Veazie Police Department hires 2 new officers

Two police officers—one full-time and one part-time—have been hired by the Veazie Police Department.

The new full-time officer is Chad Young, who was a full-time police officer in Orrington for 12 years and a part-time officer for 2 years. Chad held the rank of corporal in the town’s constable program, in which he was employed by the town but received his training and commission from the Penobscot County Sheriff’s Department. He started in Veazie June 28.

The new part-time officer is Brennan Blackstone, a student at Husson University who is working on a 5-year criminal justice program that will lead to an M.S. in Criminal Justice Administration. He started on July 10.

Veazie Superintendent Matthew Cyr and Veazie Town Manager Mark Leonard are organizing a planning committee to examine the costs and benefits associated with repairing, replacing and/or renovating the current playground at Veazie Community School.

In addition to serving the students of VCS, the school playground and its large play area is a safe and healthy attraction for many children and families in our region. With more than 20 years of use, the playground is showing signs of wear and tear, and it is time to begin planning for the future.

Please contact Mr. Cyr or Mr. Leonard if you would like to serve on this committee:

Mr. Cyr: mcyr@veaziecs.org, or call 947-6573.
Mr. Leonard: mleonard@veazie.net, or call 947-2781.
New Veazie website up and running

(Continued from page 1)
to know what’s going on in town government.”

The email and text message options include:

- Urgent alerts from the Police Department, the Fire Department, the Town, and Veazie Community School.
- News and announcements from the Town Council committees, the Police Department, the Fire Department, the Town, and Veazie Community School.
- Meeting agendas from the Planning Board and Town Council.
- Minutes from the Planning Board and Town Council.

In addition to making it easy to sign up for these notices, the website makes it equally easy to unsubscribe to and all of the alerts and announcements.

The new website includes a business directory for the town, along with a Google Earth map showing the location of all the businesses. It also serves as the central point for information on all municipal departments, boards, and committees, tax maps, real estate and property tax assessment information, and forms and documents for all municipal services. However, the website goes far beyond providing information about town government. It includes a section with several hundred photos, including town photos, river photos, historic photos, and Fire Department photos, along with photos of the Ballymote Subdivision, Buck Hill Conservation Area, McPhetres Forest and environs, and Cleanup Day and Memorial Day 2019.

Residents can also use the website to access Jean Hamilton’s 126-page *History of Veazie*, c. 1976.

The website was designed by Civ-icPlus, a Kansas firm that specializes in designing websites for municipalities. CivicPlus also hosts the website. The Veazie Town office staff maintains the site. If a business or organization wants to be listed on the website, contact the Town Office.

Mark said the town has received a lot of favorable feedback about the new website. “We would like all residents and non-residents to visit the site and sign up for text or email alerts so they will be aware of things occurring around Town,” he said.

During the site’s first month of operation, more than 900 people visited it with almost 4,000 page views. About 95% of the users were located in the United States, while the remaining users were located in Canada, India, Germany, Italy, China, Pakistan, Australia, Brazil, Spain, France, Ireland, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Kuwait, Nether-lands and Uganda.

Veazie Police Department hires 2 new officers

(Continued from page 1)

Chad grew up in Old Town and graduated from Old Town High School in 1998. His first law enforcement job was with the Penobscot County Jail, where he worked for 6½ years before accepting the position in Orrington.

He and his wife Amanda live in Old Town with their daughter, who will be a freshman at Old Town High School this fall.

Chad says he enjoys family time and fishing in rivers, streams, and lakes for anything that bites.

Brennan is a native of Presque Isle and graduated from Presque Isle High School in 2017. He currently lives in Old Town.

In addition to his criminal justice studies, Brennan does dispatch work at Husson. Until mid-July, he worked as a security officer at the methadone clinic at Acadia Hospital in Bangor.

He enjoys music and plays the guitar.
NGCR schedules town hall meeting at VCS to discuss conversion to natural gas

Natural Gas Conversion Resources (NGCR) has scheduled a town hall meeting at the Veazie Community School for 7 p.m. Thursday, August 22, to provide information for Veazie residents who are interested in converting their homes to natural gas.

The town hall meeting will be hosted by Tom Renners, program manager, and Andy McIntosh, contract business manager of NGCR, which provides project management services and favorable financing options to help homeowners switch to natural gas.

Andy says NGCR does not charge homeowners for its services, and its core financing product—an unsecured loan for up to 10 years at a rate of 4.9%—is a bargain for qualified borrowers.

NGCR is a member of the Hearthstone Utilities family of companies, which owns five utilities, including Bangor Natural Gas, that distribute natural gas to end-user residential, commercial, and industrial customers.

Andy says the town hall meeting will probably last between an hour or 75 minutes. It will start with an educational presentation on natural gas, followed by a description of the project management services and financing options offered by NGCR.

Also attending the town hall meeting will be some of the local, certified contractors who work with NGCR to help homeowners navigate the conversion process.

“We will introduce our contractor partners, and they will be able to answer any technical conversion questions homeowners may have,” Andy says. “We will encourage questions throughout the evening and review the conversion process in an open forum where everyone can participate in the dialogue.”

He said J&M Chase Electric of Veazie is one of NGCR’s contractor partners.

Andy added that snacks and refreshments will be provided.

NGCR’s project management services are available to homeowners who currently have a natural gas main on their street. To be eligible for NGCR’s core financial product—an unsecured loan for 5 to 10 years at a rate of 4.9%—borrowers would need a minimum FICO score of 685. However, borrowers who do not meet the 685 FICO score threshold may still qualify for other financing products with reasonable monthly payments.

If you’re not sure whether there’s a gas main running down your street, you can find out by calling Bangor Natural Gas at 941-9595.

Typically, Andy said there is no cost to run a service to the home when the main is on the street; however, homeowners with an exceedingly long driveway, may want to ask Bangor Natural Gas if there is an additional cost.

Andy invited anyone interested in or thinking about converting to natural gas to come to VCS on Thursday evening, Aug. 22, He requests that you RSVP to hold a seat. You can do this by email—amcintosh@egas.net—or call his cell phone 630-210-5175. To learn more about NGCR and the conversion process, visit the company’s website at www.getgas.com.

“It’s going to be an evening of getting together with your neighbors to learn more about this natural gas fuel that they have never had access to, understanding how they can benefit by converting their home and meeting the folks that will help them along the way,” he said.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is eligible to participate in this program?

Homeowners in the central Maine communities of Bangor, Brewer, Hampden, Hermon, Veazie, Orono, Old Town, Buckport and Lincoln with natural gas main already on their street are candidates for the natural gas conversion financing program.

What is the conversion process?

Natural Gas Conversion Resources will have a project manager review your specific needs, payment options, and documentation to initiate natural gas service. The homeowner selects three contractors from a certified list to do site assessments. Once the assessments are completed, formal bids are prepared and sent to the homeowner and the project manager. The homeowner reviews the bids and selects the contractor he or she prefers. The homeowner may consult with the project manager prior to selecting the winning contractor’s bid. The selected contractor will take care of ordering any parts, appliances and coordinate the conversion. The local natural gas utility will run a service to the home and the new fuel lines are hooked up. A final inspection is completed and the natural gas line is activated.

What is the average conversion cost?

Depending on the specific scope of the conversion, the cost could range from $1,000 to $10,000.

Please contact a project manager at 1-888-205-0756 and schedule an appointment to determine the scope and cost of your project.

How can I pay for my natural gas conversion?

Homeowners have many payment alternatives. Naturally, cash or credit card payments may be made directly to your contractor. In addition, homeowners may take advantage of several financing options. Borrowers with a minimum FICO score of 685 could be eligible for a 4.9% APR for a term of five or 10 years. Borrowers who do not meet the 685 FICO score threshold may still qualify for other financing products with reasonable monthly payments.

Ballymote Crossing on its way to becoming Veazie’s newest neighborhood

Veazie’s newest real estate development—Ballymote Crossing on Chase Road—is well on its way to becoming the town’s newest residential neighborhood.

When completed, the 46-unit subdivision will have 12 single-family homes and 17 duplexes with two single-family units each.

The developer, Cathy Tilton, said five single-family homes have been completed on Doolin Drive between Davis Drive and Galway Drive. Two of the homes have been sold, and two others have potential buyers who need to sell their current homes before they enter into a contract.

She adds that five other prospective buyers have asked her to build homes for them on the seven single-family house lots that are available in an undeveloped section of the subdivision on Donegal Drive.

Cathy says the interest from the home-buying public has exceeded her expectations.

A recent open house on July 20 attracted more than 100 potential buyers or interested observers.

In addition to the single-family homes, Cathy says work is proceeding on the duplex units. Two of the duplexes are in advanced stages of construction, which should be ready for sale in August and September.

Foundations have been constructed for five other duplexes.

Most of the duplexes will have two separate buyers—one for each unit—although Cathy says some potential buyers are in discussion to buy both.

Cathy says she’s been excited about the level of interest in Ballymote Crossing—and in Veazie’s reputation as a great place to live.

“Everyone we talked to spoke highly of the Town of Veazie—the school, the low taxes, and its reputation as a safe community,” she said. “Kevin [Cathys husband] and I have built buildings in several different communities and Veazie has a top notch municipal staff. Their efficiency and knowledge together with their approachability has been unmatched. They really took most of the stress out of the project.”

Cathy and Kevin, who live in Orland, own 275 acres in Veazie, which includes the subdivision southeast of Chase Road and a large tract of land northwest of Chase Road which is not being developed.

The subdivision, located between Wedgewood Drive and Long meadow Drive. A new road, Galway Drive, has been built to access the development.

Anyone who would like more information about Ballymote Crossing should contact Cathy or Kevin at 44 Concord Drive, Hermon, ME 04401, or call 745-8546.
Town Manager’s message:

Subdivision progressing, summer road building and paving projects, cemetery improvements; Code Enforcement Officer John Larson retires; tax bills coming; Town social media pages

Happy Summer! It’s hard to believe that it is already the first week of August. Before we know it, school will be back in session and we will be raking leaves and preparing for winter. The Viking continues to receive great responses. None of this would be possible without a few key players. Those being Superintendent Cyr as well as Dave, The Viking editor. Dave does a huge amount of work behind the scenes to make this paper the success it has become. I would also be remiss if I didn’t thank everyone who contributes stories or pictures. If you are interested in contributing for a future paper please don’t hesitate to contact me. I can be reached via email mleoard@veazie.net. We are always looking for new and creative stories.

Although we were off to a slow/wet start it appears summer is now in full swing. With summer comes those numerous projects around Town which we spend all winter planning for. The most visible project continues to be the new subdivision located on Chase Road. I must say it has been great to watch the progress as the area we have all know as the Davis Field is converted to the new area, called Ballymore. The developers have been wonderful to work with and I look forward to meeting the new families who will become part of our beautiful community.

For Town projects, we are nearing completion on phase II of the complete rebuild of Wedgewood Drive which is located off the Chase Rd. The next phase of this project is to rebuild Sunset Drive and finish back on Davis Drive. Thank you to our partners at the Orono Veazie Water District and the Veazie Sewer District. Without their partnership the project would not be as successful as it is.

In addition, this year for road paving projects we paved Birchwood Drive, Randolph Drive, Buckhill Drive, Silver Ridge and several other small sections around town. Hopkins Paving continues to do an outstanding job for the Town and I thank them for their hard work.

With these areas complete we now begin the process of determining where we will pave next year. This will be updated in a future issue so please stay tuned.

We have continued with improvements in the Cemetery and are receiving numerous positive comments on the work we have completed. You may recall last year we named the streets. This year we cleaned and leveled another section of stones. Most remaining stones are fairly new so we should not have to clean and level them for some time.

In addition, Lou Silvers Construction added materials and leveled all of the road surfaces. Traveling through the Cemetery is now much easier on smaller cars. This work also fixed a few water retention areas which had developed.

As in previous articles I would like to again thank the Cemetery Committee members for all their work they do for the Cemetery.

I am disappointed to report the Town’s Code Enforcement Officer, John Larson, has decided to retire. I am confident that his leadership and guidance was instrumental in numerous projects which have been completed over his time here. Although he will be missed, we wish him luck in his retirement. Until a more permanent solution is found, we will be relying on our alternate Code Enforcement Officer to assist with inspections and issuance of permits and other code related questions. He, too, has a vast amount of experience in Code Enforcement and has served the Town for many years. Much like our previous Code Officer, he will be looking for voluntary compliance but will take action if the property owner does not comply with the request.

Assessor Benjamin Birch and office staff have worked diligently to finalize tax bills for this year which will be mailed in the near future. The due date for taxes is September 30, 2019. Assessor Birch’s knowledge to a very complex process continues to be appreciated and a great asset to the Town. Assessor Birch can be reached at the Town Office on Tuesdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and can also be reached via email at bbirch@veazie.net.

In closing, I encourage you to follow the Town’s social media pages and join the Town’s email list serve/text notification service. As you will see in a later article in this paper the Town has a new web page. We are extremely proud of it and hope it helps us communicate better with you. As always, though, if you have any concerns, comments or suggestions don’t hesitate to contact me at 947-2781 or via email at mleoard@veazie.net.

Please enjoy the rest of your Summer.
Veazie Seniors, Friends meet at Town Office June 26 for BBQ

The Veazie Seniors and Friends met at the Town Office on June 26 for a barbecue. With the chance of rain and the infestation of black flies, holding the barbecue at Riverview park did not seem like a fun idea.

Town Manager Mark Leonard manned the grill with assistance from Officer Gene and Fireman Nick. “Dwayne” entertained the group with some great music that was enjoyed by all.

The meal was great, with lots of wonderful food. Many of the seniors mentioned that they enjoyed the cookout as they no longer have grills.

The next Seniors and Friends meeting will be September 11 at the Town Office. It will be a pot luck lunch to honor Veazie Police Officers and Firefighters.

Anyone interested in the Senior group call Sandra Patterson at 947-0438 for more information.

Upcoming Holidays and Council Meetings

Aug. 12 ...... Council Meeting
Sept. 2 ...... Labor Day
Sept. 9 ...... Council Meeting
Oct. 14 ...... Columbus Day
Oct. 21 ...... Council Meeting

Volunteers needed

Looking for volunteers to be on the Veazie Budget Committee, Planning Board and Board of Appeals. If interested you can fill out a Citizens Involvement form which is on our website, www.veazie.net, or call the office at 207-947-2781.

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for more information, call Mark Leonard at 947-2781
American Concrete Industries has been one of Veazie’s largest businesses for many years, but when it started up by John, Richard, and Carlton Snowe in 1957 it had both a different name and a different location.

The original business was located in Auburn next door to Superior Concrete, which was owned by Carlton Snowe. John and Richard wanted to make steps, so Carly assisted in the company startup but dissolved his stake. The business was named Maine Shawnee Step Company.

In 1966, John and Richard moved the company to Bangor and renamed it American Concrete Industries. The following year, the company moved to its present location on Stillwater Avenue in Bangor.

John’s grandson, Opie MacDonald, is currently the Vice President of Operations for American Concrete; Shawn MacDonald, John’s son and Opie’s father, is the company president.

Opie says the company started with making concrete steps, both in Auburn and Veazie, but then expanded into other markets that use concrete, such as septic tanks.

He says American Concrete has become a precast concrete manufacturer with a diverse and ever-expanding line of products, although septic tanks continue to be the company’s highest-volume product.

My father always said that the septic tank business is our bread and butter,” Opie said. “It’s definitely our largest volume item, with both sales to contractors and retail sales.”

From April or May through November, the company averages seven or eight septic tanks per day. With annual production of more than 1,200 units, American Concrete is the largest supplier of septic tanks in Maine. Most of the septic tanks are 1,000-gallon tanks, but they can be twice that size—up to 2,000 gallons.

Opie points out that American Concrete’s septic tanks are all monolithic units, made with a single cast. “A lot of manufacturers, including many of our competitors, are still making two-piece septic tank, with a seam in middle of the tank,” he says. “Eventually the seam fails, and all of a sudden the tank loses half of its capacity. A Monolithic unit guarantees capacity.”

Opie adds that all of American Concrete’s septic tanks go out with filters as standard equipment. “American Concrete is an innovative company that tries to look out for the best interests of both its customers and the environment,” he says. “Some customers regard filters as an inconvenience, but they reduce the amount of solids that go out to the leachfield and risk clogging it up. By reducing solids the filters can significantly prolong the life of a leachfield.”

Opie says the company is active in all segments of the precast market, including:

• Residential—on-site wastewater systems and leachfields, as well as septic tanks.
• Commercial—septic tanks, water source tanks, manholes, catch basins, manure pit panels for farms, blocks for retaining walls, and retaining wall systems.
• Municipal—box culverts, pump stations.
• Utility—duct banks for underground utility work, utility vaults, and transformer pads.

“Except for steps, most of what we do...
American Concrete started with steps, expanded into precast concrete products. Opie MacDonald, Vice President of Operations, stands in front of septic tanks that are awaiting delivery to customers. "Whatever you don’t see, we make." American Concrete’s emergence in municipal markets for such items as box culverts has led to some very large projects. Five years ago, the company was a subcontractor to Sargent Corporation on a contract to provide 2 million gallons of wastewater storage for the City of Portland to reduce the amount of sewage and other waste material that flows into Back Cove during heavy rainstorms. The project involved construction of 384 precast concrete boxes weighing 21½ tons each, as well as catch basins and manholes. Opie says the company is hoping to be a subcontractor to Sargent Corporation on a similar CSO project for Portland later this year. Opie points out that some of American Concrete’s precast products, such as pump stations for municipal sewer systems, also include pumps, controls, and electronics to ensure that wastewater that flows down hill is pumped up to a treatment plant. "We’re more than just a concrete company," Opie says. "We have people who install the pumps and controls that our precast products need to get the job done." The company is currently looking at producing NEXT (Northeast Extreme Tee) beams, a relatively new type of reinforced precast beams that fit together to form a flat surface when placed on abutments, eliminating the need to construct bridge decking on site. NEXT beams have been approved by the Maine DOT for bridge construction. "This or some sort of large bridge-span endeavor is probably our next step to expand the business," Opie says. "NEXT beams are currently manufactured out of state. MDOT is looking for someone to make NEXT beams for Maine projects." Although much of the company’s recent focus has been on various commercial and municipal precast markets, American Concrete still makes steps—lots of them. "We sell steps all over the State of Maine," Opie says. "The Veazie plant manufactures all the precast steps for both locations to sell and install; meanwhile, Superior manufactures the railings for both plants in their new fabrication shop.”

Spanish textbook features VCS contribution

The Spanish editing house Difusion is starting to expand into the US market. In order to adapt their manual targeted to students 7-11 years old, Difusion contacted different teachers and education experts from across the US to get input and advice on materials and pedagogical practices. Among them was VCS’ Spanish teacher Adrián Arías-Palomo. Adrián has been using materials from this editing house for grades 2-5 during his two years teaching at VCS. Drawing from his experiences with the students, Adrián was able to provide feedback on different activities and on the scope and sequence of Spanish courses specifically for children in the US. The new textbook should enhance learning for kids both at VCS and throughout the country.

Code Club to continue when school resumes with new material from Picademy

The Raspberry Pi Foundation held its Picademy on June 13th and 14th in San José, California. Picademy is a two-day digital workshop in which teachers and educators learn about the Raspberry Pi computer and the myriad of components that can be attached to it and controlled with code. VCS’ Spanish teacher and Code Club leader Adrián Arías-Palomo was one of 40 educators nationwide selected to attend Picademy this year, and in doing so became the first Raspberry Pi Certified Educa in the state of Maine. He joins an ever-growing group of like-minded educators that work to bring computer and technology education to schools across the globe.

In other news, two of the games developed by Adrian on Microsoft MakeCode Arcade—Raptor Run and Jumpy Movers Platformer—were featured over the summer on Microsoft’s website and another appeared on the blog of John Park, a nationally-recognized educator for the electronics company Adafruit (https://blog.adafruit.com/2019/06/28/makecode-arcade-game-of-the-week-raptor-run-adafruit-johndegarpark-adafruit-memakecode/).

The coding concepts that appear in these games were discussed and applied in Code Club during the year. Code Club will continue to meet every Friday after school and students in grades 4 through 8 are welcome to join at any time.

Ashley Thibeault
Veazie Community School, 8th grade Class of 2009

I currently live in Portland Maine and work at Maine Medical Center as an Oncology Nurse. After leaving VCS I attended Orono High School. I then moved to Biddeford to attend University of New England where I earned a Bachelors in Medical Biology, followed by a B.S. in Nursing on the Portland campus. Memories that I most remember from Veazie were the teachers, sports, and the fun in these games were discussed and applied in Code Club during the year. We sell steps all over the State of Maine," Opie says. "The Veazie plant manufactures all the precast steps for both locations to sell and install; meanwhile, Superior manufac turates the railings for both plants in their new fabrication shop.”

Kristen Shaw
Veazie Community School, 8th grade Class of 2007

I live in Bangor Maine, and have worked for OHI Maine since 2015 as a Community Mental Health Professional. I will start my work towards my Master’s in Clinical Mental Health Counseling In Fall 2019 at Husson University. I went to John Bapt Memorial High School and graduated in 2011 and graduated with my Bachelor’s in Psychology from Husson University in 2014. The amazing and dedicated teachers such as Mrs Healy, Lauree Gott, and Tracy Cobb.
EXPANSION UNDERWAY—The Veazie Veterinary Clinic is working on a $1.5 million expansion project that owner David Cloutier says will allow the clinic to care for additional patients and provide additional services over the next 10 years. When the project is completed, the clinic will six new exam rooms, a laparoscopic surgery suite, and a two-station dental unit instead of just one station. Ultrasound and chemotherapy will have their own rooms. The project included the purchase of an adjacent house on Highview Terrace; the house and garage were being removed, and the lot was excavated to match the elevation of the clinic’s main building. The former Always Flowers building, which houses the clinic’s rehabilitation center and rooms for chemotherapychemo, reproduction, and ultrasound, has been raised four feet to match the elevation of the main building. Two additions are also being constructed on the back side of the main clinic and connecting the main clinic with the rehab center.

News from Pastor Seymour of the Veazie Congregational Church

Things are very different than when I graduated from high school and, by all indications, they promise to continue doing so for the foreseeable future. Yet, there are some things that haven’t changed, and will not any time soon.

Specifically, I am thinking of messages--of which we are all familiar.

I love words, and how they can be used to communicate ideas; messages. But I also like non-verbal language, like when Officer Gene holds out his arm with his hand (palm facing outward) indicating that someone should stop. And, whether the signal is given to a pedestrian near the crosswalk or a driver, that doesn’t matter—the message is the same.

There is no question about what is being clearly communicated—someone is to stop.

Hand messages are more common than we realize. They are everywhere. The baseball umpire can indicate that someone is out or safe. He can also tell us whether a batter has hit a fair or foul ball, a homerun, a ground-rule double, or is out. He can call a pitch a strike or a ball, and he can even indicate his decision to “ask” someone to leave the game. His decision, whether audible or by hand signal or (as often happens) by both, is, nonetheless, effectively communicated.

In our automobile we call the message-givers indicator lights. While they still communicate the old familiar messages of low oil or fuel, modern indicators can even tell us that a tire is low on air, or whether the trunk lid is secure or not. Over the years I have heard people refer to sermons as messages. I too, have done so. I have even heard people sometimes say that the sermon was too long (or, even too short [but rarely]). Often times, someone will engage me in conversation about how the message was challenging or inspirational to them. I like those conversations. That’s what I do, communicating messages with a meaningful, hopeful, encouraging and provocative theme.

The sign board in front of the church has been recently repaired. After some time we can now open it. We will be placing a weekly message thereon. They will necessarily be very short, but I promise you, they will be thought-provoking. Some examples: “Looking for a sign from God? This may be it.” “I hate this church!” “Satan” “I love this church. I died for it!” “Jesus.” Hear the message.

Peace and Grace,
Pastor Seymour

Veazie Sewer District reminds residents that roof and floor drains can’t be connected to the sewer

Dear Residents of Veazie:

This past year has been very busy for the Veazie Sewer District. There have been a lot of construction projects all around Town. Sewer main and manhole work have been done on Buck Hill Drive, as well as finishing the last bit of work on Oak Grove. We have made improvements to both our pump stations, and are working on improving our aeration system at the plant. In addition, inspections have been performed for new infrastructure going in at the Ballymote Subdivision off of Chase Road.

With the growth of new housing and infrastructure, the District has been addressing any unwanted inflow to the plant. Residents have been notified that it is illegal to attach any type of floor or roof drain to the sewer system. Home inspections have been performed, and will continue to be performed in areas with known floor drains. The District will also be investigating potential illegal connections by means of smoke testing. We ask the public for their cooperation in reducing illegal connections to the sewer.

If there are any questions or concerns, or if anyone would like assistance to determine whether their floor drain is connected to the sewer system, please feel free to contact the Veazie Sewer District.

Respectfully,
David Leonard, Superintendent

Veazie Historical Committee hosting talk on history of stained glass windows at Veazie Congregational Church

The Veazie Historical Committee is hosting a talk on the history of the stained glass windows at the Veazie Congregational Church on September 12 at 6:30 p.m. at the church.

Mary Bagley, the Church Clerk and a member of the Diaconate, will give the talk.

The church is older than the town, having been formed in 1838 while Veazie was still part of North Bangor. Mary’s talk is very interesting, and you will find out what Webster Park in Orono, the B.F. Goodrich Company, and mutiny and murder at sea all have to do with the windows and the history of Veazie.

This will also be a chance for you to see the Church from the inside if you have driven by and wondered what it looks like. You will be surprised at what you will learn.
I want to extend a warm welcome to the 2019-2020 school year. Summertime is a great time for the office staff to get caught up on projects and plan for the upcoming school year, but we do miss the hustle and bustle of school being in full-swing and look forward to our first staff day on August 26 and our first student day on August 28! This past summer, we ran three separate academic and enrichment programs for VCS students—a special education Extended School Year (ESY), a Title 1 Reading/Math Program, and a Library program that integrated literacy and STEM resources. Each program was well attended and greatly benefited children in our community. Looking ahead to the upcoming school year, much of our professional development goals will be focused on the continued development and implementation of a shared leadership model that embraces the fact that we are a small school and the simple fact that every staff member is vital to our overall mission. We will be working with the Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence, Inc. to collect and analyze feedback from various stakeholder groups. This validated school improvement program will both highlight what is working as well as focus our energies towards targeted areas of growth and improvement. I am excited to share news that Vezzie Community School will be participating in a research grant titled Ci3T (Comprehensive, Integrated, Three-Tiered Model of Prevention). Ci3T is designed to meet students’ academic, behavior and social needs. VCS and Portland Public Schools are currently the only schools in Maine participating in the program, which will involve direct collaboration with a research team out of the University of Kansas. Much of the 2019-2020 school year will involve staff training, with the expectation of full implementation during the 2020-2021 school year. Communication is always key, and I want to take this time to encourage families to follow us on Facebook and Twitter. We are proud of our beautiful website (www.veaziecs.org) and use this tool to post calendar, breakfast/lunch menus, School Committee information and other documents vital to the operation of our school. If you haven’t already, please download our school App from the Google Play Store, or the Apple App Store (search Vezzie Community School). Text messaging is a preferred communication tool by most people, so please make sure our office has your current cell phone numbers. This year, we have moved our annual Open House and Community Spaghetti Dinner to the night before school starts—Tuesday, August 27 from 5:30 - 7:00pm. We encourage all families to attend, meet the VCS staff, see old friends, make new friends, tour the school and ‘break bread’ together! The meal is free, but donations will be accepted and go towards our PTO Visual and Performing Arts Fund, which helps to pay for our musicals and concerts! I hope to see you all at our Open House and Community Spaghetti Dinner!

Superintendent’s message: VCS—a true Community School

2nd, 3rd graders visit Leonard’s Mills in Bradley

Holly Humphrey, Grade 2 Teacher, says the 2nd and 3rd grades at Vezzie Community School went to Leonard’s Mills in Bradley in May. Ms. Humphrey says her students said it was the best day ever! They took a wagon ride, caught fish, made bookmarks, played tug of war with other area schools, and learned so many wonderful things. “It was a day of learning and laughing together,” Ms. Humphrey said. “Leonard’s Mills is awesome and it was a great way to end a wonderful year!”

State Referendum Election

The State Referendum Election will be held on Tuesday, November 5th, 2019. Polls will open at 8:00am in the Council Chambers at the Municipal Building and will close at 8:00pm. Absentee ballots will be available on October 7th and may 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, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:00am and 4:30pm. Please bring identification and something with your Vezzie address on it (ie. electric bill, paycheck). You may also register to vote on the day of the Election. If you have any questions regarding the Election or voter registration please contact Julie Strout at 947-2791.

Communication is always key, and I want to take this time to encourage families to follow us on Facebook and Twitter. We are proud of our beautiful website (www.veaziecs.org) and use this tool to post calendar, breakfast/lunch menus, School Committee information and other documents vital to the operation of our school. If you haven’t already, please download our school App from the Google Play Store, or the Apple App Store (search Vezzie Community School). Text messaging is a preferred communication tool by most people, so please make sure our office has your current cell phone numbers. This year, we have moved our annual Open House and Community Spaghetti Dinner to the night before school starts—Tuesday, August 27 from 5:30 - 7:00pm. We encourage all families to attend, meet the VCS staff, see old friends, make new friends, tour the school and ‘break bread’ together! The meal is free, but donations will be accepted and go towards our PTO Visual and Performing Arts Fund, which helps to pay for our musicals and concerts! I hope to see you all at our Open House and Community Spaghetti Dinner!
S'More Learning Camp met 4 days a week during first 5 weeks of summer

Extended School Year program focused on functional, academic skills

The Extended School Year program for children with disabilities started June 25 and ran for five weeks, concluding on July 25. It was held three days a week—one Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday—from 8 a.m. to noon.

This summer, the program included 12 students. All students in the Extended School Year program had to have an IEP (individual education program).

“The kids did very well,” said Special Education Director, Debrajean Scheibel. “They had a great time.”

Ms. Scheibel said the purpose of the extended school year programs is for the students to continue to make and retain progress on the goals they were working on during the school year.

“竭 wanted them to maintain the progress made throughout the school year through the summer so that when they come back to school in the fall, their skills will still be intact,” she said.

“We want to prevent regression of skills.”

The skills the student worked on included academic skills—reading, writing, and math—along with functional skills, such as following directions, completing tasks, and asking for help when they need it.

“We wanted the students to work on whatever functional goals were listed on their IEP,” she said.

The Extended School Year staff normally included four adults—lead teacher Tara Frazier along with other staff members Katie Sauzier, Richard, Laura Betters and Jen DeSisto alternating in the fourth spot.

In addition, two high school students worked with the students with one alternating as a volunteer.

Ms. Frazier said the program was geared to working on both functional and academic skills while allowing some flexibility.

“We try to make it more fun,” she says.

The program was built on a different theme every week. For the final week of the program, the theme was superheroes, and all the students made masks based on their favorite superhero. During previous weeks, the themes included camping, animals, and space.

“The students did some arts and crafts that were related to the weekly themes and the skills they were working on,” she said.

Ms. Frazier said the program tried to hire staff members who work with the students during the school year.

“We pay close attention to fidelity of instruction,” she said. “Using the same staff helps tremendously.”

Ben Francis, Lana Friess, Emily Adams: speech contest finalists

In May, middle schoolers participated in a speech contest with the topic “A Memorable Event.” Students were invited to write a three to five minute speech about a happy, exciting or powerful experience that left an impact, focusing on details so the audience could have a clear understanding of why this event was significant.

Judges scored participants on both content and delivery, including the speaker’s organization, persuasive quality, the ability to capture the listener’s attention, eye contact, preparation, memorization and vocal expression.

The top three winners were Emily Adams in 3rd place (photo right), who spoke about her mother’s accident and the impact on the family; Lana Friess in 2nd place (photo left), who delivered a speech on her trip to the air and space museum in Washington, D.C.; and Ben Francis in 1st place (photo center), whose winning speech focused on the life and passing of his family’s dog.

Congratulations to the finalists!
Back-to-School Open House Aug. 27
The Veazie Community School will hold its annual Back-to-School Open House and Spaghetti Supper on Tuesday, August 27, from 5:30 to 7 p.m.
The community is invited, and you don’t have to have a child at VCS to attend.
The supper is sponsored by the school’s Parent Teacher Organization.

My School Bucks...
...is a simple online payment service that provides a quick and easy way to add money to your student’s meal account using a credit or debit card or an electronic check.
You can also view recent purchases, check balances, and set up low balance alerts for FREE.
MySchoolBucks provides:
- Convenience - Available 24/7 on the web or with the Mobile App for your iPhone, Android or Windows phone!
- Efficiency - Make payments for all your students, and eliminate the need for your students to take money to school.
- Control - Set low balance alerts, view account activity, and ringing/automatic payments and more!
- Flexibility - Make payments using credit/debit cards and electronic checks.
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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 bhbrooks@veaziecs.org. You can also contact MySchoolBucks directly by calling 1-855-852-5228, by emailing parentsupport@myschoolbucks.com, or by visiting the website at myschoolbucks.com and clicking on Help/FAQs.

2019-2020 Title IA, Title IIA, and Title IV Applications under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
Now that the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) era is behind us, schools operating under the new Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) have worked hard over the past year to conduct a Comprehensive Needs Assessment and develop a School/District Consolidated Plan. Veazie Community School has followed all federal guidelines supporting this process. VCS stands to receive federal grant funds and will use Title IA funds to support salary/benefits related to our Reading Recovery Program; Title IIA funds will be used to support professional development costs including travel fees and contracted/purchased services; and Title IV funds will support further development of our STEM clubs, after school programs and the expansion of our summer library program. ESSA maintains the parental right to request professional qualifications of teachers at anytime. Such requests shall be made in writing to the Superintendent of Schools.

COMING NOVEMBER 2019
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!

Veazie Community School 2019-20 Calendar

American Red Cross
The need is constant. The gratification is instant.
Give blood.*
redcross.org/1-800-RED-CROSS
Veazie Community School Veteran’s Day Blood Drive
Gymnasium @ 1040 School Street, Veazie, ME
Friday, Nov. 8, 1-6 p.m.
Blood Drive Coordinator: Matthew Cyr, mcyr@veaziecs.org
947-6573 (call or email to schedule an apt.)
Veazie Community School Veteran’s Day Blood Drive
Gymnasium @ 1040 School Street, Veazie, ME
Friday, Nov. 8, 1-6 p.m.
Blood Drive Coordinator: Matthew Cyr, mcyr@veaziecs.org
947-6573 (call or email to schedule an apt.)
Students seen here weeding one of the existing beds planted during the spring.

By Martha Shannon,
Library Media Specialist

School may have been out, but reading was in this summer at the VCS Library!

During “Little Vikings,” our preschool aged program, families joined the Library Media Specialist, Martha Shannon, for stories, songs, rhymes and movement activities followed by sensory stations to explore the concepts of STEM—science, technology, engineering and math—and literacy.

The stations included many items that families might already have so that they could easily recreate and reinforce skills at home.

Playdoh was the one of the most popular options, and loose parts such as googly eyes, buttons, straws and toothpicks gave children an invitation to be creative, use their imagination, practice letter formation, count, and work collaboratively.

We also created a rain cloud in a jar one week. Students closely observed as the colored water saturated the shaving cream “cloud,” which then got heavier. Eventually the cloud could no longer hold any more water, simulating rain.

At VCS, our older students are becoming more familiar with some of the technology tools we have in our Makerspace.

Using Scratch, 5th grader Aiden Taylor independently programmed a game to click on a ball as it quickly bounced around the screen. He added a timer to countdown, as well as a scoreboard.

Double-Vision! Mrs. Shannon helps sisters Mona and Cora retell their favorite part of a story using manipulatives.

In the second half of library programming each week, some of our older students enjoyed a cool and quiet place to read and get lost in a book of their choice in our flexible seating options.

Others participated in drawing or Lego challenges, building with KEVA planks, recording videos with the green screen, creating stop motion videos, and completing circuits.

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Even our youngest learners had an introduction to coding this summer. We began with screen-free activities where students practiced simple sequencing. We introduced algorithms by talking about routines (how to get ready for school in the morning, for instance). We talk about directions (forward, back, left, right) and then they got a chance to program one of our latest robots, BeeBots.

Using manipulatives and hands-on activities, children also worked on strengthening fine motor skills while engaging their minds in problem-solving and creativity. Older students who were already familiar with the technology tools reinforced their prior understanding as well as challenged themselves to learn something new.

We recently received a large order of new books, and we’re looking forward to getting students back in the fall to begin reading them. Students in grades four through eight will be participating in the Maine Student Book Award this year, so stay tuned for some of their book reviews!