The Viking, February 2022

Town of Veazie
December 2, 2021, was an extra special day for Gloria Breyson and the Town of Veazie. Gloria celebrated her 99th birthday in a quiet ceremony at the Town Council chambers, and Town Manager Mark Leonard presented her with the Boston Post Cane in recognition of her status as the oldest resident of Veazie.

Gloria was born on Dec. 2, 1922. She grew up in Brewer with an older sister and brother. Her mother passed away when Gloria was 2 years old. Gloria’s father ran the Bon Ton Ferry and was known as “Tug Boat Brownie.” When the ferry ended, he went to work for the Bangor Hydro on the Trolley Cars.

Gloria has lived in Veazie for 64 years. In her early years she worked at the Stucco Lodge. Later, she worked at BMHI for 20 years. She also worked in the Brewer Upholstery Shop, which she and her husband owned until it closed in 2001.

Gloria is the mother of five children—Judy, Larry, Dottie, Jimmy, and Alyce—and the grandmother of 12, along with many great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.

VCS Library, with upgraded technology, is ‘the heart of the school’

One of Mr. Cyr’s first projects upon arriving to Veazie in 2015 was advancing the school library into the age of technology. This was accomplished with a series of upgrades to the school library infrastructure, including the establishment of a library-media program.

“I believe that school libraries should be the heart of the school,” Mr. Cyr said. “It should be the place where kids—young and old—want to go to learn, to explore, and also to relax and read a book. We wanted to create a space that was diverse and more than just a place where kids go to borrow books or have a story read.”

With that, the School Committee supported the creation of a part-time position for a Library Media Specialist—a certified classroom teacher who would spend most of her time in the library. The nearby computer lab was dismantled, and that space was transformed into a ‘Makerspace’ where kids go to explore STEM projects. The VCS Makerspace is also homebase to the Viking Robotics Team.

Coinciding with the removal of the computer lab was the purchase of 1-1 technology devices for every VCS student. Veazie Community School was a 1-1 technology school several years before the onset of the pandemic when all schools had no other choice but to move in this direction.

In addition to investing in books, laptops and iPads, VCS invested in a lending library of STEM resources including Keva Planks and WeDo robotics kits. Along with resources, professional development was provided for staff in the area of robotics.

“VCS Makerspace is also homebase to the Viking Robotics Team.

Vikings win the State LEGO Robotics Innovation Award

Vikings win the State LEGO Robotics Innovation Award

By Surya Vel, 7th grade, Veazie Community School

A few weeks ago the Veazie Viking robotics team participated in the FIRST LEGO League competition and won the Global Innovative Award for their proposal to manufacture carbon fiber shipping containers.

This year’s theme was to improve the transportation of products. The award recognizes the team with the most innovative and well-thought-out project. There are three parts to the robotics competition, specifically the robot challenge, teamwork, and the project.

The robot competition part is scored based on how well the robot completes the challenges on the board. The teamwork part is judged by how well the team works together. In the project part, teams are given a problem to solve and need to find a way to improve it.

**This year, the project theme was transportation. After lots of brainstorming the team finally landed on the idea of using carbon fiber shipping containers, since carbon fiber is lighter and stronger than steel, the main material currently used in shipping containers. Carbon fiber

Town Meeting, Town Election set for June 14

The Town of Veazie will be holding its annual Town Meeting/Municipal Town Election on Tuesday, June 14, 2022.

Nomination papers for municipal vacancies will be available at the Veazie Town Office on Monday, March 7th and can be picked up Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Vacancies include:

- Town Council—two positions for three-year terms
- School Committee—one position for a three-year term
- Sewer District Trustee—one 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.
**Town Manager’s message:**

Happy Winter! Thompson Road selected for reconstruction, new storm drains; budget deliberations under way

As I start each of these winter articles, I want to say Happy Winter, and wow, what a winter we have had so far. A few of these storms have been ones like I remember when I was a kid. Black Bear Lawn Care has done a great job in clearing the snow and ice from these large storms.

I remind you if you have a comment or concern regarding snow plowing, please contact either myself or the Town Office as soon as possible so we can have the concern addressed.

In addition, if your mailbox is damaged or destroyed by the plow, 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 once the weather allows.

I’m happy to report we held our staff Christmas party this year after taking a year off because of COVID concerns. As part of the yearly celebration, we recognize employees of the year for each department.

I would like to congratulate Andy Fish from the Town Office, Dan Morgan from the Fire Department and Chad Young from the Police Department.

Each of these employees were selected by their peers and I must agree, each of them goes above and beyond every day for this community. A plaque showcasing these recipients is displayed in each department.

Department heads and a representative of the Budget Committee met with the Council to receive direction on FY 22/23 budget. As in years past we were directed to be mindful of the impact the pandemic is still causing for residents of our community. I’m certain both Municipal and School Department Staff will work diligently to produce a modest budget that will continue to allow us to do the work needed to keep the community moving forward.

I want to remind everyone the budget meetings are open to the public and I would encourage you to attend if you would like to be more involved with the budget process. The schedule for the meetings is posted on the Town’s website and located elsewhere in this edition of the Viking.

For Capital Highway projects this year, the Council has selected the reconstruction of Thompson Road. Council was presented with three options and determined we would go out to bid on the section of road. This project will impact the neighborhood in and around Thompson Road, but I'll be working with them to make it as least impactful as possible. Once completed I'm certain the improved road will be welcomed as currently it's probably our worst section of road.

I continue to deliver food commodity boxes to our residents who are 60 years and older so they can receive the food without having to come out of their home. For those not familiar with the program the commodity boxes contain approximately 30 pounds of food and are provided by Eastern Area Agency on Aging at no cost to residents. This is a great program and I would like to see it grow. If you would like information, please contact Eastern Area Agency on Aging or myself.

As in prior issues I would like to remind everyone that I am always, open to having healthy discussions with any citizens. I can be reached via email at mleonard@veazie.net or by calling 207-947-2781.

Enjoy the rest of your winter.

**2022-2023 Budget Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>January 13th</td>
<td>6:30 PM</td>
<td>1st Quarter Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>February 14th</td>
<td>6:30 PM</td>
<td>Discussion on FY 22/23 Budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>March 10th</td>
<td>6:30 PM</td>
<td>FY 22/23 Draft Budget Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>April 7th</td>
<td>6:30 PM</td>
<td>3rd Quarter Review / FY 22/23 Budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>April 11th</td>
<td>6:30 PM</td>
<td>Review FY 22/23 Budget Prior to Public Hearing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>April 14th</td>
<td>6:30 PM</td>
<td>*Schedule if needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(School Vacation is the Week of April 18-22, 2022 / Patriots Day April 18, 2022)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>April 22nd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>May 9th</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>May 9th</td>
<td>6:30 PM</td>
<td>Budget Committee Review Workshops, Council Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Session and Public Hearing Total Budgets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>May 10th</td>
<td>6:30 PM</td>
<td>*Schedule if needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>May 12th</td>
<td>7:00 PM</td>
<td>*Schedule if needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>June 14th</td>
<td>8:00 PM</td>
<td>Voting of Warrant Articles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All meetings MAY be held in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building or MAY be held virtually. Proper notification will be advertised when this is determined. The June 14th Council Meeting and Town Meeting will be held at the Veazie Community School.

**Upcoming Holidays, Council Meetings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mar.</td>
<td>14th</td>
<td>Council Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>11th</td>
<td>Council Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>18th</td>
<td>Patriot’s Day, Town office closed</td>
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<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>9th</td>
<td>Council Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>30th</td>
<td>Memorial Day, Town office closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>14th</td>
<td>Council Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>14th</td>
<td>Annual Town Meeting/Election</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Enjoy the rest of your winter.

Mark Leonard, Town Manager
Matthew Cyr, Superintendent and Principal

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

Town of Veazie, 1084 Main St., Veazie, ME 04401 • (207) 947-2781
Veazie Community School, 1040 School St., Veazie, ME 04401 • (207) 947-6573
Assembly of God on Finson Road in Bangor.

She was a gifted seamstress, sewing many clothing items for her family. She is also gifted at knitting and crocheting.

She was a Brownie and Girl Scout Leader when her children were growing up.

Gloria has been a hospice case worker since the early 1980s, and she is still volunteering.

The previous holder of the Boston Post Cane in Veazie was Dorothy Treworgy, who passed away on Feb. 28, 2021, at the age of 102.

*   *   *

During the ceremony, Mark recalled the history of the Boston Post Cane: On August 2, 1909, Edwin Grozier, the publisher of the Boston Post, forwarded gold-headed ebony canes to the board of selectmen of 700 towns in New England—no cities were included—with a request that the canes be presented, with the compliments of the Boston Post, to the oldest male living in each town. The canes were to be kept as long as the recipient lived in the town. At that person’s death, the cane was to be handed down to the next oldest male citizen of the town. The canes belonged to the town, not to the men who received them.

The canes were manufactured by J. F. Bradley & Co. of New York from 7-foot lengths of ebony, which were shipped from the Congo in Africa, cut to cane length, seasoned for six months, and then turned on a lathe to the right thickness. Each cane had a 14 karat gold head, 2” long, decorated with an inscription that read, “Presented by the Boston Post to the oldest citizen.” The inscription included the name of the town and the instruction, “to be transmitted.”

The boards of selectmen were to be the trustees of the canes, which were to be kept in the hands of the oldest citizen. The custom of the Boston Cane took hold in those towns lucky enough to have a cane. As the years went by, some of the canes were lost, stolen, taken out of town and not returned to the selectmen, or destroyed by accident. Initially, the canes were to be presented to men, but in 1930, after considerable controversy, eligibility of the cane was opened to women.

(Continued from page 1)

Karen Walker pins corsage on Mrs. Breyson.
Veazie native Jon Parker has been doing lawn care work since he was a junior high student at the John R. Graham School in the late 1980s. Now he’s the owner of Black Bear Lawn Care and Landscaping on Stillwater Avenue in Bangor, and he has 10 full-time employees helping him do landscaping maintenance and hardscaping projects in the greater Bangor area.

He continued doing part-time landscaping while a student at Orono High School and the University of Maine, and when he graduated from the University of Maine with a B.S. degree in Forestry, he decided to keep doing that kind of work. “I realized that I was making more doing lawn care and landscaping part-time than I would make as a full-time forester,” he said. “A lot of my studies at UMaine—forestry, biology, etc.—are also applicable to landscaping. The two tied together pretty well, so I just kept on with it.”

Jon says 90 percent of his lawn care maintenance clients—mowing, trimming, shrub work, and routine landscaping activities—are in Veazie, Bangor, and Orono.

For larger hardscaping projects, such as walkways, stairs, retaining walls, sleeper walls, sitting walls, driveways, pool patios, patios, planters, fire pits, and flagstone installation, the company stretches out to other areas.

Jon says hardscaping not only allows for unique visuals or necessities, but it also makes impossible landscaping possible.

For example, he says that if soil erosion is taking its toll on your landscape, hardscape construction can allow you to enjoy plenty of green space while creating a new layout for the property.

“Our team can provide a hardscape design that works with your softscape to create a balanced look for both gardening and entertaining,” he says.

Jon says the maintenance crews at Black Bear Lawn Care do lawn care and landscaping for private homes and businesses, but they’re also responsible for the upkeep of city parks, school athletic fields, and other school properties.

The company offers a variety of other services, including tree and shrub plantings, hazard tree removal, pruning, landscape drainage, aeration, turf maintenance, irrigation, spring cleanup, fall cleanup, and fertilization programs.

Jon says Black Bear Lawn Care can provide homeowners with comprehensive landscape maintenance programs and payment schedules that work for their specific needs.

“We offer services such as gardening, weeding, lawn care, edging, path maintenance, shrub pruning and fertilizing,” he says. “Our goal is to keep your property healthy and attractive through every season. We pride ourselves on customer service. Working to make our customers happy is our number one goal.”
News From the Veazie Church

By Mary H. Bagley

The Veazie Church had a wonderful Christmas season with members of the community joining us for our Christmas Eve Service. It was a special service, as we used glow sticks in place of candles for spreading the light of Christ.

What a beautiful sight it was to see the rainbow of colors illuminating the sanctuary. We may make it a tradition—hope you will join us next year to enjoy the sight.

We also had a very successful Christmas cookie sale and mini Christmas Fair. Many thanks to all the Veazie citizens who dropped by to support the church, load up with delicious cookies (and maybe a turkey pie), and purchase a last minute gift or two.

We have many talented knitters and craftspersons that keep our hand-crafted goods boutique well stocked. If you need a pair of mittens or a nice warm hat, let us know.

The Church held its annual meeting this month and discussed issues from the past year as well as what’s ahead in the year to come. Building maintenance is always a concern for us, as the meetinghouse is 177 years old and there is always something needing attention.

We will be looking into funding through grants, etc., to help us keep this beautiful old church serving the community of Veazie for many years to come.

We are a small congregation and we welcome any ideas or expertise you may have to share. Contact the church clerk if you’d like to help. veazichurchclerk@gmail.com.

* * *

We take our outbursts are starting up again this month. In February, we will be serving beau and all the fixings and on March 19th, we will have our annual New England Boiled Dinner—ham, potato, carrots, cabbage, rolls and dessert. April will be turkey pie, mashed potato with gravy, peas/carrots, rolls and dessert.

If you’ve never tried one of our suppers, you might want to take advantage of the great food at a good price.

May is usually our plant sale—we watch the weather closely to decide the best time for this event. Post information about all events on our Facebook page and on the sign in front of the church.

We would like to have you join us for Sunday worship. The service begins at 10:00 every Sunday morning. If you need more information, please contact the clerk at the email address above. Hope to see you soon.

Every second counts when dealing with a medical emergency

When a medical emergency occurs, often there is confusion, urgency and panic.

Is the necessary medical information available for the emergency responders? Do family members know a loved one’s medical history or medications?

To assist emergency responders the Veazie Fire Department has refrigerator card or “File of Health” card that you can use to list your basic medical information so EMT’s and paramedics have quick access to your health information.

These are free and may be requested by calling the Veazie Fire Department or Town Office.

Winter Fire Safety: Keep your exits clear of snow and ice

Make sure to shovel snow from all doors of your home. Clearing your exits allows you to escape safely and enables responders to gain quicker access.

Always have TWO ways out. Make sure all doors and windows are not boarded up or blocked with snow or plastic. Those serve as a way out of your home should there be a fire.

Have working smoke alarms and an escape plan. Make sure you and your family practice and know what to do when there is an emergency.

Fuel Gas Detector Law became effective Jan. 1

The Veazie Fire Department wants to remind the community of the new Fuel Gas Detector Law effective January 1, 2022. A letter from the State Fire Marshals Office outlines what is required and when certain occupancies must comply.

As of January 1, 2022, any multi-family occupancy or residential rental unit in Veazie that uses Natural Gas or Propane for any use must have a fuel gas detector.

For more information please call the fire department or code enforcement.

Brian Swartz to speak at Veazie Historical Society

Civil War historian and author Brian F. Swartz will speak about his latest book, Passing Through the Fire: Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain in the Civil War, at the Veazie Historical Society’s meeting on Thursday, May 5.

The book chronicles the wartime experiences of Joshua L. Chamberlain, Maine’s best known Civil War soldier. Drawing on Chamberlain’s extensive memoirs and writings and on multiple period sources, Swartz follows Chamberlain across Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, while examining the determined warrior who let nothing prevent him from helping save the United States.

The book details Chamberlain’s swift transition from college professor and family man to regimental and brigade commander. A natural leader, he honed his fighting skills at Shepherdstown and Fredericksburg and was praised by his Gettysburg peers for leading the 20th Maine Infantry’s successful defense of Little Round Top.

Swartz will speak at Veazie Historical Society’s meeting held at the Veazie Community School, 35 Main Street, Veazie. The meeting starts at 7:00 PM on May 5.

The meeting is open to the public and free to attend.

Brian F. Swartz is an associate professor of English and journalism at the University of Maine at Augusta. He is currently editing Maine at War Volume II, tentatively scheduled for a late 2022 release.

Brian and his wife, Susan, live in Hampden with their cat, Miss Getty (short for “Gettysburg”).

Adopt-A-Hydrant

Winter is far from over and continued snowfall is almost a guarantee for a few more months. A fire hydrant that is buried under snow can delay fire response to a home. The Veazie Fire Department is asking for your assistance this winter by “Adopting A Hydrant” and help keep fire hydrants clear of snow.

If you have a fire hydrant near your home please take a few minutes and clear out the snow. A cleared hydrant ensures rapid access to a water supply should a fire occur in your neighborhood.

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Brian and his wife, Susan, live in Hampden with their cat, Miss Getty (short for “Gettysburg”).
COVID Updates:  We continue to coexist with the unprecedented COVID-19. Despite this virus's best effort to disrupt school, we feel fortunate to have been able to offer in-person learning while mitigating COVID-related closures or notable school-based outbreaks.

While the general public has not been privy to our weekly parent newsletters, I want to go on record in saying our success thus far is due largely to overwhelming support from our staff and families. Currently, 85% of attending students are fully vaccinated, and 90% of VCS staff are fully vaccinated.

We hang our hats on these mitigation efforts in addition to our universal masking, general hygiene awareness, contact tracing, and open/honest communication between home and school. Recent declines in transmission, hospitalizations and deaths are giving us hope and optimism for what lies ahead.

FY23 Budget Outlook:  Work on the FY23 budget began on the first day of school this year—July 1st, 2021. Key areas we have been closely monitoring are our large Kindergarten class, the multi-age group of students who are now transitioning through middle school, and balancing significant increases in special service support for current and incoming students.

In addition, our enrollment has steadily increased each of the last four years. Six years ago, we made many difficult staffing reductions to match our declining enrollment. We are now in a position where we must do the opposite and add necessary staff to safely provide teaching, learning, and special services for our growing student population. This absolutely creates a challenge for the School Committee, as we finalize recommendations for our FY23 budget while maintaining fiscal responsibility, through balancing school needs and taxpayer impact.

Solar Energy Partnership:  I am excited to share news that Veazie Community School recently entered into a long-term agreement with ReVision Energy, Inc. on the purchase of Net Energy Billing Credits associated with a 4.7 KW solar array soon-to-be built in Hampden. The electricity generated by this solar farm is expected to reduce our annual electricity bill by roughly $3,000.

It is our hope that these annual savings will help to offset recent spikes in energy costs.

In addition, ReVision Energy will provide learning opportunities for our school and community through classroom visits by their mascot—Sunsquatch, field trips to the solar farm, and access to real time data related to energy created by “our” solar array.

Recent Grant Writing Success:  Veazie Community School has recently been awarded several significant grants. VCS parent and grant writer Bethany Tocci assisted with the authoring of two Federal Emergency Connectivity Fund grants, both of which were awarded in full.

The first award of $57,240 was used to replace all student Chromebooks in grades 1 - 6. The second award of $4,435 was used to purchase PreK and K iPads and cases. Both of these grants were needed due to heavy technology use during the pandemic.

Veazie Community School was also awarded a significant School Revolving Renovation Fund (SRRF) grant. The Maine Department of Education allows schools to submit grant applications aimed at improving facilities and safety. This fall we submitted a $348,872 project to complete all remaining wall repair in one shot (as opposed to doing small sections every year as we have been for the past 3 years). We learned that our project was awarded and that the Maine DOE would forgive 40% ($140,805); and, allow us to finance the remaining 60% ($208,067) at 0% interest over 5-years through the Maine Bond Bank.

This will be our fourth SRRF award in 6 years (including window replacements, entrance renovations, and cafeteria patio redesign).

As with previous awards, the process for accepting these funds must go through the annual Town Meeting in June, which will include a specific budget article to be voted on for this project. Not all schools in Maine receive these SRRF opportunities, and I strongly recommend that past community support for accepting these awards continue for this project. Once completed, all known major facility repairs will have been addressed and our school building is in position to be a great place for years to come.

New 5-year capital plan:  Thanks to support from our School Committee, the Budget Committee, the Town Council, and the citizens of Veazie over the past 7 years, we have been able to perform many facility upgrades and repairs to help ensure that Veazie Community School will remain a beautiful and safe learning environment for many years to come.

Notable projects include upgrading our HVAC system; replac- ing the gym floor and all classroom/hallway tiles and carpets; transitioning to efficient LED lighting inside and out; redesigning our school entrance to mitigate unsafe rain and snow accumulation; redesigning our cafeteria patio for safety reasons and to brighten our main entrance; replacing all exterior windows; replacing our playground equipment; and, replacing rotting exterior walls with additional insulation and a rainguard system that allows better ‘breathing’ of our building during seasonal changes.

Looking forward, we have partnered with Carpenter Associates of Old Town to develop a new 5-year capital plan. This document will help guide future budget development. In addition, we have slowly been growing our Capital Reserve account to help fund part or all of a roof replacement so our community will not have to take out a major bond when the day comes (note: we presently have an annual roof maintenance plan which we hope will extend the life of our roof at least another 10 - 15 years).

Strategic Plan Development:  In addition to working on a new capital plan, the School Committee has begun work on the development of a new strategic plan for Veazie Community School.

Our previous plan was developed in 2016 with input from students, staff and parents. We hope to follow a similar format and are currently investigating various survey tools to assist with this process.

A ‘living’ strategic plan guides decision making related to curricu- lum, staffing, professional development, and ties in with the capital plan and budget development.

— Matthew D. Cyr  Superintendent of Schools & Principal
Veazie Community School

Vikings win the State LEGO Robotics Innovation Award

(Continued from page 1) composites will reduce the weight of cargo containers on ships, which will in turn reduce the amount of fuel used by ships thereby reducing carbon emissions.

The team then invited an expert on carbon fiber composites from the University of Maine to come and give a presentation. The team researched the pros and cons of the idea. The main disadvantage of carbon fiber composite cargo containers is that the cost of carbon fiber ($5 per pound) is higher than that of steel ($8.40 per pound). However, because carbon fiber is stronger and lighter, it is possible to use less material, which will reduce the overall cost of carbon fiber shipping containers.

In addition, the shipping companies will also save money because they can use less fuel for transport- ing goods. Also a steel container can rust, which means you would have to replace them, but carbon fiber never rusts so you could keep using carbon fiber shipping containers a lot longer than the steel containers.

The team then developed a presentation and also built a small model of a carbon fiber shipping container to showcase their idea. The team also came up with the idea of using sandwich composites consisting of two carbon fiber plates with a 3D printed core in the center in order to decrease the weight and

Model of a sandwich composite with two carbon fiber plates with a 3D printed core.

Model of a carbon fiber shipping container.
VCS Library, with upgraded technology, is ‘the heart of the school’ with active library-media program for all students

(Continued from page 1)

Shannon, who has held the position for the last five years. From there, the library has been abuzz with activity.

“The library has been abuzz with activity. It’s been a fantastic experience after another,” Mr. Cyr says.

“Another appearance soon!”

“We’ve invested heavily in rotating all of our books. If your goal is to make sure that kids want to go to the library, you want to make sure that the library has books and other materials that are of interest to them—generally, that means current materials,” Mr. Cyr said.

Mrs. Shannon received a lot of volunteer help in this effort in particular, Michelle Cannon, a retired librarian at Old Town High School, spent numerous days in the VCS library, helping to weed, organize, and relabel all of the books and converting the library to an online catalog system, replacing the old Dewey decimal system. As a result, students can find books using an online public access catalog (OPAC) on their laptops and sign out the books themselves.

After the library was updated, Mrs. Shannon developed the library program—a series of 40-minute classes for all students in 5th and 6th grade that attend once, twice, and sometimes three times a week.

In these classes, the students learn about library use, digital citizenship, and internet safety.

In addition, Mrs. Shannon also teaches a wide range of skills, such as coding, from 5th grade through 8th grade.

By middle school, kids have opportunities to code in multiple languages ranging from Scratch to Python. They also have the opportunity to learn about robotics, video, start-stop-chase photography and green-screen, along with a lot of STEM activities.

“The Library Media program has become very popular,” Mr. Cyr says.

“The kids love it. Mrs. Shannon does a fantastic job and posts current information and photos about Library Media activities on her blog. Mrs. Shannon runs her Library Media classes so many projects that fall under the category of STEM (science, mathematics, engineering, and technology) or STEAM (STEM plus ‘A’ for the arts) umbrella.

“We have a lot of kids who are interested in all as well, so we do a lot of directed drawing,” she says. “Origami is popular this year. I strive to find activities that interest the students at that time.”

She says the kids come to library media classes 2 to 3 times a week. With the younger grades, she focuses on doing picture book read-alouds, and then a STEM activity that aligns with the book they read.

For example, one series of Library Media classes focused on read-alouds of Chris Van Dusen’s Learning to Ski with Mr. Magee. The middle schoolers paired the picture book with an activity they created—using aluminum foil, pop-stick sticks, and duct tape to make skiers who could ski down a ramp and then use similar materials and a rope and pulley to make a chair lift that could actually work.

Mrs. Shannon also teaches one 80-minute block of 6th grade ELA, in addition to the PK-8 library media classes.

Originally from Greenfield, Mrs. Shannon says VCS offered the small school environment she was looking for in her teaching career.

She said she always thought early in her teaching career she would be working in the middle school students, “but the best part about working at VCS is that I get to work with all levels and the littles warm my heart just as much.”

She says that sometimes on Thursdays, she’ll combine the PreK class and the 8th graders, and have them do some collaborative projects.

“It’s really fun to watch them interact together,” she says.

For a peek inside Mrs. Shannon’s Library Media Class, visit her blog at: http://vcslibrarymedia.blogspot.com/

Library Media Program
Margaret Hamilton and Binary Coding

On November 19, students in grades 3-8 listened to the biog- raphy of Margaret Hamilton, NASA’s first software engineer who helped Apollo 11 successfully land on the moon. The students saw a video from TedEd summarizing Mrs. Hamilton’s story.

They also learned about binary coding through a hands-on activity from Our Family Code. Students then coded their names in a variety of ways—using a的画面, by making flags, or coloring in 0’s and 1’s to represent the letters of their name depending on grade level.

Greetings, Veazie community, from the VCS PTO!

By Crystal Roy

It’s been a while since we’ve said “hello,” so we wanted to take the opportunity to let everyone know what we’ve been up to.

Along with monthly meetings, fundraising, and providing support to VCS staff in person by helping with a multitude of activities and projects, the VCS PTO has most recently been striving to create more interactive moments of joy within the school.

December saw the inception of the “Woot Woot Wagon,” which was rolled from classroom to classroom to provide treats, school supplies and a little bit of fun to all of the hardworking staff at VCS (it may make another appearance soon!)

In January, PTO celebrated National Popcorn Day by making and delivering popcorn to all VCS staff and students.

National Pizza Day took place at the beginning of February, so PTO provided VCS staff with a pizza lunch.

Soon, PTO will make and serve hot cocoa and s’mores to VCS students, along with the help of the Veazie Fire Department.

Who knows what’s up next?!

Of course, none of this would be possible without the support of our community. Our 2021 Online Auction that took place this past fall was tremendously successful, and for that we want to say a big “THANK YOU!” to all of the individuals and businesses, both in Veazie and the surrounding communities, who contributed by donating items, helping to advertise the auction and, of course, bidding!

As you may guess, in order to maintain this level of support for VCS, there is always a need for more help. While we understand that not everyone can make monthly PTO meetings, there are a number of ways that everyone can contribute to the success of our school—EVERY LITTLE BIT HELPS!

If you are interested in providing support, please contact us at pto@vcs.org so that you can be kept up to date on PTO events and ways that you can help.

Thank you for your support!
3 (of many) recent Library Media Programs at VCS

KEVA Collaboration Challenge Dec 3

Library Media classes were told: “Your table has a pile of KEVA planks - as a group, you must collaborate to design and construct one piece of architecture using ALL of the planks.”

Our Youngest Learners Meet Our Oldest Learners

It was so nice to have our oldest students paired with our youngest during Library Media again during the first week of November. Eighth graders completed building challenges, read stories, and programmed BeeBots alongside PreK students.
‘Learning to Ski with Mr. Magee’ STEAM Challenge

After reading, Learning to Ski with Mr. Magee by Maine author Chris Van Dusen, students were given this STEAM challenge to design and create a statue skier and working chair lift.

Before jumping into building their creations, students had to draw a diagram of their plan. What materials would they use? How could they create a safety bar for the chair lift that would raise and lower? Would the skier, Mr. Magee, be able to both sit in the chair lift and stand to ski down a ramp?

Using just aluminum foil, craft sticks, tape, string, clothespins, and q-tips, students began to build. They found many challenges, including finding the right tape and glue that would stick well, getting Mr. Magee to both sit and stand, creating a working safety bar, and getting the chair to suspend without tipping. Students worked in pairs and really had to communicate with their partner and do lots of problem solving and critical thinking for this project.

Finally, when they thought their designs were complete, they tested their group’s creation using a moving lift line to get Mr. Magee to the top of Mt. Snow, and then a down wooden ramp to ski downhill. If a design failed, the students went back to the design process to make improvements and tried again. (By the way, we go “Woo hoo!” and celebrate failures in the Makerspace. After all, failures help us to learn!)

If students had time remaining, they were given an additional task to add ski attire for Mr. Magee—goggles, helmets, ski pants, and mittens! This was a great STEAM challenge to return to after vacation! Now our fingers are crossed for lots of real snow!
First graders had their first guest reader in Library Media last fall. Veazie Police Officer, Julia Richards, shared a book called “Police Officers in My Community” and answered lots of questions about her own role in our Veazie Community.

6th Grade ELA - Nature Makerspace

When the Penobscot riverfront is right in your school’s backyard, you take advantage of a warm, fall morning!

Students in Mrs. Shannon’s 6th grade ELA class just finished book groups. On November 19, they went were asked to recreate a significant scene from their book using only materials found in nature.

Eric and Paul read “The Red Kayak.” They were very particular in the driftwood that they selected, making sure they found one piece with a hole in it.

Gabby, Anna and Noah read Alan Gratz “Ban This Book” and recreated the banned book locker.

It was a beautiful Fresh Air Friday, and so nice to get out and explore!
Pre-K children learn about nature during weekly visits to pond in the woods

By Loyann Worster
Pre-K Teacher

Every week the preschool children visit the pond in the woods behind the school. The children are gaining a love for nature and experiencing the benefits of unstructured play in the forest! During these forest mornings, children are given the freedom to play, the opportunity to explore and learn about the natural environment, and the support they need in learning how to handle risks and cooperate with their peers.

Playing in the woods encourages problem solving and critical thinking skills. It increases resilience as it reduces stress levels and increases a sense of well-being.

Beyond the pond, deeper into the woods, the children have discovered a rock wall and many stumps they have named “the woods playground.” In this area they are taking risks in a safe way—attempting to jump from higher places, climb up high, run faster, and explore the mysteries of nature. This risk-taking brings many lifelong benefits and turns into perseverance as they grow into learners and leaders.

When unstructured outdoor play becomes a part of a child’s routine, they’re more likely to grow into future stewards of the earth.

Veazie Vikings Sports Report

By Nolan Bagley, 5th grade student, VCS

On Friday, Feb. 18, the second graders at VCS celebrated being second graders on Twosday, 2/22/22. As one second grader said, “This will never happen again!”

Happy ‘Twosday’ — 2/22/2222

On Friday, Feb. 18, the second graders at VCS celebrated being second graders on Twosday, 2/22/22. As one second grader said, “This will never happen again!”

This past fall the Veazie Vikings Soccer team won a championship.

Their biggest competition was Beech Hill and Greenbush. This year the Veazie soccer team was a coed team. Fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade boys and girls were all on the team.

The coach of the Vikings team, Mr. Gonyar, said his favorite moment was when Piper and Wyatt each scored a goal. More important than individual players is the teamwork they all displayed. That was the key to winning the championship, 2 to 1, over Beech Hill.

This year’s players say they are most likely going to play next year.

The cross country season went well for the Vikings.

One runner said her favorite moment was when she held the participation
Winter poems by middle school students

Snow Day
It’s a snow day
No school and everyone’s outside
I strap in my boots and walk to the door
I open the door and take a step into a wonderland
The wind slams against my face like a brick wall
The snowflakes glistening in the daylight
All around me like a roller coaster
I hear kids in the distance hollering for their friends
And the sounds of sleds descending down the slick hill
A voice pierces through my haze bringing me back to reality
A boy holding a sled is standing at the bottom of my steps
“Let’s go,” the boy says and we take off toward the hill
—Wyatt Chandler, gr. 7

Winter’s Gift
Winter’s nice cold gift
Snow
the fluffy blanket-like ground
as each of your worries drift away
the only thing you can think about is
Winter’s gift
snow
every morning you’re greeted by the soft cotton
we call snow
as you sip on your hot chocolate
it warms your heart to get ready to go outside
with all the possibilities
the day seems like a never ending cycle
of what feels like a winter wonderland
making snowmen
having snowball fights
rolling down a hill
the choices are endless
after what feels like a decade you decide to go back inside
as soon as you walk into the room
your feet go numb
the feeling of the heater washes over you
the table has already been ready with hot chocolate
you look outside the window
the snowflakes dancing to the rhythm of winter
letting you know that this isn’t chance
it’s winter’s gift
snow.
—Vincent Chen, gr. 7

A Record Snowstorm
The snow falls outside my bedroom window
It slips slowly in slow motion
As I watch from the comfort of my cozy room
The warmth from a large weighted blanket
Shelters me from the cold outside air
With a dog cuddled up on my lap
The sweet scent of hot chocolate
around as the tiny singing voices on a well played record
S w i r l S P i N in the background
A sip of the warm hot cocoa meets my lips
As I led the sweet silky drink s o o o o o h me Down.
—Isabela White, gr. 7

Winter Gloom
When the trees are bare no leaves to be found
In the time when ice is driving cars off the road
Now is the time to stay in your house all alone
The snow stopping the growth of all flowers
Even the fuzziest of creatures hide in their dens
Rows of shovels waiting to be pushed
Good tidings aren’t coming once December is over
Long days shortened to a few hour
On this season the sun tries to hide
Over the mountain paradise is laughing
Mourning the fact that winter has arrived
—Reed Stenzel, gr. 7

Perspective
Winter is bad
So you can’t convince me that
Drives on the highway look like paradise
Because whenever winter rolls around
I hate the cold in every way
And I’m not going to lie by saying
Ice skating is fun
So I am confident I will continue to believe
That activities outside during winter are boring
And nothing you say will make me think
I prefer winter over summer
Because no matter what
Winter is the worst season
And I am in no position to believe that
The snow is pretty to look at
Because whenever I go outside I think
Is winter bad for everyone else?
—Kylene Jo Barker, gr. 8

What’s Given Can Be Taken Away
What’s given can be taken away
The shipmunks mourn as the leaves decay
The finches gaze in dismay
For they are left alone, as a stray
The withered trees grasp for life
They were all stabbed by winter’s knife
The needles have persevered
While the leaves have disappeared
The remains of licans sprout
The feathers, once flying about
They were previously so delightful
Now, they just look spiteful
The tree’s plumage will be restored
So the robins can hop abroad
Once again, winter will swing its sword
Making decor fall to the floor
—Sam Wardrop, gr. 8

The Chilling Reaper
Winter gives you a chill
Right down to the bone
You feel like you’re freezing
On your way home.
A shivering breeze
You feel in the wind
A sign of a reaper
As the storm starts to begin.
The cold starts
To drive you insane
You are sealed to his frozen
Ball and chain.
You, a wandering soul
Lost in a storm
But you press on
To find a fire that’s warm.
The chilling Reaper
That fears the flame
But when you go out
He will find you all the same.
—Shawn Anthony Jones, gr. 8

VCS 8th grade student Isabelle Ireland has many talents, one of which is being an amazing artist. Isabelle has been helping to decorate our new graphic novel corner in the library with her own paintings!
By Nikki Richard

Currently, our garden beds lay dormant waiting for the spring thaw. Even though the ground is solid and blanketed with snow, many of our little gardeners keep asking, “When can we go to the greenhouse?” It pleases me that they enjoy gardening so much.

Our 2021 summer and fall harvest was gratifying. Some crops bountiful and some a bit lacking; regardless we learned what worked and what didn’t.

Picking began in the cucumber patch late July into August. We shared our early cukes with Mr. Snitty and Mr. Pete, as they were so gracious to keep our garden watered. Once we had enough, Natalie and Martin Freeman, along with their mom, Jessie, came one day in August to pick the pickling cukes, dill, and garlic. We made four quarts and four pints of home grown dill pickles, which went up for sale in the November PTO Auction.

With the start of school came an abundance of ripe cherry and sun gold tomatoes, lettuce, and green beans. My after-school crew picked weekly to supply the cafeteria with fresh salad fixings.

Mrs. Murphy's students enjoyed pulling the carrots, and Mrs. Humphrey's 2nd graders had a grand time digging their potatoes. Mrs. Brooks and Mrs. Thibeau prepared a lovely potato salad and homefries for our school lunches, along with fresh cut carrot sticks.

The remaining garlic bulbs were dug up, shared amongst the staff and after school helpers, as well as delivered to the cafeteria. We harvested and dried our basil leaves, which now, along with the garlic, helps to flavor Mrs. Brooks' and Mrs. Thibeau's delicious spaghetti sauce - a favorite meal! We plan to plant some oregano in the spring to add to our herb garden.

Many little florists enjoyed picking bouquets of zinnias, cornflowers, snapdragons, and sunflowers to brighten up our staff members' desks. All of these flowers were started by seed; either in the greenhouse to get a jump on growth or directly in the fertile, warm ground in June.

As much as I love winter, I am anxious to get our gardeners back out in the dirt. I hope to have a spring flex group out in the greenhouse, as well as an after school garden club!
1st graders read ‘The Snow Child,’ make snowbabies, write stories about them

First graders in Ms. Kimball’s class read the book, *The Snow Child,* and then made their own snowbabies by stuffing socks. After finishing their snowbabies, the students wrote stories about them.

**Nora** - My snow baby’s name is Heart. Her favorite thing to do is eat lemon zested cake and burgers. She loves her Mommy and her naps. She loves day care. Her Mommy is an artist. She loves living at her house.

**Cora** - My snow girl’s name is Snowflake. She likes ice cream and waffles. Her favorite color is pink. She likes books and school. She can read books by herself. She plays football and loves science.

**Greggory** - Once upon a time my snow baby went shopping at the mall. His name is Cotton Candy. After he went to the mall he went to the grocery store. Then he went fly fishing.

**Mackenzie** - My snow girl is so cute. She is a baby. She is so sweet. She likes to eat pizza. She is kind and smart. Her favorite colors are blue and pink. Her name is Sarah.

**Claire** - My snow girl’s name is Lily. She likes to eat moose cake. She likes to play volleyball. She likes toast on butter. Her friend’s name is Heart. Lily knows her numbers. She makes friends quickly.

**PreK Bird ‘Tweets’**

PreK students made a special “tweet” for their bird friends after reading Betsy Franco’s *Bird Songs.* The students practiced counting backwards from ten, sounded different bird calls, and then made peanut butter and birdseed treats to hang outside on their PreK playground fence.
Once Upon a Time in Grade One

First Grade recently wrapped up a fairy tale unit by putting on the play, A Runaway Unicorn, for Pre-K and Kindergarten. Students rehearsed and memorized lines and actions for about a month. They painted scenery and put together costumes. After putting on their play they read fairy tales to their younger VCS friends.

Due to Covid the play was recorded for families to watch at home. The only question that remained after they finished happily ever after was . . . “When can we do another play?!”

In Mrs. Shannon’s sixth grade ELA class, the students recently finished reading Fever 1793 a historical fiction novel about a yellow fever epidemic that struck the city of Philadelphia in the year 1793. Yellow fever swept through the city, destroying everything in its path, including everything 14-year-old Mattie Cook had ever known.

The sixth graders were given the following assignment:

“Imagine that you are Matilda, lying in a hospital bed at Bush Hill, recovering from Yellow Fever. Write a letter to Mother from Matilda’s perspective describing your situation.”

Mrs. Shannon’s students drank tea as they did the assignment and then used the remaining tea to stain the papers, so they would look as if the letters were written 200 years ago.

The second part of the assignment was: “Put yourself in Mattie’s shoes and write an ‘I Am Poem’ depicting the events that quickly turned her life upside down.”
HATHAWAY HOLIDAY LIGHTS, which were displayed during December at the Veazie Community School, was named the "Best Overall/Fan Favorite display" and the "Outstanding Non-Profit display" in the Rotary Club of Bangor’s Festival of Lights event for 2021. From December 4 through January 2, the public was invited to drive by participating homes and organizations and enjoy the light displays. Then, people were asked to vote for their favorite light displays. Hathaway Lights receive a $500 cash prize for being voted Best Overall.

Encounters with hairs from browntail moth caterpillars can cause mild to severe rashes and respiratory issues. Browntail moth caterpillars overwinter in webs that may have from a couple dozen to several hundred caterpillars each. Some people say they experience itching with fewer than 10 webs per tree or shrub; others say they have no symptoms from heavier infestations around their yards.

Winter is the best time to spot an infestation and take steps towards controlling the caterpillars and reducing the itch.

Use these Four R’s to get you started:

1. **Recognize:** Learn how to tell if the trees where you live, work and play have browntail moth. Their winter webs can look like single leaves hanging onto twigs, or fist-sized clumps of leaves tied together tightly with silk. Knowing where the webs are in your yard or town can help inform your management decisions.

2. **Remove:** With permission, use hand snips or extendable pole pruners to remove webs within reach from the ground and away from hazards such as powerlines. Protect your eyes and skin from hairs that might be present from past caterpillar activity. After removal, destroy webs by soaking or burning.

3. **Recruit:** Hire professional help for treatment of webs out of reach or near hazards on property you own or manage. Line up help during winter. Licensed Professional Arborists can remove a limited number of webs in larger trees and shrubs in the winter. In trees where the caterpillars’ hairs cause a nuisance and where it is not practical to remove webs, Licensed Pesticide Applicators may be able to use insecticides during the growing season to manage browntail moth.

4. **Reach Out:** If you find browntail moth in your neighborhood, let your neighbors and town officials know. The more that neighbors, businesses and others get together to respond to the problem, the better the results.

We invite you to join us in scheduling awareness-raising events and promoting management of browntail moth this winter, with a focus in February. Use #KnockoutBrowntail on social media. Efforts could include organizing groups to map infestations on town and school properties, hosting public service web-clipping events, hosting contests for the most webs clipped or other community and knowledge building activities.

**Follow the Four Rs to Knock Out Browntail in Our Communities and Reduce the Itch!**

**Maine Forest Service**

**KNOCKOUT BROWNTAIL**

**For more information:** Contact 211 Maine for answers to frequently asked questions on browntail moths: Call 211 or 1-877-463-6207, text your ZIP code to 898-211, or visit our website. While you are at our website, sign up for our new Browntail Update Bulletin.