training opportunities that would not have been affordable for our employees without it.

In 2022, the Alfond funding covered 100% of the training costs. In 2023 thru 2025 the Alfond funding is available to us all at a 50% match, up to \$1,200 per employee.

This is an incredible opportunity



Holiday tree lighting and lights parade.

provided by the Alfond Foundation and it is available to all Maine employees. If I can be of assistance in helping you find this information let me know.

Maine Municipal Education and Training Advisory Council

I was asked to join the newly formed Maine Municipal Education and Training Advisory Council to help develop statewide training and

education programs for municipal employees. The committee is the result of a Statewide study and gap analysis focusing on the unmet needs of municipal employees.

On February 2, 2023, co-chair Peter Osborne, the director of Education and Training for MMA, and I presented the recommendations of our committee’s work to the MMA Executive Committee. I happy to report that the proposal received unanimous support.

Now the work begins.

We will focus on the unmet training needs of municipal employees of all occupations and seek to facilitate, in conjunction with the professional associations across the State, needed education and training.

Community Events

What a great year! We have been adding community events that we are hearing that people want.

The Memorial Day Parade and Riverfest have always been the anchors for our community events, but they have grown in recent years.

The Holiday Lights event has been a real hit! It has grown every year.

We would like to thank the local Elks Lodge for organizing the first Holiday Lights Parade!

I would also like to recognize the behind-the-scenes people that make these events happen. Public Works, Public Safety and Pollution Control staff are always helping us get it done. Thank you.

I would be remiss if I didn’t recognize the man behind it all – E.J Roach. E.J. is the City’s Economic and Community Development of-



Fire and Ice.

ficer and is very passionate about community pride!

Community Events that are currently on schedule for 2023:

- **January 21—Fire & Ice.** This was a successful event, and we look forward to it growing.
- **May 29—Memorial Day Parade.**
- **June 11—Wings & Wheels.** This is a car and aircraft show at the Old Town Airport.
- **Summer 2023—Two new events that are developing:** an art festival and a music event.
- **Sept 22/23—Riverfest.**
- **October 28—Harvest-fest.**

This is a new event—stay tuned!

- **November 25—Light the Night.** Holiday tree lighting and lights parade.

We have had some great success with these events thus far, but it takes many hands!

If you are part of a group that would like to volunteer to help with one of the events, please let us know.

You can email volunteeroldtownevents@old-town.org.

We will be in touch when we receive the message.

Together we will make these some great events for our community!

Old Town Finance

By Danielle Berube
Finance Director

Happy New Year!

The City’s website offers citizens the ability to re-register vehicles, pay taxes and sewer fees, purchase hunting and fishing licenses, and re-register ATV, snowmobile, and boat registrations with the on-line portals.

General Assistance Office

General Assistance is a service administered by the municipality for the immediate aid of persons who are unable to provide the basic essential necessities to maintain themselves or their families.

The General Assistance office operates by appointment only on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

General Assistance can be reached by telephone at 827-3991, ext. 107, or by email at otwelfare@old-town.org.

Upcoming due dates:

- 30-day notices will be mailed in February for any unpaid 2022 sewer fees with liens issued in March.
- 2023 Real Estate and Personal Property Tax bills are due March 8, 2023.

2023 Waste Water Pollution Billing schedule:

Service dates	Due dates
January-March	April 28
April-June	July 28
July-September	October 28
October-December	January 28

Library: Story Walk, park passes, cribbage and games, sit 'n stitch, and much more

Spring is just around the corner, and with it, more opportunities for outdoor activities!

- We will have Maine State Park and Botanical Garden passes available to check out with your library card.
- The Story Walk in the garden around the library is updated monthly during Spring, Summer, and Fall, so be sure to stop by and see the new story.
- Our Library of Things collection is circulating! We have ukuleles, Giant Jenga, Yardzee, and several other indoor and outdoor games and things available to check out with your library card.
- Coming soon to the collection this year are 2 kayaks from Old Town Canoe. Visit the library for more details.

* * *

Our hours of operation are Monday and Tuesday, 10am-7pm; Wednesday-Friday, 10am-5pm; and Saturday, 10am-1pm.

Feel free to come in and browse the collection or use our public internet access computers.

We are still offering curbside pickup service for those who would prefer it.

Utilize our catalog to request items, or give us a call, and we would be happy to help with your selections (207-827-3972).

* * *

Our Children's programming has been very busy in our downstairs meeting rooms.

Toddler Time, intended for children ages 1-3, is on Mondays and Thursdays at 10:30am.

The after-school **Club Library** will be continuing through the end of the school year and is held from



2:30-4:30 on Wednesdays (PreK-2nd grade) and Thursdays (3rd-5th grade).

Also, back by popular demand, **Lego Club** (for children K-5th grade) is held from 3:00 - 4:30 on the 3rd Monday of the month during the school year.

Contact Ms. Cindy at the library for more details on children's events.

* * *

One of our meeting rooms is open on Thursday mornings for Cribbage, Cards, & Games. Anyone who would like to use the space for gaming is free to come from 10-12.

We also have a Sit 'n Stitch group that meets from 1-3 on Thursday afternoons for knitting, sewing, and other handicrafts.

Check our Facebook and website for more adult programs.

* * *

Our "Virtual Branch" is still available to find video streaming,

eBooks and e-Audiobooks, online learning, genealogy and other database resources, tickets to theatre events, and more.

Highlights include:

• **Comics Plus** - With Comics Plus, you have unlimited access to over 20,000 digital comics, graphic novels, and manga from more than one hundred publishers. Every title is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, on your computer, tablet, or phone—no holds or wait lists required.

• **Kanopy** - the popular on-demand film streaming service. Use your OTPL card to access more than 30,000 of the world's best films, which can be streamed from any computer, television, mobile device or platform by downloading the Kanopy app for iOS, Android, AppleTV, Chromecast or Roku. Made possible with James Gilman Memorial Funds,

Kanopy also offers a wide array

of Great Courses, and a large collection of enriching, educational, and entertaining content for children.

• **cloudLibrary** - Want to expand your reading experience with eBooks and e-audiobooks? All you need is an OTPL card to gain access to the digital content you want to read. CloudLibrary's easy one-click borrowing is available for your smartphone, e-reader, or computer, and you can use advanced filtering to create customized "shelves", for optimal reading preferences. Now with access to 80,000+ more e-audiobooks!

• **Ancestry Library Edition** - available for use in the library. The world's most popular consumer online genealogy resource, this collection holds billions of records in census data, photos, directories, vital records, and more.

• **Digital Maine Library Resources** - a "one stop shopping" experience for information on all kinds of subjects. You will find thousands of magazines, newspapers, and references available through this expansive online resource.

• **Story Time & Simple Crafts with Miss Cindy** - a great way for young people and their families to stay connected with beautiful books, craft activities, and Miss Cindy. Visit our YouTube channel and enjoy lots of great story time offerings.

* * *

Use our website for more information about what's going on at the Old Town Public Library (old-town.lib.me.us) and follow our Facebook and Instagram accounts for reading recommendations, lists of new items added to our collection, and upcoming programming announcements.

Code Enforcement: Many projects underway, more to come

By David C. Russell

Code Enforcement Officer

With 2023, upon us it is not too early to begin your spring and summer project planning. In fact, if you are planning any sort of projects that will require professional trades people, you will need to start lining them up now, as most contractors are booked months in advance.

Below is a follow-up on projects that were ongoing this past fall.

• The construction of two new three-unit apartment buildings on Brunswick Street. (Completed and occupied)

• The conversion of the old Jefferson Street School into a twelve-unit apartment building. (Being drywalled)

• There is also a five mega-watt solar array to be constructed on the Airport property. (Completed and delivering power to the electrical grid)

• There are three new dwellings in various stages of construction on Poplar Street.

• A large remodeling project is underway in the old Old Town Canoe building that housed the store. This will be utilized as office space, conference rooms and lab testing new products.

• A project that was site developed a number of years ago has been sold to new owners. They have come in and received the first

four permits out of 20 needed to construct six-unit buildings. (Currently one building has been wired, plumbed, and insulated with dry-wall beginning soon. One building is constructed and closed in with electrical and plumbing to begin soon. Two are in the framing stage. There have also been four more foundations put in the ground.)

• A new owner bought the property at 1123 Main Street and has received Planning Board approval to relocate four, four-unit buildings from University Park to be put on new foundations.

With the afore mentioned and all of the unknown projects that are sure to begin this winter and into spring and summer, I will continue to stay busy.

* * *

So, if you are in the early stages of planning a project or want to have your project shovel read for this fall or next spring's construction season, please contact me with any questions you may have. I would like to reiterate the same advice once again as I offered in the last quarterly. While this information may seem redundant, I feel it is important to remember:

I always suggest that you give me a call before you get too far along in the planning stages to determine whether a permit is required and if your project is even feasible/ al-

lowed. I pride myself in 99% of the time finding a way for your dream to become a reality. For some construction projects, such as siding, roofing, and fences there are no permits required. However, do you know if the siding you are going over is asbestos, or how many layers of shingles are permitted to be shingled over. Do you really know where your property line is and if it is true that you must put the good side of the fence facing your neighbor's property? What size does my new bedroom window need to be to meet egress standards. How high does the railing on my new deck have to be and do I even need a railing on it? Is a permit for a deck or a shed required? The list goes on and on. Most accessory structures, decks, sheds, and garages require a building permit. Set back distances from property lines vary between zoning districts and upon an accessory structure being attached or detached to the primary structure. These are important items to find out before venturing too far into a project.

Our permit fees are very reasonable and are assessed based upon the type of construction you are doing. For instance, remodeling fees, with no additional square footage added are based on the following:

- <\$1,000 of construction costs = \$25.00

- \$1,000 - \$4,999 of construction costs = \$35.00
- \$5,000 - \$9,999 of construction costs = \$50.00
- \$10,000-20,000 of construction costs = \$65.00
- Over \$20,000 of construction costs the fee is \$4.00 per thousand of cost.

Permit fees for additions and accessory structures are based on the square footage of the addition / structure. We also require and issue both internal and external plumbing permits, electrical permits, sign permits as well as permits for all commercial applications.

* * *

Important new legislation!

Fuel Gas detectors are required to be installed in all new and existing multi-family dwellings and commercial buildings beginning January 1, 2022.

Call for information.

* * *

As you can see it is an easy one stop shopping department for all your permitting needs. Please do not hesitate to pick up the telephone and let me help you get your project under way.

I look forward to lending you any assistance you may require. You may contact me, David Russell, at 827-3965 ext. 205 or at drussell@old-town.org.



Public Works: Winter snow removal priorities, landfill consolidation

Well winter is here, and warmer temperatures and the lack of precipitation may not be good for the winter sports enthusiasts but it's good for the snow removal season and keeping those energy bills down.

The Public Works department has been prepared for the winter with all materials stocked up and equipment is serviced and ready for action.

Clearing of streets during a storm is our priority, and we ask that you observe the winter on-street parking ban that allows us to be the most efficient and safe during a snow removal event.

Maine law does not allow individuals to push snow across public roads or pile snow in sidewalks and public ways, this helps again with a safe and efficient snow removal operation both during a storm and after as we try and clean up.

Sidewalks are cleared as soon as the streets are cleared, and to clear the 22 miles of sidewalks, we prioritize from the schools first, then the downtown area and outlying sidewalks are done after that.

We have had an increase in sidewalk snowblower damage this year as debris has been pushed into the walks and the blower's augers try to chew it up, bricks, rocks, rebar, and occasionally buried trash get sucked into the augers and damage the machines. Again we ask that you try and keep from piling snow in



Crews excavate city's Construction and Demolition Debris Landfill.

the sidewalks to help alleviate the problem.

We have moved the snow dump from the Old Town canoe site on Brunswick Street to the Public Works Garage on airport road, which will make the spring clean up a bit tidier.

Christmas trees can still be dropped off there, across from City Hall on Middle Street, for recycling.

* * *

In other department news, the

relocation of the city's Construction Demolition Debris Landfill located at the Gilman Falls Transfer Site is underway and should be completed by mid-February.

This will consolidate the city's landfills and return the site to its native condition, allowing for future development and eliminating the MDEP's requirement for continued testing and monitoring.

* * *

It's still early but we have al-

ready scheduled the annual Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event at the transfer site for June 10, 2023. Details will be posted on the City's social media sites and web site soon.

Stay tuned for information on the City's annual spring clean-up as well.

Stay warm, Stay safe and enjoy the winter while it lasts.

Pollution Control: Winter is good time for maintenance

The winter months are a good time for the staff at Pollution Control to do maintenance and repairs at the plant and seven pump stations.

Staff has been working on one set of Rotating Biological Contactors (RBC's). The RBC units are over 30 years old so the work is scheduled preventive maintenance.

We will be replacing about a dozen pieces of framework and installing reinforcement disks to tighten up loose modules. Once we complete the work on this set of RBC's we will concentrate on the other set of RBC's.

The majority of our treatment process is done with the RBC units so it is very important to keep them running properly.

* * *

There are seven pump stations throughout the City. Six of the stations have two pumps and one has three pumps. Staff will be inspecting these pumps. This usually requires changing oils, drive belts, and possibly impellers and wear plates. This is also preventive maintenance.

* * *

Staff is continuing with flow monitoring required by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). We have five portable flow meters throughout the City. The goal is to find areas where rain water impacts the wastewater flow.



We have been conducting this flow study for over two years. At the end of the summer the flow data will be studied and a report will be sent to the DEP.

* * *

As always the Pollution Control Staff is asking everyone to not flush things that should not be flushed, including "flushable wipes." These items

include but are not limited to baby wipes, Chlorox wipes, paper towels, etc. These items should never be flushed as they only cause problems in sewer lines and could cause a sewer blockage and backup into a homeowner's basement.

Also, please do not pour used cooking oil and grease down your sink. These items also cause problems in the sewer lines.

A message from the Old Town City Clerk's Office

By Laura Engstrom
207-827-3965, ext. 122
lengstrom@old-town.org

Congratulations to returning Councilors Carol May and Timothy Folster, who were reelected to the Old Town City Council for another 3-year term at the November 2022 Municipal Election.

2023 City Council Council President

Linda McLeod (2020 - 2023)
171 Bennoch Road 207-827-6211 (H)
linda.mcleod@roadrunner.com

Council Vice-President

Christian Pushor (2021 - 2024)
144 Middle Street 207-441- 5203 (C)
cpushor@hotmail.com

Councilors

Carol May (2022-2025)
7 Oak Street 207-478-9012
mannyunt@aol.com

Michael May (2021-2024)
7 Oak Street 207-478-1640
michael.may@rsu34.org

Timothy Folster (2022-2025)
77 Sewall Drive 207-827-8763
tfols04468@icloud.com

Stanley Peterson (2020-2023)
45 Pride Street 207-659-0246
stan.peterson4943@gmail.com

David Wight (2020-2023)
302 Woodland Avenue 207-852-3531
councilorwight@gmail.com

Our Office is pleased to announce a redesigned City Clerk's website with improved user navigation, easier access portals to City Council meeting agendas, minutes, and audio/video. Links to Vital record requests, marriage intentions, business licensing and an online dog registration portal are available via this website.



Laura Engstrom

City Council Meetings are held the first Monday of every month at 6:00 pm in the City Hall Council Chambers, 2nd floor, 265 Main St.

Committee Meetings are held the third Monday of every month at the same place and same time as above. The public is always invited to attend, and you can view the agenda the Friday before the meeting on our website.

Enjoy the rest of winter and let's cross our fingers that Punxsutawney Phil didn't see his shadow on Feb. 2.

—Best regards,
Laura Engstrom, City Clerk

OTFD: new firefighter/EMT; crews trained on Lucas Devices

Please join us in welcoming our most recent FF/EMT Mikaela Pechar, who was hired by Old Town Fire Rescue in December 2022. She was

born and raised in Nebraska where her family still lives.

She graduated from Creighton University in Nebraska in 2021 where she played Division 1 softball and graduated with a bachelor's degree in life-style management.

It has been a long standing goal of hers to become a Firefighter/EMT. After completing a month-long in-house training program, she has been assigned to C shift and began emergency responses mid-January.

* * *

Crews were recently trained on the new Lucas Devices that were purchased in conjunction with the City of Old Town and a Penobscot County Unorganized Territory grant.

These automatic CPR machines automatically perform high quality CPR. This can free up several responders during a cardiac arrest and allow them to perform other lifesaving skills.

Both of our ambulances are equipped with one of these devices.

* * *

Old Town Fire Rescue would like to remind everyone to keep your home entrances free of snow and ice for easier access for emergency personal.

Here are a few other winter safety reminders:

Heat Your Home Safely.

Keep anything that can burn 3 feet away from any heat sources like fireplaces, wood stoves, radiators or space heater.

Never use your oven to heat your home.

Always keep chimneys and vents clear of snow and ice for proper ventilation, which will help to prevent

carbon monoxide poisoning.

• Power Outages.

—Never Use Candles for Emergency Lighting.



Firefighter/EMT Mikaela Pechar

—Always use flashlights and stock up on extra batteries.

—Keep portable generators outside away from windows, and as far away from your home as possible.

* * *

Planning an outdoor activity?

Incidents of ice fishing and skating mishaps have already made the news this winter in Maine.

Always make sure to practice safety on the ice on local lakes, ponds and rivers regardless of your activity this time of year.

Check for and stay away from any cracks or melting ice as these are signs that the ice isn't stable.

The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife has these General Ice Thickness Guidelines (<https://www.maine.gov/ifw/fishing-boating/fishing/ice-safety-tips.html>):

GENERAL ICE THICKNESS GUIDELINES

These guidelines are for new, clear (blue) ice on lakes and ponds.

- Ice is never 100% safe!
- White ice or "snow ice" is only about half as strong as new clear ice.
- **Under 4"**—STAY OFF
- **4"**—may allow for Ice fishing or other recreational activities on foot
- **5"-7"**—often allows for a Snowmobile or ATV
- **8" - 12"** of good ice supports most cars or small pickups
- **12" - 15"** will likely hold a medium sized truck

PLEASE NOTE: These thicknesses are merely guidelines for new, clear, solid ice. Many factors other than thickness can cause ice to be unsafe. Always check before you go!

Slow down. It's harder to control or stop your vehicle on a slick or snow-covered surface. Watch for pedestrians walking on streets and at crossings.

Navigating Around Snow Plows. Don't crowd a snow plow or travel beside it. Snow plows travel slowly, make wide turns, stop often, overlap lanes, and exit the road frequently.

However, the road behind an active snow plow is safer to drive on. If you find yourself behind a snow plow, stay behind it or use caution when passing.

Old Town Police: Seat belts, addiction, winter driving

Please join Old Town Police Department in congratulating Officer Brandon Ancil for graduating from the 42nd Basic Law Enforcement Training Program on December 16th at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy after 18 weeks of training.

We are excited to have Officer Ancil back working the evening shift.

* * *

The Old Town Police Department recognizes the health and safety benefits of wearing your seat belt. Maine law requires all occupants to be properly secured. This fall Detective Canwell completed her National Child Passenger Safety Certification and is a certified car seat technician. If you or someone you know would like a car seat inspected to ensure it is safe for the road, please call the Old Town Police Department at 827-3984 to set up an appointment.

* * *

As a reminder, the Winter Parking Ban started November 1st

and runs through April 30th. Any vehicle parked on the street after midnight until 6 am will be issued a parking ticket.

* * *

If you've gotten a parking ticket, the Old Town Police continues with the tradition of accepting an alternative payment for parking tickets.

For the last five years, in lieu of paying your ticket you can bring in \$10.00 in non-perishable food items to the Police Department or City Hall, and we will then mark your ticket as paid!

We donate the food to many of local food banks, schools and churches in Old Town.

* * *

As winter sets in and the days get longer we want to remind anyone struggling with addiction that you are not alone and you can overcome whatever battle you are fighting right now.

The Overdose Prevention Through Intensive Outreach, Naloxone, and Safety program (OPTIONS), is available. The purpose of this initiative is to engage with individuals who are struggling with drug/alcohol addiction and connect them with recovery services and treatment.

Your addiction does not define you. There is a better life for you free of addiction and we at Old Town PD would love to help direct you to the resources that you need.

If you or someone you know could benefit from "OPTIONS", please contact the Old Town Police Department at 827-3984 or stop by the police department at 150 Brunswick Street.

* * *

Now that winter is finally here we would like to remind everyone of a few Winter Driving Safety Tips: Stay Alert. Keep your gas tank close to full whenever possible and on longer trips plan enough time to stop to stretch, get something to eat, return calls or text messages, and change drivers or rest if you feel drowsy.

* * *

Avoid Risky Driving Behaviors. You know the rules: Do not text or drive distracted; obey posted speed limits; and always drive sober. Both alcohol and drugs, whether legal or illicit, can cause impairment.

It is illegal to drive impaired by any substance in all states – no exceptions. Alcohol and drugs can impair the skills critical for safe and responsible driving such as coordination, judgment, perception, and reaction time.



Scott Wilcox

Old Town Municipal Airport: Many improvements by city, Maine DOT, FAA have made airport a viable general aviation hub for local, transient pilots

The Old Town Municipal Airport provides the residents and local pilots in neighboring communities the opportunity to pursue their private pilot's license and the infrastructure to store and use their aircraft.

In the last 8 years, the City of Old Town along with the Maine DOT and the FAA have invested close to \$12 million developing Dewitt Field into a viable general aviation hub for local and transient pilots.

A few projects which have enhanced our operating abilities include the addition of a new 6 bay T-hangar, a new beacon tower, reconstruction of both runways, apron expansion, a 20-year lease with Customs and Border Protections Air-Marine unit, land leases for private hangars, updated and more efficient sewer pump station, up to date weather station that can be monitored on the City web site in real time, and the terminals renovation.

This spring we will finish the Taxiway B project connecting the Apron to the threshold of Runway 30. This will allow aircraft to takeoff without back taxiing the runway, making it safer for landings and takeoffs.

* * *

Northwoods Air decided last fall to locate their operations on Dewitt Field. They bring with them



Old Town Municipal Airport seaplane base.

15 additional aircraft that will be based here, along with home office and maintenance facility.

They are planning on a spring start to building their facility.

Jason Perkins and his wife Linee have also decided to build their aircraft repair facility on the airfield, specializing in aircraft fabric coverings.

We will also be doubling our apron this spring

to accommodate the increase of aircraft.

* * *

The airport is open from 8am to 4pm. Please stop in and look around.

We are very proud of the improvements and are very willing to show the residents of Old Town their airport.

Economic and Community Development

Riverfest Dates Announced for 2023:

Riverfest 2023 will be held Friday September 22nd and Saturday September 25th. Plan on fireworks, food, and live entertainment in the park Friday night. Saturday will include the morning parade then activities, food and vendor booths, demonstrations, crafters, and car show. We will then have food trucks and the DTOT Block Party late Saturday afternoon and evening. For more information, please contact the planning committee via email at riverfestoldtown@gmail.com. We are always looking for partners, volunteers, and sponsors to help make this memorable event happen each year.

City Purchases 354 Main St. to Help with Food Insecurity:

To assist the Caring Community Cupboard in its mission to provide food assistance to the local community, the City of Old Town purchased the building at 354 Main Street.

The food pantry had been leasing the building from its former owner, Donna Ketchen, for the past year. Each lease payment made was graciously credited to the purchase price of the building.

The City of Old Town will continue to lease the building to the Caring Community Cupboard until the purchase price of the building has been recouped.

City leaders believed that the ability to have a safe and easily accessible food pantry was important in their decision to purchase the building. Linda Bryant, Board of Directors President, said "the Caring Community Cupboard is thrilled to have such a tremendous outpouring of support from the City of Old Town. It really shows how much the city cares about the well-being of its residents. With the City's support, we are able to continue the fight against hunger in Old Town and the surrounding communities."

The food pantry is open every

Tuesday from 10 am to 2 pm and 4 pm to 6 pm. Caring Community Cupboard is a member agency of the Good Shepherd Food Bank.

CCC works closely with Good Shepherd, the Old Town Hannaford Supermarket, and the generosity of countless volunteers and donations to get food in the hands of over 100 local families on a weekly basis.

For more information and to find ways to help please contact Linda Bryant at bryantlinda1954@gmail.com

Downtown Old Town (DTOT)

This January, DTOT hosted its first "Fire and Ice" event to commemorate the Ice Storm of '98, 25 years later.

The event included the Old Town Little League's "Bring the Heat" chili cook off, Old Town High School's Project Graduation potato bar fundraiser, and the Old Town Rotary fundraiser for local heating assistance.

The Old Town Elks Lodge hosted the beer garden in the DTOT Inflatable Igloo, while people watched the ice carving demonstration and warmed up by the fire pits.

The Elks Lodge also provided the DJ for the street dance in the heated tent.

Kosta's and Kanu provide gift cards to help raise money for local heating assistance.

Over \$700 was raised and will be given to Penquis to distribute to people in need of heating assistance.

Next year's "Fire and Ice" will be January 20, 2024.

Downtown Old Town is Looking for Volunteers

As DTOT completes its application to become a Maine Downtown Affiliate, we are seeking volunteers.

If you live or work in the City of Old Town and have an interest



in seeing our Downtown develop and grow, please contact EJ Roach, Director of Economic & Community Development at eroach@old-town.org or (207) 827-3965.

DTOT is a group of business owners, residents, educators, elected officials, and staff, focused on the re-development of Downtown Old Town.

DTOT has been working since December of 2021 with the Maine Development Foundation and the Maine Downtown Center to continue its efforts on revitalizing Down-



town. By using the 40-year-old Main Street Four-Point Approach®, DTOT is focusing its efforts on economic vitality, design, organization, and promotion.

Caring Community Cupboard serving over 100 families

The Caring Community Cupboard (CCC) is a non-profit organization that works hard to alleviate food insecurity and eliminate hunger in the greater Old Town area.

We are now serving over 100 families every week. Since we opened our doors, several area businesses, social organizations, and individuals have supported our fundraising efforts, made financial contributions, or hosted food drives to support our cause.

The City of Old Town recently took a strong stand against hunger by purchasing our building to ensure our continued success. The giving spirit of our community affords us the opportunity to lift up the people that need it, and we could not do it without the very generous support of our community.

If you would like to help, your monetary or non-expired food donation can be dropped off on Mondays from 10 am - 2 pm or Tuesdays from 8 am-6 pm.

* * *

The CCC helps families and individuals by providing a safe,



non-judgmental, friendly place for shoppers to come and choose items to supplement their weekly meals, or to keep their body and home healthy with personal hygiene and household cleaning products.



This service is for anyone who needs it. The sign-up process is simple and no probing questions are asked.

The CCC is open to shoppers on Tuesdays from 10am-Noon and 4

pm-6 pm.

If you need it, don't be shy. Come see us. For more information, or to find ways you can volunteer or help out, please call the Director, Linda Bryant, at 207-852-4487.

CITY OF OLD TOWN PARTNERS WITH THE OLD TOWN-ORONO YMCA TO OFFER FREE YOUTH MEMBERSHIPS!



Old Town City Councilors unanimously voted to enter into a partnership with the Old Town-Orono YMCA to provide FREE annual Youth Memberships to all school age children who reside in Old Town!

We are committed to developing new generations of changemakers who will create a community we all want to live in. We believe every child deserves a place where they can be, belong and become a part of our community. Together, we envision communities where everyone has the opportunity to make healthy choices, gain confidence, make connections, and feel secure at every stage of life. This partnership will provide the youth in Old Town with a safe space to learn, grow and thrive.

We would like to thank the City and Councilors for recognizing a need, taking the necessary steps to make a difference and for their continued commitment to providing youth development opportunities in our community.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A YOUTH MEMBERSHIP?

- Access to everything our facility has to offer!*
 - Family Swim
 - Climbing Gym
 - Basketball Gym
 - Fitness Center
 - Indoor walking and running tracks
 - Indoor Turf
 - Open Gymnastics
- Family Events
 - Easter Bunny Breakfast, Healthy Kids Day, Family Halloween Spectacular, Haunted Y, Holiday Extravaganza, Parent Nights Out
- The Y opens access to opportunities, relationships and resources for kids to be who they are and become who they want to be.
- Early Registration and Discount Prices for Programming*
 - Seasonal Youth Sports
 - Travel & Rec Basketball, Soccer, Football, Flag Football, Tennis, Field Hockey, Wrestling
 - Seasonal Sports Clinics
 - Martial Arts
 - Y-Arts Programs
 - Dance Lessons, Art Classes, Theater & Music
 - Gymnastics Lessons
 - Competitive Gymnastic & Cheer Teams
 - Tumbling Classes & Clinics
 - Swim Lessons
 - Competitive Swim Team
 - Batting Cages
 - Lifeguard, First Aid & CPR Certification

Program availability varies each session.

To sign up, please visit the Old Town-Orono YMCA to complete the required paperwork and provide proof of residency (valid driver's license or recent utility bill preferred).

Please reach out to our Membership Director, Macie Cote, with any questions at macie.cote@otoymca.org or 207-827-YMCA.



OTHS Academic Awards Breakfast

On Friday, February 3rd, Old Town High School celebrated over 100 students in its annual Academic Awards Breakfast.

This tradition of honoring our students was started in 1990s by then-Principal Donald Sturgeon.

We recognize students in the winter at the Academic Awards Breakfast and in the spring at Spring Awards Night.

Students are invited to the ceremonies based on their honor roll history. Students who earn Highest Honors in a quarter earn 10 points, High Honors earns 5 points and Honors is 2 points.

Once a student has earned 40 points, a student earns their Academic Letter and insignia. They earn their service bar at 70 points and then for each 20-point increment after that.

Students were treated to breakfast provided by our Food Service



Staff—Scones and Smoothies—which are always well received.



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Prepare for a career in education by completing one of several degree plans through courses, fieldwork, service learning, and student teaching. Education faculty will assist you in gaining content knowledge, teaching skills, and developing personal qualities necessary to the changing classroom of the 21st century. Collaboration with peers and faculty will help you to develop the necessary competencies of Maine's Common Core Teaching Standards.

Through our residency program, candidates are often able to work full-time in schools while completing their field experience and student teaching.

Upon successful completion of all program and state requirements, graduates will be eligible to apply for Maine Teacher Certification.

Contact UMA Admissions
for more information:

Phone: 207.621.3465

Toll Free: 1.877.862.1234

Email: umaadm@maine.edu

Old Town High School Athletic Hall of Fame

On Saturday, January 7th, Old Town High School inducted its 9th class into the Athletic Hall of Fame during a ceremony in the high school cafeteria.

The event was attended by family, friends and community members. This was the first class inducted since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the plan is to resume with annual classes inducted returning to pre-pandemic form. After a welcome from Old Town High School Principal Scott Gordon, Clem Labree served as the master of ceremonies for the event, which featured each candidate saying a few words about their memories at Old Town High School and how they have applied some of the lessons they learned to life after high school.

Tia Jackson Norton - Class of 2014

Tia was a dominant force in high school track during her time at Old Town High School. In

outdoor track she was the high jump state champion as a junior with a school record jump of 5' 4". She was a four-time



outdoor track all-state selection, and a four-time all-PVC in multiple events. She was a multiple time team most outstanding and most valuable performer and was a three-time qualifier for the New England Championships. She remains the outdoor school record holder in the 200 meter dash, the 4x400 meter relay and the high jump.

Competing in indoor track, Tia was a two-time state champion in the high jump, and a four-time all-state selection. She was also named all-PVC four times in multiple events, and qualified four times for the indoor New England Championships.

Her indoor track legacy burns strong as she still holds six school records—in the 200-meter, 300-meter, 400-meter, 4x200 meter relay, the high jump, and the pentathlon.

Tia also played field hockey for Old Town, and following graduation ran indoor and outdoor track for the University of Maine.

Adam Richardson - Class of 2014

Adam Richardson helped bring the state title back to Old Town in 2014. He was a three-sport

athlete, playing soccer, basketball, and baseball, and he played them all well.

On the soccer pitch he captained the Coyotes, was named to the PVC Class B First Team and the Class B All-Star team, and was the recipient of the Coaches Award.

He was also captain of the baseball team, which he led to the Eastern Maine Championship



game before being named to the Eastern Maine Class B All-Star team.

Adam spent the winter months patrolling the paint for the basketball team. His senior year he led Old Town to the Eastern Maine Championship and followed that up by winning the State Championship gold ball.

Following graduation, he continued his basketball career at Maine Maritime Academy, where he remains 15th on the all-time scoring list, 13th in rebounds and 7th in assists. In his senior season he was named the North Atlantic Conference Player of the Year.

Jim Walsh - Coach

Coach Walsh coached football and baseball at Old Town High along with being a social studies teacher. He spent 10 seasons guiding the football team from 1983 to 1992. In those 10 seasons he led his team to 5 conference championship games. In 1991 he coached Old Town to a 6-0 win over Orono on a mud-covered field to win the LTC Championship—a game still remembered as one of the greatest in LTC history. His teams only suffered one losing season and finished in the top three of the conference standings in all but three seasons, racking up a combined record of 64-34.



For his efforts he was twice named LTC Coach of the Year and was also selected as a coach in the prestigious Maine Shrine Lobster Bowl. During his time at Old Town, he also coached 28 All-LTC players.

Clem Labree - Class of 1990

Clem graduated in 1990 and enters the Hall of Fame as a contributor. While not suiting up in uniform, he made contributions to the athletic department in a behind-the-scenes capacity, by establishing a sports medicine presence, and helping with facility improvements.

When the Athletic Hall of Fame was in its formative stages, he joined the selection committee and has now helped organize all nine induction ceremonies.



Kate Laverdiere Bartemus - Class of 2001

In cross country Kate was the PVC and regional champion and a state runner-up. She was a two-time Most Outstanding Performer for the cross

country team, a four-time PVC all-conference, three-time all-state selection, three-time New England qualifier, and was named All-New England in her senior year.



In outdoor track Kate was equally impressive,

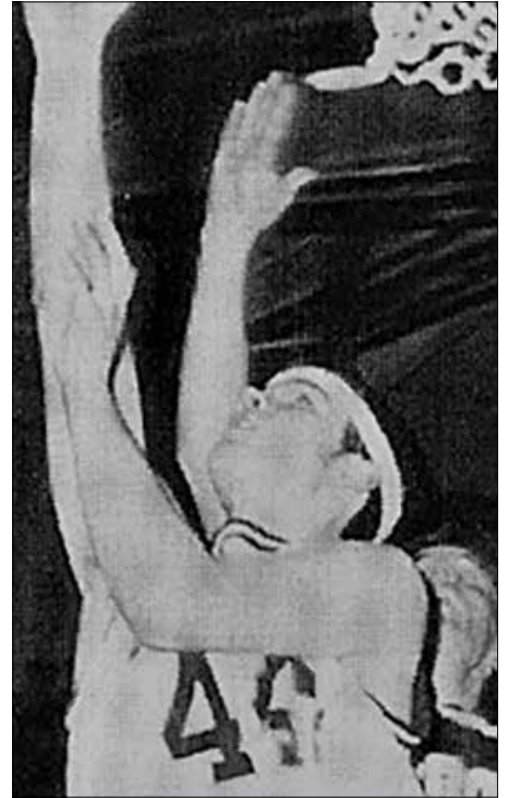
as she was a multiple time team Most Outstanding and Most Valuable Performer, was named PVC All-Conference three times and was an All-State selection two times. She is also part of the school record 4x800 meter relay team, a record still holding strong 20 years later.

Following her graduation, Kate continued her athletic career, running cross country and track at the University of Maine. She still competes today in triathlons, Ironman and CrossFit competitions and the Boston Marathon.

Chad Hayes - Class of 1997

Chad Hayes played basketball and football at Old Town High School. His size and physical presence made him a force to be reckoned with

in both sports, but especially in football, where he was twice named All-LTC tight end and, as a senior, All-LTC defensive tackle.



During this

time, he caught the eye of the football coaches at the University of Maine, where he would play his college ball. In his senior season, he led UMaine to the NCAA playoffs, catching four passes including a touchdown pass in a win over McNeese State, followed by seven more catches and a touchdown against Northern Iowa.

He finished his career as a Black Bear by being named an All-American tight end. He then went on to spend parts of four seasons in the NFL for the Chiefs, Bengals, Titans and Chargers. He also played in NFL Europe for the Berlin Thunder and Frankfurt Galaxy, including World Bowl 12 where he caught 2 passes.

* * *

The Old Town High School Athletic Hall of Fame committee is always accepting nominations for the next year's class of inductees. If you know a former student athlete, coach or contributor who should be in the Hall of Fame, nomination forms can be found in the main office at Old Town High School or by clicking on the "Hall of Fame" page on the Old Town High School website. You can also get forms by going to www.oldtownhalloffame.com and be sure to visit and like the Old Town Hall of Fame on Facebook.

Where to find information about Old Town Athletics:

• **Facebook** - <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100087747578069>

• **Instagram** - https://www.instagram.com/athletics_rsu34/

• **Website** - <https://www.rsu34.org/o/athletics>

Coyote Pride!