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Now that Veazie has taken ownership of 25 acres of parkland, including a mile of shoreline along the west bank of the Penobscot River, the town would like to come up with a name for the park.

The property was given to the town by the Penobscot River Restoration Trust after the demolition of the Veazie Dam and two powerhouses that were part of the dam complex. The dam was removed in 2013 as part of a $60 million project to restore much of the Penobscot River as a free-flowing waterway. The project included removal of the Veazie and Great Works dams, along with improvements to the fishways at the Milford and Howland dams.

The Back-to-School Dinner and Open House at Veazie Community School has become an annual community event. This year, the spaghetti supper was held on Wednesday, Sept. 13, sponsored jointly by the PTO and the Town of Veazie. The servers included Town Council Chair Chris Bagley and Todd Zerfoss (newly nominated to the VCS School Committee), along with the amazing VCS kitchen staff.

The Back-to-School Dinner and Open House at Veazie Community School has become a community event.

Town seeks name for riverfront park on former Veazie Dam site

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2016-17 MEA scores top state average in Literacy, Math, Science, but Cyr urges caution in interpreting test data

Students at Veazie Community School demonstrated improvement in all three of the 2016-17 Maine Educational Assessments (MEA Mathematics, ELA & Science). Superintendent/Principal Matt Cyr said he is happy to see growth in student achievement, but also urges residents to use caution when interpreting the MEA testing data.

The test results are positive, both compared to the state average and the 2015-16 VCS scores.

- Mathematics: 51% of VCS students met or exceeded state expectations in 2016-17, compared to 39% of students statewide and 45% of VCS students in 2015-16.
- English Language Arts/Literacy: 54% of VCS students met or exceeded state expectations in 2016-17, compared to 39% of students statewide and 45% of VCS students in 2015-16.

Maine Educational Assessment (MEA) % At or Above State Expectations

- VCS 16-17
- 16-17 State Avg.
- VCS 15-16

State Referendum Election set for Tuesday, Nov. 7

The State Referendum Election will be held on Tuesday, November 7, 2017. Polls will open at 8 a.m. in the Council Chambers at the Municipal Building and will close at 8 p.m. Absentee ballots will be available on Oct. 10. They can be requested in person, by mail, by phone or go to Maine.gov. If you are not registered to vote you may do so by coming to the Town Office up until 4:30 p.m. on Oct. 16. Starting Oct. 17, you will need to register in person with proof of identity and residency.

To assist you with registration, the Town Office is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Expanded TIF district, improved Veazie ‘brand,’ name for Veazie Dam park, updated RFP policy among Town Council’s goals

The Town Council has worked very hard the last few years to get out as much information to the community as possible. We are pleased to be able to improve those efforts by distributing the Town’s first edition of The Viking.

Over the last several years, the Town Council has established a list of goals. During the 2016/2017 fiscal year the Council created a list of goals that was successfully completed. During our September 25, 2017 Council meeting, we established another list of goals to accomplish during this fiscal year. Some of these goals are a continuation of previous goals that we would like to improve on and others were recommended based on items that have come up over the last few months. The Council would like to present these goals to the community through this edition of The Viking.

One of the opportunities that we are excited about and have set as a goal is to expand our Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district. This process has already started, as we’ve recently hired the professional services provided by Rudman Winchell of Bangor. Rudman Winchell will be assisting with completing the TIF application and giving expert advice to help position the Town to promote business development.

We have set a goal to continue finding ways to brand Veazie. We think Veazie is a desirable community to live in and we want to find ways to promote this. It is our goal to attract home buyers to select Veazie when looking to move to the Bangor area. The Council has started moving forward with this branding goal by working in collaboration with the School Board. Part of this collaboration was to hire Sutherland Weston to prepare a marketing plan. Ultimately our continued improvements with communication and our marketing plan will help with this branding goal.

One of the increased expenses this year was the addition of an ambulance contract with the Town of Orono. During this fiscal year we will be evaluating the effectiveness of this contract. The Council understands the importance of prioritizing ambulance response time, which will be considered during our evaluations.

Now that the old Veazie Hydro Dam property has been transferred to the Town, we want to set some long-term goals for the Park and include the Town’s other trail systems. One of the priorities for the new park will be naming it. We are looking forward to working with the community in coming up with ideas on naming the park.

Over the last several years we have remodeled and made improvements to both the Community Center and Town Office. As things continue to age, we want to set up a capital improvement plan to implement over the next couple of years.

Our final goal for this fiscal year is to update and implement a Request for Proposal (RFP) policy. The goal of this policy is to develop consistency for the bidding process for Town contracts. In addition to consistency, we want a policy that awards contracts to those that are the right fit for Veazie.

As we work towards achieving these goals we encourage you to join us at Town Council Meetings to voice your opinion. The Town Council can also be reached via email.

Sincerely,
Veazie Town Council

Chris Bugley, Chair (cbugley@veazie.net)
Paul Messer (pmesser@veazie.net)
Michael Reid (mreid@veazie.net)
Aaron Turcotte (aturcotte@veazie.net)
Jeff Manter (jmanter@veazie.net)

Veazie Dam park
(Continued from page 1)
After the dam was removed, two powerhouses and other structures related to it were demolished, and a small park was developed on the site last year. The park includes a hand-carry boat ramp for kayakers and canoeists.

The process for selecting a name for the new park is still being developed.

Town Manager Mark Leonard said suggestions from Veazie residents will be welcome and can be sent to his email address, mleonard@veazie.net.

He said he might ask a core group to narrow the list down to three or four names, which could be placed on the town ballot in November—or on an informal straw ballot that would be given to voters on Election Day.

The deed to the park property was conveyed to the town on Monday, September 11. The following Saturday, September 16, a team of nine volunteers—six Veazie residents and three University of Maine students, gathered at the park for a quick cleanup effort.

The Viking is published by the Town of Veazie and Veazie Community School for the citizens of Veazie.

Mark Leonard, Town Manager
Matthew Cyr, Superintendent and Principal

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

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Mr. and Mrs. Swackhamer pull weeds and invasive purple loosestrife as part of the clean-up.

The Veazie Town Office, Fire Station, and Police Station.

Volunteers spent two hours on a variety of clean-up tasks at the new park area.
2016-17 MEA scores top state average

(Continued from page 1)

exceeded state expectations in 2016-17, compared to 52% of students statewide and 50% of VCS students in 2015-16.

• Science: 82% of VCS students met or exceeded state expectations in 2016-17, compared to 62% of students statewide and 57% of VCS students in 2015-16.

“Our scores have improved, but we don’t want to overreact to the data,” Matt says. “We’re a small school, with only a few students in ten grades. The percentages are real, but they represent a small number of students who actually take the assessment. Our scores could be a random variation or they could be a spike related to a specific cohort of students. We don’t want to cheer too loud and then see our numbers fall in the future.”

Matt says he would prefer to monitor trends over a period of time as opposed comparing one specific year to the next. However, he says he will continue to dig into the data to identify areas VCS can improve.

That said, Matt points out that the dramatic improvement in the test results for science may be related to the new science curriculum at VCS.

“The entire staff has been working hard on professional development, and we’ve implemented our new science curriculum, STEMscopes, at all grade levels,” he says. STEMscopes is modeled after the National Science Teachers Association’s Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).

Matt Cyr
Principal/Superintendent

Veazie Community School has had an incredible start to the 2017-2018 school year—thanks largely in part to our amazing students and staff, along with overwhelming support from the community. Many capital improvement projects were addressed over the summer including landscaping, paving and re-engineering the entrance roofing structure for reasons of safety and structural integrity (nearly one-third of our entrance project was funded by a DOE renovation grant awarded to us this past spring). Efficiency Maine rebates funded close to half the cost of a school-wide LED lighting conversion with a very short 2.5 year ROI (return on investment) resulting in approximately $9,000 in annual savings going forward.

We were awarded multiple Perlof Family Foundation grants to help develop and expand our horticulture (Farm to Table) program and STEM programs.

We now have a state-of-the-art greenhouse structure along with a series of raised beds and have already started serving VCS garden vegetables in our hot lunch program. The other Perlof grant purchased two, mobile 3D printers to go along with the two we already had.

Our Makerspace is now home to the Viking Robotics program as well as a location where students can explore multiple STEM projects, including Raspberry Pi3 computers, Makey Makey programming stations, and start-stop animation cameras. Connected to our Makerspace is a revamped Library Media Center, complete with many new book selections, new seating options, and a web-based catalog system.

Schedule changes have enabled us to place greater focus on individualized learning plans for students through RTI and acceleration. Students now have ‘blocked’ specials time along with mixed groupings and teachers have longer, uninterrupted teaching blocks accompanied with daily team meeting times.

Multiple grants and Federal resources have enabled us to provide a significant increase in professional development opportunities for staff, the development of STEM after school programs, and a STEM Summer Learning Program.

Student learning, safety and growth is consistently at the forefront of the decision-making process which is outlined in our Strategic and Capital Improvement Plans. At a time when many area schools are reporting a decline in student population, VCS enrollment is growing. Our test scores show improvement across the board, and school pride and spirit is on an upward trend. Our staff will continue to place students first, look for ways to become more efficient, improve our craft, and provide the students of Veazie with an educational experience forged in high expectations.

I want to thank the citizens of Veazie for their ongoing support and look forward to another successful school year.

Superintendent’s message

Very strong start to 2017-18, thanks to staff, students, community

By Matthew D. Cyr

180 served at Back-to-School dinner

(Continued from page 1)

After dinner, families and students were encouraged to tour the building, where they saw:

• Classroom displays showing a variety of projects and programs.

• The new VCS greenhouse and horticulture program.

• The rebooted Library, along with new furniture and Makerspace.

• Flexible seating options in many of the VCS classrooms.

A total of 180 plates of spaghetti were served, and over $800 in donations were raised for the PTO’s Visual & Performing Arts Fund.

Three years ago, the PTO decided to create a separate account for visual and performing arts funding requests, which support the school’s practice of offering dramatic productions and musicals at all grade levels.

The fund covers such items as play scripts, props, musical instruments for students in financial need, musical instrument rentals, field trips for visual and performing arts, and improvements to the lighting and sound systems on the VCS stage.

For example, thanks to the PTO, VCS now has an audio system with eight wireless microphones...
The Town of Veazie has contracted with the Bangor law firm of Rudsman Winchell to hire a consultant to help the town develop additional Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts within the community.

The TIF consultant will be Noreen Norton, an economic development consultant at Rudsman Winchell.

Town Manager Mark Leonard said the goal is to give the town the ability to help both new businesses that want to move into Veazie or existing businesses that want to expand their operations in Veazie.

“The kind of issues we’re facing are our business tax base, which will help with property taxes,” he said.

Most of the town’s capital paving projects for 2017 have been completed, including paving of Oak Grove Street, Ridgeway Drive, and the beginning of East Summer Drive.

At its September 11th meeting, the Town Council decided to add three projects to the current list, including the Wedgewood Drive project, which were completed around the end of September, and Hillside Drive and the Community Center parking lot (at the corner of Olive and Flagg streets), which are scheduled for completion in early October.

The council also decided to delay reconstruction of Davis Drive until next spring, when it will be combined with the reconstruction of Wedgewood Drive. Both projects will include installation of new water lines and storm drains.

Town Manager Mark Leonard said the Davis Drive project was delayed partly because the paving season was closing in—paving can’t be done at temperatures below 45 degrees F.—but also to minimize the inconvenience to residents.

“Next spring will do both those streets,” he said. “We’re doing them in one season instead of one street in two consecutive seasons, which will mean less disruption to the neighborhood.”

The third street in the neighborhood, Sunset Drive, will undergo a full reconstruction, including a new water line and storm drain, during 2019.

Paving the community center parking lot will mark the final step in a series of improvements to the Community Center which has been completed over the last half-dozen years.

A new sprinkler system was started earlier this season, and work on the roof and heating system will begin.

Earlier improvements at the Community Center included replacement of the roof and heating system.

Officer Jones starts ‘DARE’ program at VCS

Starting this month, Officer Meaghan Jones of the Veazie Police Department will be coming to Veazie Community School each week to lead the school’s DARE program.

The 10-week program involves students at all grade levels, but the focus is on the 5th graders, who have one DARE class with Officer Jones each week.

Officer Jones says she also talks about other issues that 5th graders are concerned with, such as bullying—and specifically cyberbullying.

DARE, which stands for Drug Abuse Resistance Education, is designed to tell students how to avoid drugs and how to deal with peer pressure and bullying—and why those things are important.

“I try to focus on the students’ responsibility as individuals,” she says. “I tell them that it’s important for them to be in control of their own decisions, regardless of peer pressure. I’m pretty blunt with my students on the responsibility issue, because at the end of the day the choices they make are their choices. They own those choices.”

Officer Jones also tries to give her students the tools to help them say no to drugs and alcohol.

“It’s easier for adults to say no, but when you’re 10 or 11 years old, it’s not so easy,” she says. “What’s important to adults isn’t necessarily what’s important to kids. They’re concerned about being liked, fitting in, etc. Unfortunately, some students will make poor choices in order to fit in. I try to give them some tools to help them combat that pressure.”

Noreen Norton, consultant at Rudsman Winchell, to advise Veazie on TIF districts

With that business, we were behind the curve,” Mark said. “For future development opportunities, we want to be ahead of the curve.”

Mark said the TIF districts are often quite complex, but they give the town a tool that can drive economic development.

“That’s how we got the gas plant in Veazie,” he said. “It’s in a TIF district.”

After Noreen was recommended by Rudsman Winchell, she made a presentation to a small group and then to the entire town council. The council agreed to engage her as part of their effort to draw businesses into town.

According to her LinkedIn profile, Norton has more than 20 years of economic development experience in the public and private sectors, including a wide range of projects to generate economic growth, advance community development, and create alliances that benefit both business and public entity interests. She has secured approval of tax increment financing (TIF) districts throughout Maine, ranging from county-wide projects to small business expansions, including commercial, downtown, and residential projects.

Noreen holds an M.B.A. from the University of Maine and a Bachelor’s degree in marketing and business education from the University of Wisconsin-Stout.
2 VPD programs you should know about

If you travel, the Veazie Police Dept. will check your property

Vezzie residents who go on vacation or go away for the winter can ask the police department to check their property while they are gone.

Town Manager Mark Leonard, who also serves as police chief, says the department did property checks for numerous homeowners last year.

“We want to remind people that this service is available,” he says. “Residents have to stop by the town office or the police department and fill out a property check sheet.”

The police will check properties on a daily basis and make sure everything is OK—that the property hasn’t been broken into, the doors are locked, and the windows aren’t broken.

Mark points out that the daily property checks can pay huge dividends.

‘Good Morning’ program offers daily call for seniors

“A lot of seniors feel they don’t want to bother us, but we want to assure them that it’s not a bother.”

That’s what Veazie Town Manager Mark Leonard says about the “Good Morning” program, which is operated by the town’s police and fire departments.

Five people are currently enrolled in the program. On a pre-determined day, a police officer calls to check and make sure everything is OK— that they haven’t fallen or gotten hurt, and that they don’t need anything. On odd-numbered days, the call is made by a firefighter.

Participants fill out a form to provide the police and fire departments with their contact information, emergency contacts, and any medications they take, and who should be contacted in an emergency.

Fire Prevention Week Oct. 8-14; VFD offers reminders for home safety

Fire Prevention Week is the week of October 8-14, and the Veazie Fire Department would like to remind residents of a few simple things they should do to ensure home safety.

All too often, firefighters will hear about smoke alarms being taken down or disconnected because they’ve been set off by smoke from cooking, candles, or cigarette smoking.

“People say they took the battery out because they were cooking and forgot to put it back in,” he says. “Speaking of batteries, Chief Metcalf says smoke alarms need fresh batteries, even if the alarms are hard-wired.

“The most common time for fire emergencies is during a power outage, because people use candles for lighting and burn wood in their fireplaces or wood stoves to keep warm,” he says. “If you don’t have power, your hard-wired smoke alarm won’t work unless it has a backup battery.”

For both regular and hard-wired smoke alarms, the batteries should be changed every year, and a good time to do that is in the fall when you change your clocks from Daylight Savings Time to Eastern Standard Time.

“Change your clock; change your battery,” is the fire prevention slogan.

Chief Metcalf says the firefighters will not only give you the battery, but they’ll install it for you.

“Just give us a call at 945-5627,” he says. “They come to your home within 24 hours.”

Is your child in the correct safety seat for age, height, weight? Is seat installed correctly?

Is your child in the correct child safety seat for their age, height and weight? Is your child safety seat installed correctly? Why is it important for caregivers to know the answers to these questions?

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children in the United States. Nationally, approximately 80% of car seats inspected are found to be installed incorrectly; in Maine, the percentage is closer to 90%.

Many injuries and deaths of children happen as a result of the high misuse rate of car seats, booster seats and seat belts.

The Veazie Police Department is committed to the safety and well-being of area children by having a certified Child Passenger Safety Technician on staff: Officer Brian Nichols. Officer Nichols’ role as a CPS Technician is to provide education to caregivers on the proper selection, installation and use of car seats, boosters and seat belts.

Best Practice is defined as the safest way to transport a child based on the child’s age, weight, height and development level. Caregivers will then have the final decision on their child’s transport based on best practices provided.

Officer Nichols will work with you to schedule a time for the inspection based on your availability. The inspection is done inside a climate controlled bay, so weather is not an issue. Your car seat will be inspected and checked for any recall notices. Officer Nichols will show you how to install your seat properly; then you will be given the opportunity to install it yourself. Education will be given on proper harnessing of your child in the car seat. Education materials will be given and you will discuss issues such as bulkly clothing, unused seat belts, airbags, projectiles and unrelated products.

At the end of the inspection, you will have made the decision on where and how your car seat is installed based on the material given and discussed with Off. Nichols. There is no cost for a car seat inspection.

To schedule a car seat inspection, call the Veazie Police Department at 947-2358. You may, also, contact Off. Nichols via email at bnichols@veaziepd.net.

VEAZIE POLICE OFFICERS GREET STUDENTS AS THEY COME TO SCHOOL. — One of the many unique policies at the Veazie Police Department is that they visit the Veazie Community School almost every morning to welcome the students as they arrive at school. Above, Officer Meghan Jones greets two Pre-K students at the school entrance. Town Manager and Police Chief Mark Leonard says the policy has been in place for about two years. In addition to greeting the students as they arrive at school, police officers also visit the school in the afternoon to greet the students when they go home. Mark says both he and VCS Superintendent Dr. Matt Cyr encourage the police officers to visit the school on a regular basis.
Stools, cushions, beanbag chairs, couches, standing desks, lawn chairs, and even some conventional chairs and desks, those are among the seating choices available to students in grades PreK-8 at Veazie Community School, thanks to a movement toward flexible seating options.

The focus on the learning environment was sparked by 3rd grade teacher Holly Humphrey, who has been looking for some time at what type of seating is best for teaching and learning. Holly’s emphasis was on student perspectives.

“The theory is that if students are able to choose what type of seats they use, they’ll be more comfortable learning,” she says. “They’ll also take ownership of what they think works best for them.”

Holly started experimenting with flexible seating at the end of last year by providing stools with a rounded platform (so students sitting on them can wiggle a bit) and letting her 3rd graders decide where they wanted to sit.

“It worked really well,” she said. “I had fewer behavior issues when the students picked their own seats.”

This fall, she started by having her students try all of the different seats to see what type of seat—and what location—would work best.

“At first, I chose the seats for them to make sure they experienced each one,” she said. “By October, they should be able to do their own choosing.”

Holly said both the students and the parents have been enthusiastic about the new flexible seating plan.

“The kids love it,” she said. “When we had the open house [on September 13], the parents who came into my room said it felt ‘homey’ and had a comfortable, welcoming feeling.”

Most of the elementary grades at VCS have some sort of flexible seating based on their own teaching styles.

“Basically, the teachers decide how far they want to take it,” Holly says.
What's all the DRAMA about at Veazie Community School?

By Laurie Kimball, Grade 1 and 2 Teacher

Yes, you read that correctly! VCS is filled with drama and we're pretty proud of it! Each year you can see anywhere between two and six shows. They range from the smaller classroom plays to the full blown musicals done by an entire school wing.

Teachers really take time to integrate the topic of the play/musical into their curriculum to make learning more meaningful for the students. Just last year the Primary Wing, Pre-K through 2nd Grade, put on Willy Wonka, Jr. Children not only enhanced reading skills, they dove into all subject areas!

Students learned about economics and the history of chocolate as they visited Specialty Sweets. They even made their own candy! Second graders invented their own type of gum and then actually went to the Discovery Museum and made it!

The musicals are always a great team building event. Older students work with younger students to help them read and learn play scripts, which creates common bonds between the students that go beyond the stage.

Teachers work with other classroom and specialty area teachers to help students learn all the various roles in putting on a show. Last spring, the Intermediate Wing, Grades 3 through 5, put on Space Pirates. Students worked together to make scenery and help with the technical aspects. The kids formed new friendships as the grades worked together that continue today.

Students grow as public speakers through theatre. Each year, it becomes easier for them to get up in front of an audience because they start young and gain confidence from each other.

One of the best things to watch is when the cast lines up after their school performance and the entire audience goes through the line to congratulate them. What a confidence builder!

With each performance we put on, the plays and musicals get more advanced. Students and teachers all learn from each other. Just last spring we were able to purchase a couple of microphone headsets. We also add to our costume and scenery inventory each year.

We would love to purchase a lighting system for the gym side of the stage. This would allow the audience to see the performers without shadows.

The PTO has established a Visual and Performing Arts Fund as a means for supporting various VCS programs. In addition to musicals and plays, they have also purchased and rented musical instruments for students in need. At all plays, musicals and concerts, we put out a donation bucket and respectfully ask for your support.

Our annual back-to-school Open House and Community Dinner also serves as a kickoff for our Visual and Performing Arts fundraising efforts. While these are school events, the community is always invited!

So, the next time you hear someone say, “VCS is full of drama,” you look at them and say, “Why yes it is—and so much more!”

Join the VCS PTO!

We help raise money for the school:

- Fall Online Auction
- Cookies Drive
- Visual and Performing Arts Donations
- Hamper and Helps Schools
- Sports Concessions
- Collecting Box Tops

Where does the money go?

- Back to School dinner/open house
- Halloween Howl-a-boo
- Movie Nights
- Parents Night Out
- Concert Snacks
- Family Dance
- Holiday staff breakfast
- Teacher Appreciation Week
- Books 4 Books
- Teacher mini grants
- 5th grade activities
- Summer Learning Program
- Field Trips
- Flex Block Activities
- Visual & Performing Arts
Loyann Worster, Pre-K teacher at VCS, has been working with an adjunct professor at the University of Maine to integrate a variety of fun science and math activities into the pre-K curriculum, using tablets and apps to foster and enhance the students’ creativity.

The professor, Bonnie Blagojevic, has written an article about their work, which has been accepted for publication by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

As a result, Loyann, Bonnie, and two other early childhood educators will give a presentation on “Dramatic digital storytelling: Children develop and share play and story ideas using tablets,” at the NAEYC national convention in Atlanta on November 16.

Loyann said Bonnie, an early childhood education consultant, brought iPads and digital microscopes into Loyann’s pre-K classroom at VCS, and the two of them developed some “real fun STEM [Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math] activities.”

She said they used a program on the iPads to make the children’s drawings come to life.

“Using the iPads, the kids were able take 3D images and make them 3D and moveable,” she said.

“Then they could add voice, move the characters around, and make them talk to one another.”

Then Loyann, Bonnie, and the preschoolers started studying worms using Bonnie’s digital microscope.

One day, after it rained, Loyann said hundreds of worms came out of the ground and wound up crawling on the school sidewalks.

“We took the preschoolers out on the school sidewalks. We side, collected worms, brought them to the ecosystem. The next step was for the preschoolers to start their own worm farm, leaning how composting works, how worm castings can be used to grow vegetables and other plants, and how valuable worms are to the ecosystem.

Finally, Loyann and Bonnie brought the iPads and the worms together, and the kids started using the iPads create worm stories and to make videos based on their worm fiction.

“We used the iPads to record the kids and sent videos of the worm plays home so their families could see them,” Loyann said.

The class also used an app to make non-fiction worm stories, which were combined into a digital book, which the children were able to read in class and the families were able to read at home. Loyann said one of the most striking results of the project was the enhanced ability to connect with families through technology.

“I got a lot of positive feedback from the families,” she said. “A lot of families said that before, they couldn’t get a lot of information from their children about what they did during the day. Now, after getting a look at some of the classroom activities, it was easier to talk to their children about school activities, and they could extend the conversation and learning at home.”

She said some of the families started looking for worms at home so they could start their own worm farms. Bonnie’s article will be published in an upcoming issue of Young Children Journal, one of two periodicals published by NAEYC.

Loyann Worster’s students act out worm stories.

Students look at worms after collecting them from the school sidewalk.

Pre-K students collect worms on a rainy day.

Bonnie Blagojevic, adjunct professor at the University of Maine, helps Pre-K students examine worms with digital microscope.

Her presentation at the national convention was summarized as follows: “Come join us as we celebrate children’s powerful ideas and discuss ways children can use tablets and apps to foster creativity, further develop their story ideas, increase content knowledge and vocabulary comprehension through publishing and sharing their work...”

In addition to Bonnie and Loyann, the presenters in Atlanta will include Marry Ellin Logue, associate professor of early childhood education at UMaine, and Juana Rodriguez-Vasquez, migrant education regional coordinator for Mano en Mano (Hand in Hand) in Milbridge.

This summer, Bonnie and Loyann gave a presentation at the PREP (Penobscot River Educational Partnership) Tech Academy, and in October, they will present at 30th annual conference of the Association of Computer Technology Educators of Maine (ACTEM).
The VCS library recently converted over to a fully-automated cataloging system. A significant portion of the work related to this 8-month project was performed by a volunteer, retired school library media specialist Millie Cannon, who has already logged in hundreds of hours and continues to support the growth of our library media center.

Mrs. Cannon obtained her Master’s Degree in Library Services from the University of Maine and spent a majority of her career at the Old Town High School. Millie didn’t rest for very long and began working part-time and then volunteering in Milford, consulting in Greenbush and assisting in catalog automation projects in both places.

Millie has expressed great passion for library sciences through volunteerism and has embraced technology and its effect on libraries throughout her career. Thank you Millie!!

By Martha Shannon

VCS Library Media Specialist

September 15th was International Dot Day, the date that marks the anniversary of best selling author and illustrator, Peter H. Reynolds’ The Dot. This book tells the story of a teacher who encourages a reluctant student to “make her mark.” Vashti’s breakthrough begins with a simple dot on a piece of white paper. Encouraged by her teacher, she sets off on a journey of creativity and inspires others.

We celebrated Dot Day several ways in Library Media class. Veazie students in PreK through grade 8 listened to the story of The Dot, designed their own dot, and then brought it to life using the Quiver 3D app on the iPads. Some of our students and staff even wore polka dots to school! Students were very excited to show their families their Dot Day celebration dots, but even more so to come into the library during Open House and show off the Augmented Reality.

Have you ever wondered how they add the imaginary yellow first down line while watching a football game on TV? How about those Snapchat filters that turn you into a dog? Want to buy a new couch and see what it will look like in your living room before you actually buy it? Have you played Pokemon Go? They use Augmented Reality (AR), and now our very own VCS students can show you how to use it! The most common use of AR can be see through mobile apps. You simply point your camera at something the app recognizes, and it will overlay virtual content onto the real world. The effect makes the computer-generated sights and sounds appear like they’re really there.

This year the Library Media Center’s main focus will be to support the school curriculum and develop literacy skills. We’ll also be focusing on digital literacy and citizenship. We will create, communicate, collaborate and think critically. At each grade level, students will be learning research and computer skills specifically suited to their developmental needs and interests. We’ll learn about how to create and balance a healthy relationship with media. My goal as the Library Media Specialist is to cultivate a love of reading, integrate technology, and encourage students to be lifelong learners. I’m excited for a great year!

VCS Library converts to automated catalog

The VCS library recently converted over to a fully-automated cataloging system. A significant portion of the work related to this 8-month project was performed by a volunteer, retired school library media specialist Millie Cannon, who has already logged in hundreds of hours and continues to support the growth of our library media center.

Mrs. Cannon obtained her Master’s Degree in Library Services from the University of Maine and spent a majority of her career at the Old Town High School. Millie didn’t rest for very long and began working part-time and then volunteering in Milford, consulting in Greenbush and assisting in catalog automation projects in both places.

Millie has expressed great passion for library sciences through volunteerism and has embraced technology and its effect on libraries throughout her career. Thank you Millie!!
Skiing, biking, running, hiking, traveling . . . and other tidbits about VCS staff

By Tracy Cobb

Veazie Community School

Here’s a treasure trove of trivia about the staff at Veazie Community School and their lives beyond the brick walls:

Athletic and involved

Skiing has been a part of principal and superintendent Matt Cyr’s life since his father first taught him to ski at the age of three. Matt started downhill racing at age five and continued into his college years. He had the pleasure of teaching his daughter how to ski on the hill where he started, Lonesome Pine Trails in Fort Kent. His 72-year-old father is still an incredible skier and often joins Matt’s family on ski trips around New England.

VCS P.E./Health teacher Angela Nelligan pole vaulted in college at UMaine and participates in track meets every chance she gets. This summer, she beat her personal best with 11’3”.

Secretary Carolyn Hathaway loves to bicycle. She and her husband Rod participate in rides throughout New England. She has also won a few races in her age bracket.

Carolyn and Rod Hathaway.

Martha Shannon, library/media specialist and middle school math teacher, has run three half marathons and ran the Sugarloaf Marathon a few years ago in 4 hours and 30 minutes. These days, she mostly just chases after her toddler, but she still likes to get out and run as often as she can.

Third-grade teacher Holly Humphrey has run two Disney races and five half marathons. She is planning to run her first full marathon in May.

VCS P.E./Health teacher Angela Nelligan.

Melissa Hileman, grade four teacher, will be running her first half-marathon—the Maine Marathon in Portland—on October 1st.

Fifth grade teacher Diane Smart and educational technician Elizabeth Glunt are also running in this same race.

Brushes with fame

Reading Recovery/middle school teacher Sue Logan lived in England for a year and visited London. She was standing outside Buckingham Palace taking pictures when the gates opened and out came the Queen in her elegant car and waved to her!

Special Education teacher Tara Frazier tried out for the TV game show "Jeopardy!" this summer and is waiting to hear if she qualified for the next level.

Music teacher Sara Phillips sings opera, and her second cousin is the lead singer of the band Metric.

The grandfather of middle school teacher Tracy Cobb was working as a bellhop at a Florida hotel when a group of elderly men came in... one of whom happened to be Thomas Edison.

World travelers

Middle school teacher Brian Gonyar climbed Middle Teton in Grand Teton National Park this summer and reports it was an amazing hike with snow fields to cross and some steep sections of rock. Some of his other hikes include Half Dome, Angles Landing, Phantom Ranch, Pitamakan-Dawson loop, and Katahdin.

Nicole Spinney, middle school teacher, traveled to Thailand last summer and took a side trip to Cambodia to see the ancient temples of Angkor Wat, the largest religious monument in the world. Photos of her trip can be found on her blog.

Water and wilderness

Educational technician Craig Thompson enjoys hunting, fishing and spending time at his camp on South Branch Lake in Sbois.

Laurie Kimball, second grade teacher, loves the water. A member of the Bangor High School swim team, Mrs. Kimball was also a lifeguard, a swim instructor through college and coached a swim club for seven years.

Random fun facts

Speech pathologist Kelly Fish doesn’t have any pet fish and doesn’t like to eat fish, but she has two guinea pigs and a dog.

The mother and stepfather of pre-K teacher Lysann Worster owned llamas for many years, and when the animals passed away, Mrs. Worster was given a skull and some of their bones to use in the classroom. Her mom and stepdad currently have four alpacas and many goats.

Art teacher Ashley Curtis likes to up-cycle broken crayons in her spare time.

Kindergarten/grade 1 teacher Jill Chandler has the cool distinction of being the only staff member who also attended nine years of school (K-8) in Veazie.
Enrollment is easy! Just do the following:

2. You will receive a confirmation email with a link to activate your account.
3. Add your students using their school name and student ID.
4. Make a payment to your students’ accounts with your credit/debit card or electronic check.
5. A program fee will apply. You will have the opportunity to review any fees and cancel if you choose, before you are charged.

If you have any questions, you may contact Betsy Brooks at the VCS Food Service Office, 947-6573, or email her at bbrooks@veaziecs.org. You can also contact MySchoolBucks directly by calling 1-855-832-5226, by emailing parentsupport@myschoolbucks.com, or by visiting the website at myschoolbucks.com and clicking on Help/FAQ’s.

Veazie Community School Veteran’s Day Blood Drive
Gymnasium @ 1040 School Street, Veazie, ME
Thursday, Nov. 9, 1-6 p.m.
Blood Drive Coordinator: Matthew Cyr, mcyr@veaziecs.org
947-6573 (call or email to schedule an appt.)
The American Red Cross and the Veazie Fire Department are teaming up to install free smoke alarms in residents’ homes and teach people how to be prepared for home fires.

Residents can sign up for free smoke alarm installation by calling Ron Springel of the Red Cross at 874-1192, ext. 113. The Veazie Fire Department will follow up with the installation.

“Seven times a day someone in the country dies in a home fire and countless others suffer injuries,” says Assistant Fire Chief Pete Metcalf. “We want residents to be safe.

Smoke alarms cut the risk of someone dying from a home fire in half, so we want to put them in as many homes as we can.”

Chief Metcalf says there are several things people can do to protect themselves and their loved ones from fires. They include:

- Install smoke alarms on every level of the home, inside bedrooms, and outside sleeping areas. Test the smoke alarms once a month and replace the batteries at least once a year.
- Develop a fire evacuation plan with all members of the household and practice it several times a year at different times of day.
- Include two ways to get out of every room, and consider escape ladders for sleeping areas on the second floor or above.
- Pick a place outside for everyone to meet after evacuating from a fire emergency, and make sure everyone knows where it is.

In addition to the garden, we have purchased two mobile hydroponic growing stations that students and teachers will use throughout the winter to experiment with various gardening units and begin preparation for spring planting. We look forward to improving our planting schedules and increasing our harvest in the upcoming school year!

The school garden’s new greenhouse, raised beds, and fence-in growing area.

VCS awarded Perloff Family Foundation Fast Track grant for greenhouse, raised beds, fenced-in growing area for school garden

Veazie Community School was recently awarded a Perloff Family Foundation Fast Track Grant that enabled the design and purchase of a greenhouse, raised beds and fenced-in growing area.

Students and staff who participated in the Veazie Summer Learning Experience planted vegetables and flowers. In addition to students selected the vegetables and herbs and we also received gifted plants from several community members.

This fall, students were able to harvest vegetables that were prepared and served in several salads as part of our school hot lunch program. A new round of planting has already taken place this fall, once again largely in part to donated time and seeds from community members (THANK YOU AGAIN!).

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Red Cross, Fire Dept. team up to install free smoke alarms

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VEAZIE COMMUNITY SCHOOL FALL ONLINE AUCTION

COMING NOVEMBER 2017

This is Veazie Community Schools largest fundraiser of the year... and we need YOUR help! We are collecting donations of gift certificates/cards, coupons for services, memorabilia and much more!

Please contact VCS PTO if you would like to donate:

pto@veaziecs.org

Thank you for your support!

Smoke Alarms Save Lives

The Red Cross and Veazie Fire Department are installing FREE Smoke Alarms

Smoke alarms reduce your chances of dying in a fire by nearly 50 percent.

Fire Safety teams will install FREE smoke alarms and help you create an emergency escape plan.

To sign up for a FREE home visit contact: Ron Springler at 207-874-1192 ext. 113.

Learn more about Red Cross volunteer opportunities:
(207) 874-1192, x 204