Veazie Town Meeting set for Tuesday, June 11; nomination papers available March 4 for Town, School, Sewer District positions

The Town of Veazie will be holding its annual Town Meeting/Municipal Town Election on Tuesday, June 11, 2019. Nomination papers for municipal vacancies will be available at the Veazie Town Office on Monday, March 4th, and can be picked up Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Vacancies include:
- Two positions on the Town Council, which will be three-year terms.
- Two positions for School Committee members, one for a two-year term and one for a three-year term.
- One Sewer District Trustee position for a three-year term.

To be qualified for an office, the State requires that the candidate be a citizen of the United States, a Maine State resident and at least 18 years old. In addition to the State requirements, the Town of Veazie requires the following: elected officials and/or candidates for the Town Council and School Committee must be registered voters and shall reside in the Town of Veazie during their term of office. Nomination papers must contain signatures of no less than 25 registered Veazie voters and no more than 100.

The filing deadline for nomination papers is by the close of business on Friday, April 12th. If you have any questions, please contact Julie Strout, Deputy Clerk, at the Town Office at 947-2781.

Veazie PD hires 3 former Bangor PD officers

The Veazie Police Department hired three part-time police officers in January. All three of the new hires are former members of the Bangor Police Department, including two retirees with 30-plus years of service and one officer with five years of experience.

The new police officers are:
- Steve Hunt, who grew up in Veazie and started his police career in 1983 as a part-time patrolman with the Veazie PD. He retired as a lieutenant in 2016 after 31 years of full-time police work, the last 30 for the Bangor PD.
- Robert “Hutch” Hutchings, who retired in 2010 after 30 years as a police officer, including 4 years in Hampden, 1 year in Orono, 4 years in Brewer, and the last 21 years with the Bangor PD.

Veazie Community School MEA scores reflect steady growth

By Matthew Cyr

Superintendent of Schools

The Department of Education adopted the new eMPower State Assessment (the MEA), in spring of 2015. This mostly computer-based assessment measures English Language Arts (ELA) and Math in grades 3 to 8, and Science in grades 5 and 8.

The MEA is just one of many tools that Maine schools use to evaluate programs, student growth, and achievement levels. Veazie Community School scores have been trending in a positive direction over the three-year existence of the new eMPower assessment.

Science scores (our smallest testing group) reflected a 33% increase between 2015 and 2018, while State averages during this time have slightly decreased. Veazie ELA scores have increased 19.5% over the three-year span, while State averages have declined. Veazie Community School MEA scores reflect steady growth.
R. M. Flagg Food Service Equipment still a leading restaurant supplier, but with more retail 'home kitchen' customers now

R. M. Flagg Food Service Equipment was founded in 1928 by Roscoe M. Flagg, and for more than 80 years, three generations of Flaggs made it one of Maine's leading food service and restaurant equipment dealers.

In 2011, Bruce Flagg asked Joe Guerin, who had worked for Bruce for about 20 years, if he wanted to buy the business so that Bruce could retire.

Joe and his wife Stacey said yes, because they had always wanted to be business owners, and for the last eight years, they've brought in a new energy to R. M. Flagg Food Service Equipment.

"We've grown the company a lot over the past eight years," Stacey says. "We've been able to implement some of the ideas we developed over the years."

Three generations of Guerins are currently active in the business—Joe and Stacey at the helm, son Caleb as general manager, and Andrew working in customer service and deliveries, and Kay Smith, Stacey's 94-year-old mother, as part-time bookkeeper.

R. M. Flagg Food Service Equipment continues to be a leading food service and restaurant equipment dealer in the state of Maine, and in addition, the Guerins have expanded the company's focus in a number of areas, including retail sales, community involvement, and the establishment of the Maine Kitchen Cooking School.

The Guerins also joined a national buying group called Excell, which has allowed R. M. Flagg to pool its buying power with 157 other vendors of food service equipment and supplies around the country.

"By joining Excell, we've been able to bring our prices down a lot," Stacey said. "This has changed our reputation from being expensive to being affordable with exceptional customer service."

In 2015, Excell honored R. M. Flagg with its "Great Expectations Award" as the business within the buying group that has greatest potential for growth.

Currently, Excell ranks R. M. Flagg in the top 20 of the 157 vendors in the buying group.

Stacey says the company has expanded its emphasis on customer service.

"That sounds like what every business would say, but we really try to live that," she says. "Our biggest competition is the internet, so it has to be fun to come here. Doing things with and for our customers is important to us. Maybe that's one of the biggest changes—we've really made our customers our friends."

Perhaps the biggest change has been to include a lot of home kitchen items to the 10,000 items that are in stock at the Veazie store.

"We serve a lot of home shoppers now, particularly in the Christmas season," Stacey says.

Caleb says the retail side of the business has grown to the point where home kitchen items now account for about 25% of sales.

"It's a big help," Caleb says. "A lot of that business comes in October, November, and December, which is a slow time in the wholesale business. If we're going to be here, we might as well sell to anybody who wants to come in."

Asked which items were the most popular among home kitchen customers, Stacey listed Kitchen Aid mixers, a line of Cuisinart products, and Lodge Cast Ironware.

She said they started stocking cast iron ware after their youngest son Jesse said his Boy Scout troop used cast iron dutch ovens for cooking and suggested that they'd sell well in the store.

Stacey was skeptical but she and Joe wanted to encourage Jesse's involvement in the business.

"We said, 'OK, we'll bring those in. Then we added fry pans, and Jesse got his Boy Scout friends to come in."

We're the biggest seller of Lodge Cast Ironware in the North-east—not just New England, but the entire Northeast. They're made in America and we love that. It's pretty incredible."

Another popular item for home kitchen customers is Fiesta dinnerware.

"We carry open stock Fiesta, too," Stacey says. "After Macy's closed at the mall, we picked up a lot of customers who wanted open stock Fiesta ware. We were able to help a lot of people who wanted to buy Fiesta ware locally and not have to pay to have it shipped."

The cooking school is part of R. M. Flagg's increased focus on community involvement.

"We try to support our customers, and we eat at their restaurants whenever possible," Stacey says. "One of the reasons we started the cooking school was to promote locally-owned businesses so that people would get to know the chefs."

A class was held in January featuring the chef from Novio's in downtown Bangor. The class was sold out three days after it was posted on the R. M. Flagg Facebook page.

This spring, Rob Dumas will offer a class to raise funds for the Veterans Memorial in Hudson. People can sign up for the class after it is posted on Facebook. Rob, a former White House chef who is now food service director for R. H. Foster, also taught a "chicken fabrication" class in October 2017.

Although retail sales have increased significantly, R. M. Flagg Food Service Equipment is still primarily a wholesale business, offering the latest in food service and restaurant equipment and design, including commercial refrigeration, pizza ovens, and commercial baking ovens.

R. M. Flagg is also the largest supplier of walk-in refrigerators in Maine.

Stacey says a walk-in box can be as small as 6x6 or as big as 20'x90'—the size of the walk-in refrigerators Flagg installed at the Tradewinds store in Clinton, ME.

One thing that hasn't changed is R. M. Flagg's interest in helping people who are planning to start new restaurants.

(Continued in next column.)
Veazie PD hires 3 former Bangor police officers

(Continued from page 1) years in Bangor.
  • Alexis McKechnie, who served as a police officer in Bangor for two years before leaving last fall to accept a job in the private sector.
  • Beth Steve and Hutch worked with Veazie Town Manager and Police Chief Mark Leonard at various points in their careers while they were assigned to the Maine Drug Enforcement Agency.

Steve started working for the Veazie PD a month after graduating from Bangor Christian School in 1983. In the late fall of 1983, he started working full-time for the South Portland PD, and 10 months later, he was hired by the Bangor PD. He was assigned to Maine Drug Enforcement three times, once as an agent and twice as a supervisor.

“I spent about a third of my career in the drug world,” Steve says. “I also served as a patrolman, patrol sergeant, and patrol lieutenant.”

Steve lives in Orland. He and his wife have three children—two adult sons and a daughter in 5th grade. He enjoys outdoor activities and physical fitness. Steve says his goal is to be a really good patrol officer.

“If the department has needs, and I’m able to provide guidance or help in any way, I’m willing to do that,” he says. “I’m looking to give back to a town that gave me an opportunity 35 years ago, and that I care for very much.”

He adds that he likes the atmosphere and the guidance that Mark has provided for the community as police chief.

“I like the style of policing in Veazie, with the emphasis on relationship building, especially the way they develop relationships with the senior community and with the school,” he says. “They’re providing real quality service to the citizens of the community. I think they’re doing it right.”

Hutch said he decided to apply for the job in Veazie nine years after retiring from the Bangor PD because “once it [police work] is in your blood, it’s always there.”

He originally wanted to become a police officer because his uncle, Bob Stevens, was a Maine State Trooper—a road trooper in the ‘60s and ‘70s, and then a homicide investigator.

“They’ve done walk-in boxes when they partnered with Chief Leonard. He also attended the Maine Police Academy’s Homicide School, rode a police mountain bike, and was twice a member of the Bangor PD tactical team. He also worked with Steve, who was his patrol lieutenant for several years and a supervisor at Maine Drug Enforcement.

Hutch lives in Orono with his wife and 18 year old son, Marc, who aspires to be a Bangor police officer. Marc, who was the starting center on the Hampden Academy basketball team, is recovering from a life-threatening pickup truck crash on Outer Essex St. in Bangor in January.

Hutch said Marc works for a company that plows and sands driveways. He got up at 3 a.m. one morning and took the pick-up out because he wanted to get 2-3 hours of work in before going to school. He got caught in a big trough of water on Outer Essex St. and ended up leaving the road, hitting a telephone pole, and rolling over.

Marc broke his pelvis, but a week later he joined his teammates on the bench and watched as they played Bangor at the Hampden Academy gym.

Hutch said Marc wants to be a policeman.

“It was quite a stressful week, but knock on wood, he’s still with us—and he’s going to law enforcement school in the fall,” Hutch said.

Alexis has worked full-time in law enforcement for five years, including two years as a police officer and school resource officer for the Bangor PD. She is currently employed by a bank in the Bangor area.

Before moving to Bangor, she was a full-time police officer in Saco for three years. She also served as a part-time police officer in Kennebunk for one summer.

Alexis grew up in northern Maine. She enjoys traveling throughout Maine, especially the coast and beach areas. She also enjoys hiking and learning to play the piano.
Town Manager’s message:
Chase Road subdivision, Davis Drive project, Code Enforcement, re-branding project

By Mark Leonard
Veazie Town Manager

Happy Winter! As I write this, I am just returning from a weekend of snowmobiling up north where they have substantially more snow than we do. I have been going to that region for 20-plus years, and this is by far the most snow I remember. With all that said, we have been fortunate, (or unfortunate if you like snow) this winter with low amounts of snowfall, although we have used a lot of salt due to ice. The Town’s contractor, Lou Silver, has done a good job clearing the snow and making the walkways passable. If you have a comment or concern regarding snow plowing, I urge you to contact the Town Office or the contractor directly. As a reminder, if your mailbox is damaged or destroyed by the snow plow contractor, the Town has a Mailbox Replacement Policy in effect. The contractor will make every effort to temporarily fix the mailbox so you will continue to receive mail. The permanent repairs and/or replacement will be taken care of as soon as the weather allows. Please contact the Town Office if your mailbox was damaged and/or destroyed.

During the staff Christmas party, we recognized employees for their dedicated years of service. Fire Department was Jacob Reese, Police Department was Brian Nichols and Julie Stratton for the Town Office. Congratulations to each of these outstanding employees for this recognition. A plaque showcasing these awards will be displayed in each department.

The Budget Committee has held its first meeting to begin working on the FY 19/20 budget. This year we have two new members as well as one who previously served on the committee. The members are Bill Masters, Jon Plummer, Bill Hogan, John Sullivan, and Ashley MacDonald. Bill Masters was selected to Chair the Committee, and Jon Plummer was selected as the Secretary.

Thank you to each of these community members for agreeing to take part in this very important process. I look forward to working with the committee.

The meeting schedule is listed on the opposite page of this newspaper, and posted on the Town’s website. All meetings are open to the public.

As we look towards spring, it is time to start thinking about paving projects. The Town’s paving contractor and I have looked at several roads in the community to determine which ones need to be paved. My findings will be presented at a future Council meeting with a decision can be made as to which roads we address in the spring. Last year, we were able to rebuild Davis Drive, and we will continue this project with the complete rebuild of Wedge Road this year. I am happy to report that the Town was able to work with the residences on Mutton Lane near the Buckhill Conservation area to locate a failing portion of the road. The contractor will return in the fall to grade the road. During this work, the contractor installed a parking area near the entrance to the conservation area. This will eliminate parked vehicles impeding access to the home that is beyond the former parking area. In addition, this area will double as a turnaround/ staging area for emergency vehicles if they ever need to respond to this area of Town.

Since the last edition, the Town partnered with Eastern Area Agency on Aging to pass out commodity boxes to those 60 years and older. You will find an article on this program on page 6 of this edition. We currently provide food for between 12 and 14 residents. If you would like more information on this program please contact either Eastern Area Agency on Aging or myself.

Also, the Police Department continues to deliver meals prepared by Eastern Maine Community College and distributed from the Parker Dining House in Orono to seniors 4 days a week. We have found this to be a very beneficial program for those who find it difficult to get out of their homes during the winter months. The meals are provided on every weekday except Thursday. Although we currently only deliver to mostly seniors, the program is open to all. For more information you can contact Rosemary at Parker Dining house at 207-866-4374 or myself at the Town Office.

The development of the Davis Field has taken off since the last edition. We currently provide food to seniors, the program is open to all. For more information you can contact Rosemary at Parker Dining house at 207-866-4374 or myself at the Town Office.

I like to remind everyone to follow the Town on Facebook or sign up for our list serve which sends out periodic messages on important topics occurring in Town. The sign up for list serve is located on the Town’s website as well as the Town’s Facebook page.

Enjoy the rest of your winter.
Veazie Historical Society hears presentation by Cathy Davis Tilton on history of Davis farm

The Veazie Historical Society sponsored a presentation in October by Cathy Davis Tilton on the history of the Davis farm. It was very interesting, as Joe King and Gayle Bemis were also able to add greatly to the history and had many interesting stories to add. It is hoped that when future talks are given, we will be able to video them so that people who can’t attend can still enjoy them.

The Historical Society is busy trying to get its new room at the Town Office set up with all the items of historical interest held by the town. Counters are being built along with shelves. David King has donated a lovely display case that we are excited about getting filled. Anyone with any items they feel would be of interest—please think about donating them to the Historical Society so they can be preserved for future generations.

VEAZIE SENIORS AND FRIENDS GROUP—The club held a Christmas party on the second Wednesday of December. A wonderful potluck was enjoyed by all who attended, followed by entertainment by Veazie residents David Bagley and Dean Henderson, and the exchange of Christmas gifts through a Yankee swap. The club meets on the second and fourth Wednesday of every month.

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FY 2019-2020 Budget Meeting Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day/Date/Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thurs., Jan. 10, 6:30 PM</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>1st/2nd Quarter Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, Feb. 11 6:30 PM</td>
<td>Council Meeting</td>
<td>Discussion on FY 19/20 Budget</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, Mar. 7 6:30 PM</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>FY 19/20 Draft Budget Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, Mar 11 6:30 PM</td>
<td>Council Meeting</td>
<td>Discussion on FY 19/20 Budget &quot;as needed&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, Mar. 25 6:30 PM</td>
<td>Council Meeting</td>
<td>Discussion on FY 19/20 Budget &quot;as needed&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, April 4 6:30 PM</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>3rd Quarter Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, April 8 6:30 PM</td>
<td>Council Meeting</td>
<td>Discussion on FY 19/20 Budget &quot;as needed&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, April 9 6:30 PM</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>FY 19/20 Budget Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>(School Vacation is the week of April 14-21 / Patriots Day April 15)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, April 22 6:30 PM</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>Review FY 19/20 Budget Prior to Public Hearing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, April 26</td>
<td>Last day for submittal of recommendations to Budget Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, May 6</td>
<td>Town Manager issues Budget Message</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, May 6</td>
<td>Public Hearing</td>
<td>Budget Committee Review of Workshops, Council Review Session and Public Hearing on Total Budgets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, May 7</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>Schedule if needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, May 9</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>Schedule if needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, May 27</td>
<td>Council Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, June 11</td>
<td>Council Meeting</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, June 11</td>
<td>Town Meeting</td>
<td>Voting of Warrant Articles</td>
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Any Real Estate taxes left unpaid after April 12th, 2019 will be printed in the Town’s Annual Report.

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Eastern Area Agency on Aging providing commodity support to Veazie families

A sample of the commodities offered by the Eastern Area Agency on Aging.

News from the Veazie Congregational Church

What do B.F. Goodrich, the Maine State Legislature, Pilgrim Elder William Brewster, and mutiny on the high seas have to do with the Veazie Congregational Church? They are all connected to the stained glass windows that decorate the sanctuary. A presentation about the windows was enjoyed by the congregation as an opening to a series of talks presented by members of the church in celebration of our past, our present, and our future. These presentations were shared during the fall weeks leading up to Thanksgiving. Conversations about where we are and where we are headed continue to be shared—like most small churches we have concerns about being a part of the community and continuing to serve in the years ahead. We invite you to be a part of our Sunday morning worship service and be a part of these plans for the future. We have some great church suppers planned for the months ahead. On March 9th there will be a traditional New England boiled dinner, and April 13th will end our supper season with our wonderful turkey pies. Admission is $8.00 for adults, $4.00 for children, and under five years old—free. Come join us.

In celebration of our past we are collecting wedding photos. If you or someone you know were married in the church, we’d love to have a photo to copy for a display. You can send them to the church (they will be returned) at 1404 State St. or send them to the church (they will be returned) at 1404 State St. or can you send an email to churchclerk@gmail.com. Please include names of the bride and groom and the date of the wedding.

By the Rev. Dr. Patrick Seymour
The Veazie Church

It is interesting to me to note that we have arrived at this point so quickly, one month beyond Christmas, and New Year’s Day now so many weeks in the past. Time marches on doesn’t it. But in this brief article I want us to step back in time and, just for a few moments, peer into a bygone era. Once again, I want to share with you some thoughts from yet another historical perspective. The hymn selected was written by Frederik M. Lehman in the early 1900’s; its title: “The Love of God.”

While each verse is noteworthy to be sure, I choose to focus only on the third one at this time. That is because, sometime in the very distant past, the words of this particular verse were discovered written on the wall of a patient’s room in an insane asylum. That person, however, was not the original author. Yet, they were significant enough that this individual did not want to forget them, and to always be reminded of them. They were provocative in thought, and inspirational – lasting through the dark, lonely hours of the night, and the long endless hours of the day. The significance of discovering them conveys the depth of meaning they held for that person whose existence was perhaps empty and mundane.

Here are the words:

Could we with ink the ocean fill,
And were the skies of parchment made,
Were every stalk on earth a quill,
And every man a scribe by trade,
To write the love of God above,
Would drain the ocean dry.
Nor could the scroll contain the

Hymn from early 1900s has verses from a wall written by a Jewish poet over 1,000 years ago

EAAA currently has CSFP boxes available at 51 locations throughout the four counties that they serve. One of the distribution locations is right here in Veazie at the Town Office! If you would like to receive one of these boxes, please contact EAAA at 1-800-432-7812 or call 941-2865 and ask for extension 167. If you qualify, your application can be processed and approved over the phone and a box can be yours on the next available distribution date on the first Tuesday of the month.

Finally, whenever the church is open for an event, our boutique of handmade goods is open. We have a wonderful collection of baby items, aprons, mittens and hats (among many other things) that our handcrafters at the church make. If you are looking for a gift, come take a look at what we have! For more information you can contact the email above.

Upcoming Holidays and Council Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 11</td>
<td>Council Meeting</td>
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<td>April 8</td>
<td>Council Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 22</td>
<td>Council Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 13</td>
<td>Council Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 27</td>
<td>Memorial Day</td>
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Hymn from early 1900s has verses from a wall written by a Jewish poet over 1,000 years ago

Established in 1973, Eastern Area Agency on Aging’s goals are to provide older adults, caregivers and adults with disabilities in Hancock, Penobscot, Piscataquis and Washington counties with information and access to resources they need to be healthy, engaged and supported in their communities. One of the many programs that EAAA offers is the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). The CSFP program works to improve the health of low-income seniors, 60 years of age or older, by supplementing their diets with nutritious USDA foods.

These monthly food boxes include a variety of items such as non-fat dry and ultra-pasteurized milk, juice, Farina, canned meat/poultry or fish, oats/readies-to-eat cereal, rice or pasta, peanut butter, dry beans, a block of cheese and canned fruits or vegetables.

EAAA currently has CSFP...
**Superintendent’s message**

**Breakfast After the Bell success; FY20 budget work includes long-term capital planning**

Veazie Community School has had an excellent first half of the school year in the classroom, at athletic fields and basket ball courts. The level of support we receive from parents, community members, municipal officials and business partners continues to play a vital role in our success as a school department. On behalf of the school committee, staff and students, I sincerely thank all of you.

In addition to the great articles and photos in this edition of THE VIKING, I want to put a spotlight on our breakfast program. There is plenty of research supporting the importance of eating breakfast each day. As the parent of two students attending different schools, I live the routine (a struggle at times) of getting kids ready for school each day; and, I’ll be honest, sometimes eating breakfast takes a back seat to getting them out of bed and off to school on time. For the past few years, the staff at Veazie Community School have been exploring different ideas for making our breakfast program more accessible to students with the goal of setting students up for success before the day begins. A few years ago we tried having ‘to-go’ bags available as students got off the bus but found that some students who didn’t eat at home didn’t grab a bag because they felt uncomfortable eating during class time (during that year we had 151 students enrolled and sold 3,109 breakfasts). We then tried having all students go to the cafeteria during arrival with the thought that they’d be more likely to eat in that environment; however, that did not work because students preferred to talk with their friends instead of eating (during the year we had 130 students and sold 1,650 breakfasts). During the month of November last year, we started ‘breakfast after the bell’ where a breakfast cart went to each classroom during morning RTI block, and students who were hungry had opportunity to get a breakfast and have time to sit down and eat in their classroom while working on their RTI plans (during that year we had 138 students and sold 4,139 breakfasts). This year to date, with 145 students, we have sold 2,425 breakfasts and are on pace to sell more than 5,000 by the end of the year. Sometimes the path to student success is not as obvious as you might think. I truly believe the conscientious and collaborative efforts of our entire staff on starting each day with breakfast has played a key role in our growth as a school.

The onset of winter coincides with budget development. As I write this memo, we are still weeks away from learning how much revenue we will receive from the DOE for FY20 (the 2019-20 school year). Regardless, there are several known factors that must be considered as we build our budget for next year. Our increase in enrollment requires special attention to student-staff ratios as well as services for students with special needs. The town of Veazie now owns the school building (our last debt service payment was made last year), and it is important to have a capital improvement plan that addresses facility needs from both a short and long-term perspective. A couple years ago we shifted some of our fund balance into a capital reserve account for the purpose of growing a dedicated reserve line for large capital projects of the future. Beginning with FY20, I will be recommending that we consider annually funding this capital reserve as part of the regular budget process with the goal of having sufficient funds available to support a roof replacement project in 12-15 years (the roof lifespan we were given during our most recent roof inspection). Other budgetary considerations include safe and dry storage options for school property/equipment and creatively staffing our school in order to attract and maintain part-time positions that are sometimes difficult to fill. Through all of this, we must continue to be mindful of how we use our fund balance to support future budgets. I look forward to working with the school committee and town office on the FY20 budgeting process. I have high hopes that mother nature will provide us with winter weather that permits outdoor recreation and safe day-to-day living. Thank you!

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**Student attendance now tied to school funding and DOE rating system**

By Lexie Dinenc, School Counselor/RTI Coordinator

At Veazie Community School, student attendance is critical. Public Schools are held to extremely high standards and until recently, student achievement was the focus. Beginning this year, attendance is directly tied to school funding formulas and measures of accountability.

**ALL ABSENCES ARE ABSENCES AND IMPACT OUR SCHOOL**—whether your child is sick, or on a family vacation. At Veazie Community School, student engagement, attendance, and achievement are equally important.

Research shows that students who drop out of school typically have above-average absenteeism during their elementary years. Absenteeism can be extremely challenging and frustrating for teachers to plan and instruct when there always seems to be one or two students absent from each school day. Replacing lost instructional time is extremely difficult. Students need to be present and engaged to fully grasp learning concepts and skills.

Research has proven there is a direct correlation between school absence rates and school achievement rates.

Under the Every Student Succeeds Act, Maine is now required to report Chronic Absenteeism to the Federal Government and is directly tied to school funding. There is Chronic Absenteeism being used for school accountability, and is one of the key areas Maine is using to evaluate schools under their soon-to-be-released “Report Cards.”

All absences are documented as absences whether a child is truly home sick, or away on a family vacation.

The table at right shows how missing just a couple days each month can quickly add up over time and place a student into the chronically absent category.

A chronic absence means missing approximately 10% or more of the school year (regardless of whether absences are excused or unexcused). During the 2017-2018 school year at Veazie Community School, 10.16% of our student population missed at least 18 days of the school year.

An excessive absence is missing more than 20% of the scheduled school days (regardless of whether absences are excused or unexcused). During the 2017-2018 school year at Veazie Community School, 0% of students missed 36 or more days of school.

Veazie Community School continues to strive to improve attendance and remain above state average. “Small School, BIG Heart”

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**Cumulative effect of missed school days on Chronic Absence (10%) and Excessive Absence (20%)**

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**Breakfast After the Bell success; FY20 budget work includes long-term capital planning**

Veazie Community School has had an excellent first half of the school year in the classroom, at athletic fields and basketball courts. The level of support we receive from parents, community members, municipal officials and business partners continues to play a vital role in our success as a school department. On behalf of the school committee, staff and students, I sincerely thank all of you.

In addition to the great articles and photos in this edition of THE VIKING, I want to put a spotlight on our breakfast program. There is plenty of research supporting the importance of eating breakfast each day. As the parent of two students attending different schools, I live the routine (a struggle at times) of getting kids ready for school each day; and, I’ll be honest, sometimes eating breakfast takes a back seat to getting them out of bed and off to school on time. For the past few years, the staff at Veazie Community School have been exploring different ideas for making our breakfast program more accessible to students with the goal of setting students up for success before the day begins. A few years ago we tried having ‘to-go’ bags available as students got off the bus but found that some students who didn’t eat at home didn’t grab a bag because they felt uncomfortable eating during class time (during that year we had 151 students enrolled and sold 3,109 breakfasts). We then tried having all students go to the cafeteria during arrival with the thought that they’d be more likely to eat in that environment; however, that did not work because students preferred to talk with their friends instead of eating (during the year we had 130 students and sold 1,650 breakfasts). During the month of November last year, we started ‘breakfast after the bell’ where a breakfast cart went to each classroom during morning RTI block, and students who were hungry had opportunity to get a breakfast and have time to sit down and eat in their classroom while working on their RTI plans (during that year we had 138 students and sold 4,139 breakfasts). This year to date, with 145 students, we have sold 2,425 breakfasts and are on pace to sell more than 5,000 by the end of the year. Sometimes the path to student success is not as obvious as you might think. I truly believe the conscientious and collaborative efforts of our entire staff on starting each day with breakfast has played a key role in our growth as a school.

The onset of winter coincides with budget development. As I write this memo, we are still weeks away from learning how much revenue we will receive from the DOE for FY20 (the 2019-20 school year). Regardless, there are several known factors that must be considered as we build our budget for next year. Our increase in enrollment requires special attention to student-staff ratios as well as services for students with special needs. The town of Veazie now owns the school building (our last debt service payment was made last year), and it is important to have a capital improvement plan that addresses facility needs from both a short and long-term perspective. A couple years ago we shifted some of our fund balance into a capital reserve account for the purpose of growing a dedicated reserve line for large capital projects of the future. Beginning with FY20, I will be recommending that we consider annually funding this capital reserve as part of the regular budget process with the goal of having sufficient funds available to support a roof replacement project in 12-15 years (the roof lifespan we were given during our most recent roof inspection). Other budgetary considerations include safe and dry storage options for school property/equipment and creatively staffing our school in order to attract and maintain part-time positions that are sometimes difficult to fill. Through all of this, we must continue to be mindful of how we use our fund balance to support future budgets. I look forward to working with the school committee and town office on the FY20 budgeting process. I have high hopes that mother nature will provide us with winter weather that permits outdoor recreation and safe day-to-day living. Thank you!
By Laurie Kimball  
Grade 1 Teacher

After lunch in grade one is story time. It’s our favorite part of the day. It’s a time where we take imaginary field trips to many far off lands. We learn to picture what we hear and make a movie of it inside our heads. It is a time for chapter books which don’t always have a picture for us to easily see. However, we learned quickly that you don’t need pictures to jump into a book!

Our first chapter book series this year was called PIXIE TRICKS. Tracy West brings us eight wonderfully magical stories that build off each other. They hook first graders quickly to the love of reading. These stories teach story elements. It lets the children see how to develop characters and detailed settings. It shows how stories flow through problems and solutions while being careful in each new book to set the reader up with a prologue. The children naturally take to these skills because they are so engaged in the books. You can often see them at recess acting out the stories.

At the conclusion of the stories were lots of sad faces. However, we celebrated their love for the books by integrating them into a special week. In science, we made fairy houses along the path behind the school. Students started by making blueprints and material lists. They then worked with partners to create. Inside we used symmetry in math to create and sew pixie bags. These were to hold all of our magic in. In language arts we wrote a new version to the Pixie Tricks series called, PIXIES AT V.C.S. We actually had a chance to share these with our parents when they came in for a visit. In reading we had fun reading the mini book called BOOK OF TRICKS that told how to catch the fairies. By integrating the love and excitement of the series the kids were more involved in their closing activities. They also were able to use their book knowledge from the stories to help when reading new stories. It will also help them become lifelong readers.
After-school STEM Club excites future engineers

By Laurie Kimball, Grade 1 Teacher & STEM Club Coordinator

Year two of the after school STEM club started off with a bang . . . waiting list and all! First through fourth graders were able to hypothesize, investigate, create, engineer, observe and work together through many different weekly challenges.

They constructed cars, fit through an index card without cutting through it, built houses that allowed a ball to travel from one floor to another and then out the door, designed something that could hold the maximum amount of pumpkins, engineered a space rover that can land without hurting its “astronaut or computer,” and launched bottle rockets.

Session One ended with a trip to the Em-era Planetarium at the University of Maine to see FLY ME TO THE MOON. Session Two will start in March.
Viking Robotics sweeps Regionals, earns top honors at States

The Veazie Vikings Robotics Team had a wonderful experience this fall preparing for the regional and state competitions. The theme for this year’s FLL competition was “Space”. Fifteen middle school students played an active role with our team doing a wide range of activities from researching space flight to building and programming lego robots.

The regional competition was held in Searsport on Saturday, November 10. Ten VCS students made presentations on their science project, team values, and the design of their robot (FLL rules restrict team sizes to 10). The team also competed on a robot obstacle course to complete predetermined challenges. The Viking Robotics team designed an AI or Artificial Intelligence using Scratch programming to support astronauts on long duration space flight. It was interesting to find that NASA is working on a similar project of their own. Our robot finished in first place with a competition-best score of 90 and we also won the robot runoff of three rounds with a high score of 84. It was great to see the many different designs and strategies other teams brought to the regional competition. At the end of the day, the Veazie Vikings Team came home with the First Place Champions Award, the First Place Robot Performance Award, and won the head-to-head competition.

The state competition was held in Augusta on December 8 and had 44 teams representing big and small schools around Maine. After regionals, the team decided to focus their energies on a newer robot design with new programs. This new design earned the 7th highest scoring round of the day, and earned the team an invite to the head-to-head round where they finished 2nd place (IN THE STATE!!) with a top score of 116. The team’s enhanced Scratch “AI” received high marks and won the 2nd Place Innovative Solution Award.

In addition to the team’s success at competitions, the Viking Robotics team members learned many valuable lessons around teamwork and problem solving.

Coaches: Brian Gonyar, Nicole Spinney

Student report: Middle School artists help the Bangor Humane Society

By Martin Skacel and Liam Wheelden, grade 8

What’s better than visiting the Bangor Humane Society? Donating something while you’re there! On November 30, two groups of VCS middle schoolers visited the Bangor Humane Society. Not only that, but they brought paintings.

At the start of the school year, each middle school student visited the Humane Society’s website and chose an animal up for adoption. This was the animal they would be painting for the next few weeks. The groups have been working on these paintings for the majority of the school year so far, so they were very excited when they were finished.

The middle schoolers got the option to either donate their paintings or keep them. In exchange for the donations, Community Outreach Director Katlyn Studdard gave everyone a tour of the whole facility. The Humane Society has three different sections: one for cats, and two for dogs. They even have hamsters and rabbits displayed in the front of the building. Katlyn gave students a surprise at the end: the opportunity to play with some animals. She brought in both puppies and kittens. “It was a fun experience, and it was nice to meet all the animals,” says eighth-grader Emily Adams.

“We also learned a lot about the animals and their histories. It really goes to show even when animals have had backgrounds, they can still be great pets,” says eighth-grader Emily Adams.

The Bangor Humane Society is a non-profit animal humane society located on Mount Hope Avenue. They take in around 3,000 animals per year, but this number has decreased over the years due to the increase in spaying and neutering. Most of their animals are strays or animals lost from their homes. They also take in animals in case someone can no longer take care of them.

There are a few permanent staff members, but they rely on volunteers to socialize and care for the animals. They are always on the lookout for volunteers, and help is needed year-round. People aged sixteen or older can volunteer by themselves, while anyone under fifteen has to be accompanied by an adult over twenty-one.

During the tour, there were many pets available for adoption. The goal of BHS is to match pets with the right people. People can visit BHS and look at all the available animals. If you see an animal you are interested in, you are usually allowed to bring the pet into a separate room to interact with the pet under staff supervision. If you’re interested in adopting, the process starts with an application to find out what the adopter is looking for in a pet. These animals have already been spayed or neutered and their vaccinations are up to date, thanks to local veterinarians. Once a match is made, the fee is $100-$350 for dogs varying by age, and $50-$150 for cats.

Since BHS is funded mostly by donations and fundraising, these fees also help to cover operating costs.

Eighth grader Josh LaGrange comments, “The best part was meeting the animals, and having the chance to pet them. It’s definitely something I’d do again, because I really love the animals.”

Consider donating or volunteering at the Bangor Humane Society. More information is available on their website: https://www.bangorhumane.org/.
Student report: VCS basketball news

By Lily Chandler, Grade 7

The girls’ basketball team got off to a great start with a record of 12-1. This season, the Veazie girls have a roster of eleven girls from 6th grade to 8th grade. These girls are coached by Kindergarten teacher Jillian Chandler and long-time Veazie resident Andrew Freese.

Last year with a record of 5-4, the girls pulled through with a Division Two championship title, beating Beech Hill. This year, there are ten teams including Veazie, Airline, All Saints, Greenbush, Etna-Dixmont, Dedham, Beech Hill, Island Island, Pownobscot Christian, and Highview Christian.

The starters for this year’s team are Lily Chandler (point guard), Avery Messer (guard), Bekah Jaksa (guard), Maddie Brown (post), and Hannah Taylor (post). Some highlights the girls have had this season are having Parise Rossignol coming to the Veazie girls’ game, and winning many loose balls in the game where the Veazie girls picked up another win against the Eagles. The Vikings continue to work on team defense and winning every loose ball. Coach Chandler is encouraging the girls to work on ball handling skills and boxing out after every shot as they are trying to get more offensive and defensive rebounds. When players asked what it’s like to be a part of the Veazie girls’ basketball team, all answers were the same. They all said that they love to represent their school and enjoy being part of a team. The girls also mentioned that they were very appreciative of the support they all received from their fans. Go Vikings!

When asked about her coaching mentality, Coach Chandler said, “My focus going into every season is always the same. Not only is my goal to make these young athletes better players but better people. We want to have fun and if we win along the way, bonus. I’m pretty competitive myself, so I strive to help the girls to want to compete and be good sports.”
The VCS Civil Rights Team has declared January 22nd Civil Rights Day!

Since the early 1990s, New Hampshire and Arizona brought together Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday (a major advocate and part of civil rights history) and Civil Rights Day to honor people of all race and skin colors, national origin and ancestry, disabilities, gender (including gender identity and expression), sexual orientation, and religion.

The Veazie Community School Civil Rights Team thought bringing this holiday to Veazie Community School would be a great way to celebrate the civil rights movement and to educate our peers.

In honor of Civil Rights Day, our team hosted a kahoot for middle school students to help them learn about more civil rights facts. We also read civil rights related books to our younger friends!!

This flyer was sent home to all families to help everyone understand who we are and what we do!!

To read more about Civil Rights Day we invite you to read our blog post! https://vcscivilrightsteam.blogspot.com/2019/01/civil-rights-day.html.

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Student report: Veazie Viking Robotics Update

By Hayden Rollins and Christian Zerfoss, Grade 7

The First Lego League (FLL) is an organization created by Dean Kamen. The Viking Robotics Team, which has participated in Lego Robotics for 3 years, did very well (first place) in the Central Maine Qualifier in Searsport, Maine.

In Lego Robotics, there is a tab that you can put on a table. It has missions on the table that you try to complete to earn points. You complete the missions by doing certain actions.

In the actual competition, you have your own little table to set your robot, parts and other things that are needed. That area is like your team’s area. Then you have different events at different times for Core Values, the Science Presentation, and the Robot Game. Before the robot game, you have to get your robot checked and make sure it’s legal. The FLL is not just about building a robot and programming it. There is also a science portion where you and your fellow teammates come up with ideas to solve real-life problems.

The Core Values aspect is another category that you and your team are judged on. This category represents teamwork and being kind and helpful to each other. Recently, the Viking Robotics Team went to the state competition in Augusta, Maine. They won one award in states and two at regionals. They won the Second Place Most Innovative Solution Award at states. At the qualifier, they won the First Place Champions Award and the First Place Robot Performance Award. Although they did not win the state competition, we are still very extremely proud of them and the hard work they have completed throughout the season.

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Grades 2/3 perform surgery!

By Holly Humphrey, Grade 2/3 Teacher

Why do we need to know about text features?

Text features help readers determine what is important to a text and them. Without a table of contents or an index, readers can spend wasted time flipping through the book trying to find information. Special print helps draw the attention of the reader to important or key words or phrases. What are text features?

Some examples of text features are the contents, index, headings, bold print, captions, graphs, charts, illustrations, and more.

Grades 2/3 spent time learning about each feature and what it is used for. We had lots of fun finding them in books, magazines, and newspapers. After a week of studying and preparing they then performed surgery...yes SURGERY! The stepped into the operating room (art room) clothed and ready to find text features in books!

We had lots of fun and learned so much!

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Student report: FLEX Friday at VCS

By Dom Ondo and Tristan Martin, Grade 7

Flex Friday is an activity that happens every Friday morning at Veazie Community School. There were eleven different groups in the first trimester, including Robotics, Jewelry Making, Gardening and Origami, Science Fun, Dungeons and Dragons, Soccer, Mandala Rocks, Strength and Conditioning, Dot and Dash Robotics, Public Safety Club and finally, Walking.

Mrs. Kimball, the first grade teacher at VCS, said that kids have liked Jewelry Making and have been doing it in their spare time. They even used the jewelry they made to give as Christmas gifts for some lucky parents.

Fifth grade teacher Mrs. Smart managed Painting Scenery and Mandala Rocks. She said the kids loved it and they would do it again if they could.

The third grade teacher, Mrs. Humphrey, did science experiments with the younger kids. They made snow in the classroom and exploding apples. The kids enjoyed it a lot because it was fun to make the experiments.

“The idea behind FLEX Friday was to create a student-centered learning opportunity that unites our school and community...one that allows students to learn things they may not otherwise have the opportunity to try and allows our staff to share their own passions with students and each other.” said Principal Mr. Cyr.

Overall, the teachers at VCS love Flex Friday, and so do the students.
VCS Art students help Bangor Humane Society

Learning goals for middle school art students this year are greatly focused on community service. They learn why and how to share their artwork beyond our school walls to help others. We started this fall by working on pet portraiture and planning our field trip to the Bangor Humane Society. Each student chose an animal featured on the BHS website to pay homage as a painting and raise awareness about adoption. They learned what it takes to care for the animals during their stay at the shelter and how they find their forever home. It was a day to remember and students even got to bond with some puppies and kittens at the end of our visit. One of our students, Lily Chandler, had her artwork featured on the holiday card that was sent out by BHS.

Our next middle school community service project was the 2nd annual Bangor Area Homeless Shelter soup fundraiser. Soup-er Bowl Saturday was held in February as students continued to hone in on their ceramic skills and create art for their community and a good cause. The luncheon raised money for the shelter as students sell their ceramic bowls which included a warm soup, salad, rolls, drinks, and desserts. We received generous donations from the Hogan Road Hannaford, Old Town Hannaford, Broadway Hannaford, Old Town Governor's Restaurant, Sam's Club, VCS staff, family, and friends. Thank you to everyone who continues to support our art endeavors!
Vincent, Seth, Liam and Shawn spend a Friday afternoon coding in Scratch while in the VCS Makerspace.

**Substitute Teaching at VCS**
Have you ever thought of being a substitute teacher at Veazie Community School? Here is a short list of some of the benefits:

- A second income that can certainly come in handy.
- Flexibility: You get to pick the age level of the students, and which days you’d like to work!
- An excellent opportunity to gain experience in the teaching field.
- You will truly have an impact on the lives of children.
- There is no better job reference than one that involves experience working with children.
- The kids are amazing!!!

Applications are available at the Superintendent’s Office at Veazie Community School. Call 947-6573 for more information.

By Adrian Arias-Palomo, Spanish Teacher and Code Club Leader

Last September VCS started a Code Club as an after-school activity every Friday. At Code Club, students learn how to program their own games, art, animations and music using Scratch (a block-based programming language developed by the MIT Media Lab) and later moving to text-based programming languages, like Python.

This winter we are very excited about the release of Scratch 3.0 because it incorporates a lot of new features that are going to let us control our programs with micro-controllers like the Micro:bit or Makey Makey, use text-to-speech in our programs and also to code Lego WeDo 2.0 and Lego EV3 robots.

Some of our projects so far include randomly generated art based on the noise level of the room, a memory game, the Simon Says game, a math wizard, different runner games like the dinosaur one that we see on the Chrome browser when there is no internet, a Christmas card with a snowflake generator and a paint box.

The Code Club at VCS displays a different project every week on a screen in the corridor of the school for students and community members to interact with. Come check them out! All students from grades 4 through 8 are welcome to join our Club at any point during the school year.

5th graders begin their snowshoe unit by learning how to walk and run in snowshoes through the VCS sports fields. We are hoping to hit some trails soon! All VCS students know that it is important to get outside and stay active, even in the winter!
By Martha Shannon
Library Media Specialist
Vezazzie Community School

Our Makerspace is an extension off the library filled with technology, creativity tools, and reusable materials. It not only serves as a home for our LEGO Robotics team, but also is a place for our students to experiment, design, and invent as they engage in STEM activities and challenges. Even more than a physical space, the Makerspace movement is also a mindset. Students are encouraged to make mistakes, ask questions, test their creations, and explore their own interests. They experience failure, work cooperatively, celebrate their successes, make connections, and become extremely engaged in their learning.

In Library Media class, we often collaborate with teachers to provide an extension of technology to the classroom curriculum. PreK and Grade 4 students recently used our green screen to share their artwork and biography projects. Seventh grade ELA students participated in a LEGO Lit challenge and recreated a scene from The Outsiders. Grade 5 students learned how to graph decimals on a number line using Scratch.

At the primary level, our Makerspace activity almost always pairs with literacy. When the fireflies at the end of Eric Carle’s The Lonely Firefly didn’t light up, PreK students were challenged to make their own magic. They caught on quickly and loved exploring our Little Bits coding kit. They could tell you that to make the firefly light up, they needed blue power, a pink input (switches, dimmers, buttons), and a green output (LED light, fan, speakers). They snapped the magnetic bits together and were fascinated by what they could build. We begin coding with our youngest learners and use common language all the way up though middle school, providing lots of opportunity to explore, problem solve, create, and learn.

**STEM opportunities at VCS begin as early as PreK**

**VEAZIE COMMUNITY SCHOOL CALENDAR 2019-2020**

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T = Teacher Only Day
H = Holiday
V = School Vacation Day
T = Parent/Teacher Conferences: November 7th and 8th 3:00 - 6:30 PM
First Student Day (PreK - 8) Wednesday, August 28
Last Student Day June 5, 2019*
*Additional days will be added at the end of the school year to adjust for snow days or unexpected school cancellations.

Adopted 1/7/19
Ballymote Crossing subdivision taking shape; 5 new homes completed, first of 17 duplexes under construction and about 50% complete

Construction is well underway at the Ballymote Crossing subdivision southeast of Chase Road in Veazie, with five single-family homes completed and the first of 17 duplexes about 50% complete.

Eventually, the 46-unit subdivision will include the five existing single-family homes, the 17 duplexes (34 residential units), and six house lots. The first five single-family units will be independently owned. Two have been spoken for and three are still available.

Construction of the first duplex began last fall and should be ready for occupancy this spring or summer, according to Cathy Davis-Tilton, one of the developers.

Excavation has begun for the second duplex, and plans call for the remaining duplexes to be completed in the next year or two.

The land has been in the Davis family for eight generations. Cathy said the project is doing a feasibility study for the parcels in back of the five completed homes, which will be sold as house lots.

“Our focus is on getting the duplexes done,” she says. “If people want to construct their own custom-built homes they can purchase one of the lots out back. We’re currently putting a road (Donegal Drive) with town water and underground power to service those lots.”

Cathy says she’s excited about the subdivision.

“There’s nothing like it in the area,” she says. “People just love the floor plan, and having that field behind the duplexes gives it a wide-open feel.”

Cathy said it’s been enjoyable working with prospective buyers because they’re such a diverse group.

“They’ve had different lives and different backgrounds, but they all want to be part of a community that has a rural feel, but is close to all the amenities,” she said. “I think the neighborhood is going to be charming and a lot of fun.”

Another aspect of the project that has generated some excitement is the development of hiking and cross-country ski trails.

“We’ve walked the land and have some good ideas,” Cathy says. “We can connect our trails with the town forest; we think the community will love them.”

The duplex units will be part of a planned unit development (PUD), which is similar to a condominium but allows for more variation among the homeowners. One difference between a PUD town home and a condominium town home is that the PUD homeowner actually owns the land underneath the footprint of the home.

“The emphasis is on individual home ownership while maintaining a smaller footprint,” Cathy says. “Shared space with a strong community is popular right now.”

The existing single-family homes are on lots ranging from 0.37 to 0.39 acre. They have covenants, but they’re not part of the PUD.

The 17 duplexes (34 residential units) will share a 20-acre lot bounded by Galway Drive, Chase Road, and Longmeadow Drive.

Anyone who would like more information about Ballymote Cross ing should contact Cathy or her husband Kevin at 44 Conzord Drive, Hermon, ME 04401, or call 745-8546, or email catherinedtilton@yahoo.com.

Dan Freitas, firefighter/advanced EMT, selected for Live-In Program at Veazie FD

Dan Freitas, a firefighter/advanced EMT who is in the EMS (emergency medical services) program at Eastern Maine Community College, probably spends more in the Veazie fire station than anyone else.

At least when school is in session. Dan was selected in May 2018 to participate in EMCC’s Live-In Program, which allows him to live at the fire station rent-free while attending classes to earn his degree.

In return, when classes are in session, he’s at the station every night from 10 p.m. to 7 a.m. providing first-responder coverage, with every other weekend off. He also works three day shifts a week, from 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

During both his night and day shifts, he’s paid only for the hours he and other firefighters are responding to calls.

The Veazie Fire Department has two full-time firefighters—Assistant Chief Metcalfe and Lt. Sirois. The rest of the department are call firefighters. Dan has been a call firefighter for Veazie since October 2017.

The Live-In Program benefits both the student and the town. Veazie benefits because the fire department doesn’t have full-time coverage at night, when many emergencies occur.

With Dan living at the fire station, he’s available to be of service to the town as a first responder to nighttime emergencies. Dan benefits from being able to learn and grow in a fire station atmosphere. He also gains valuable experience that will make him more attractive when he applies to fire departments for full-time employment.

Dan grew up in North Attleboro, MA, about 10 minutes from Foxborough, MA, home of the New England Patriots. However, his favorite team is the Boston Red Sox.

After graduating from North Attleboro High School, he spent a year in the nursing program at the University of Maine, but decided the program wasn’t for him. He had been an EMT in Boston since May 2017 (he’s also an EMT in Maine), so he enrolled in the EMS program at EMCC. He’s on track to receive his paramedic certification in 2020.

Dan is currently trained on two of the fire department’s three trucks, so he can drive the fire engine and the rescue truck for EMS calls. He’s currently training to drive the ladder truck.