

Welcome to OUR TOWNS



Special Supplement • Morning Sentinel

Thursday, May 16, 2019

Outdoor recreation program for all ages soon to be a reality in Skowhegan

BY MAIN STREET SKOWHEGAN
Special to What's Up Downtown

Main Street Skowhegan has been awarded grant funding from the Maine Commission for Community Service and the Corporation for National & Community Service. The funds will be used to enroll three full-time AmeriCorps members as outdoor recreation coaches for a three-year period beginning this spring.

Under Main Street's guidance, the outdoor recreation coaches will spearhead implementation of the Skowhegan AmeriCorps Outdoor Recreation Program. Developed in collaboration with the Outdoor Sport Institute and other

local stakeholders, the program is designed to get Skowhegan residents of all ages active outdoors and engaged with nature.

In addition to scheduling and executing outdoor recreation programming – from nature walks to paddling expeditions and mountain bike training – the outdoor recreation coaches will recruit local volunteers who will help sustain the program for years to come.

The coaches also will establish a gear library so residents can borrow outdoor recreation equipment such as kayaks, snowshoes, skis, and bikes free of charge.

Main Street is currently working to fill the outdoor recreation coach positions. Learn more at runofriver.org/outdoor-recreation-coaches.

New Skowhegan event to offer local food experiences

Main Street Skowhegan is teaming up with the Wesserunnett Arts Council and the Maine Grain Alliance on a new event, AgriCulture, that will take place Saturday, June 15 in Skowhegan.

Capitalizing on Somerset County's agricultural bounty and ultra-local food products, AgriCulture will feature local food experiences, demonstrations and workshops. The event will culminate with a festival in downtown Skowhegan that will include samples from local food vendors, music and a cash bar with local beer and wine.

There will be numerous opportunities for attendees to learn more about where products come from through first-hand experiences.

More details will be available soon at agriculturemaine.org.

Karen Segler photo

Local handcrafted cheese will be one of the features of the new AgriCulture event this year.



Anonymous \$31,000 donated to Skowhegan's Run of River Project

An anonymous donor recently gave \$31,000 for the Run of River Whitewater Recreation Area, a proposed whitewater park and expanded trails network that will be located in and around the Kennebec River Gorge in downtown Skowhegan.

The donation brings the total raised for Run of River in the last nine months to \$124,000. This includes a \$25,000 grant from the Quimby Family Foundation, a \$25,000 matching gift from a Maine Community Foundation Donor Advised Fund, \$40,000 from the Somerset County Tax Increment Financing Community Benefits Fund and \$3,000 raised via Skowhegan River Fest event proceeds.

"We're so grateful to the donor for this amazing gift," said Kristina Cannon, Run of River Committee member and Main Street Skowhegan executive director. "We can't thank them enough for believing in Skowhegan, this project and the vision for community transformation through outdoor recreation."

The committee will use the donation to help cover costs of required permits from state and federal agencies, including the

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Maine Department of Environmental Protection and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Total permitting costs are expected to be \$180,000. The committee has submitted several grant applications to raise the remaining \$149,000 and hopes to apply for permits this summer.

The committee is planning for construction of the whitewater park – three whitewater features for playboating (where the paddler performs various technical moves in one place), surfing and tubing; access trails; and terraced seating – during the summer of 2021. This timing will coincide with the installation of a fish passage apparatus at upriver Weston Dam and ensure low water levels for construction in the gorge.

Total funds raised for the \$5.3 million whitewater park now exceed \$1.56 million. In addition to pursuing grant funding, the committee is gearing up for a major fundraising campaign to help raise the additional \$3.7 million.

For more information, please see runofriver.org or contact Kristina Cannon at kristina@mainstreetskowhegan.org or call 612-2571.

Tranten family keeps full-service grocery in business for decades Offers meats from local farmers

BY VALERIE TUCKER
Correspondent

Downtown Farmington has a thriving business district and Tranten's full-service grocery store sits conveniently on Main Street, a short walk from the University of Maine at Farmington and area shops and businesses.

"We offer a great selection of competitively-priced produce, meats, baked goods and deli items in a fraction of the space of a grocery store chain," said Donald Tranten.

A family owned and operated business, Tranten's carries a wide variety of quality-brand products, but they offer their own specialty creations that have become customer favorites.

"People love our fresh-baked World Famous Bacon, Egg & Cheese Bread," Donald Tranten said.

Tranten's offers freshly-cut pork and beef from local farmers. The daily homemade delicatessen offerings include a variety of fresh salads, sandwiches, soups and bakery products made right in the store.

"If we don't stock something a customer wants today, we can typically find that item and make it available for those who ask," Tranten said.

In the Wine Alley section of the store, customers will find an affordable, but sophisticated selection of wines. The store also stocks a large assortment of beverages, including the locally-owned and freshly-roasted Carrabassett Coffee brand. Each spring, summer and fall, the store always is stocked with local produce. Fresh lettuce, beet greens, tomatoes, strawberries and corn provide a one-stop destination for locally-grown products.

"We offer lots of great money-saving buys in our weekly sales flier," Tranten said. "We post the flyers online, so customers can plan their grocery list before they head out the door."

Tranten's owners pride themselves on its superb customer service and its friendly and knowledgeable staff who make the shopping experience as enjoyable and convenient as possible.

"Our growth and success comes from decisions made right here in Franklin County," Donald Tranten said. "We reinvest our earnings and time in the local communities we serve."

The family has been very involved with

"Our growth and success comes from decisions made right here in Franklin County."

DONALD TRANTEN

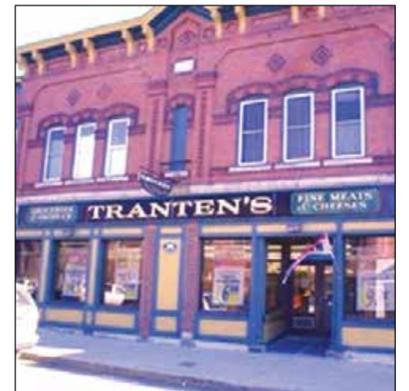


Photo contributed

Tranten's Store on 180 Main Street in Farmington offers a full deli counter, a wide selection of locally-raised beef and pork, fresh produce and baked goods and a sophisticated selection of wines. The store is open seven days a week. Weekday hours are 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday hours are 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Sunday hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. For more information, or for weekly sales flyers, coupons and specials, visit trantens.com or call 778-2202.

community projects, including support for the annual Kingfield Pops concert each summer. Donald Tranten has served as past chairman of the planning committee, and the family provides financial support. Neal Tranten has served for many years on the board of the Franklin County Children's Task Force.

Clay Tranten said his grandparents, Harold and Mary Tranten, first opened their business in

More TRANTEN, PAGE 4

Franklin County announces events

May 20
RANGELEY RUKABI RACE

Rangeley RuKaBi Race - 12 noon - 2 p.m.
Run 3.5 miles, Kayak 1.5 miles and Bike 3.5 miles. FMI: Call 207-864-5571 or 207-864-3055

May 31
LIVERMORE FALLS HISTORY NIGHT
CRUISE-IN

Downtown Livermore Falls Live band music from 5 to 8 p.m. Tractor rides by Jason & Richard Gibbs. Art in the the Park. Plant sale by Treat Memorial Library. The Paper and Heritage Museum open 4 to 8 p.m. Conditions pending, we may have train rides at the museum, food vendors, and more!

June 1
LITERACY VOLUNTEERS ANNUAL BOOK SALE & LITERACY FESTIVAL

Festival starts at 9 a.m. at the Farmington Elk's Lodge, 120 School Street, West Farmington. Celebrate family literacy and find some great books at the Literacy Volunteers amazing annual book sale!

Sit in on an origami lesson, watch shadow puppet theater and a magic show, listen to a read-aloud, or visit the animals in Fred and Matilda's Petting Zoo.

Lots of great food, \$2 raffle tickets on Saturday for bikes, games, and movie tickets.

All proceeds benefit Literacy Volunteers of Franklin and Somerset Counties.

Book donations will be accepted at the Elk's Lodge Tuesday, May 28 through Thursday, May 30 from 11 a.m.-6 p.m., please no encyclopedias or textbooks.

Franklin County is a unique blend of sophisticated culture and laid-back charm amidst natural beauty. Have you ever wanted to stroll down a vibrant downtown area while visiting local galleries, unique shops and eateries and within the same mile be able to walk down beautiful trails within miles of tranquil forest? How about hike a glacial rock formation and ride a train on a track that's more than a hundred years old, all within the same day? With our many pristine lakes and breathtaking mountains, it's not hard to explore or discover your favorite outdoor experience.

While in Franklin County stop by one of the events below.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

May 18
ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND
GOLF TOURNAMENT

Held at Turner Highlands, 10 Highland Ave in Turner, the Jay-Livermore-Livermore Falls Chamber of Commerce hosts this 18-hole golf scramble tournament to raise funds for scholarships awarded to RSU 73 students. FMI: www.jay-livermore-llf.org or 207-500-2464.

May 19
SUGARLOAF MARATHON

Eustis Maine's oldest continuously running Marathon is an official qualifier for the Boston Marathon, a notably fast course known for PRs, and a strict limit of 2,000 participants, registration will sell out quickly. FMI: www.sugarloaf.com/events-calendar/sugarloaf-marathon

Watch Greater Skowhegan



Photo contributed

Whittemore Real Estate in Skowhegan is celebrating its 50th year of doing business in central Maine. Pictured above, Van Ames (seated) - Owner/Broker. From left: Bonny Redmond - Broker, Kily Hilton - Associate Broker, Mickella Laney - Sales Agent, Jim LeClair - Sales Agent, Jennifer Ames - Real Estate Assistant, Garrett Quinn - Associate Broker, Christopher Perkins, - Owner/Broker, Katie Quinn - Sales Agent, Amanda Taylor - Associate Broker, Chad O'Brien - Associate Broker.

Harmony Osteopathic & Acupuncture opens its doors

BY VALERIE TUCKER
Correspondent



"I am open-minded with my approach to patients."
DR. GAIL LAMB, D.O.

Starting a solo practice is always an exciting challenge for any physician. After two decades of training and experience, Dr. Gail Lamb, D. O., decided to create a healing space that would offer patients a wide range of medical skills.

In December, she opened the door to Harmony Osteopathic & Acupuncture clinic in Skowhegan and welcomed visitors to her April open house.

"I chose to study medicine, because I wanted to help people," Lamb said. "I knew I wanted to help improve patients' quality of their lives."

Osteopathic manipulative medicine often is used to treat muscle pain, but it can also help provide relief for patients with asthma, sinus disorders, carpal tunnel syndrome and migraines. In many cases, it can be used to complement other care and may help reduce the need for medications, procedures and surgery. Lamb makes suggestions to her patients, and she encourages them to participate in the healing process.

"I am open-minded with my approach to patients," she said. "I welcome their thoughts and questions."

Lamb offers injections for trigger points, bursa and joints, but she also offers the healing therapy of acupuncture, an ancient healing art used in Asia for centuries to treat many conditions and relieve pain. It's now more common in the United States to ease everything from low back pain to nerve pain. Patients may find relief from shingles, rashes, headaches, fibromyalgia and menstrual cramps.

Lamb earned her Bachelor of Arts from the University of Maine at Farmington, a Master of Acupuncture from the New England School of Acupuncture and a Doctor of Osteopathy from the University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine. She completed her specialty training with the Maine-Dartmouth Family Medicine Residency. Its program has two clinical primary care sites: the Fam-

ily Medicine Institute in Augusta and the Maine-Dartmouth Family Practice in Waterville. Hospital rotations are at the North Augusta MaineGeneral Medical Center site.

The osteopathic curriculum at the University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine in Biddeford included the structure and function of the nervous system; the development and evolution of neural and behavioral systems and interactions among physiology, behavior, environment and genetics. This education formed the foundation for clinical practice and residency-specific training at Maine-Dartmouth.

Lamb completed an additional residency/fellowship in Neuromusculoskeletal Medicine and Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine (NMMOMM) at Eastern Maine Medical Center. She is certified by the American Board of Family Medicine, the American Osteopathic Board of NMMOMM and the American Board of Medical Acupuncture.

"With years of experience in outpatient clinics and hospitals, including caring for emergency room patients, I am ready to welcome patients for evaluation and treatment in my clinic," Lamb said. She also said that her newly-renovated building from the 1800s has room for additional practitioners to share space to compliment her healing practice.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Harmony Osteopathic & Acupuncture
20 North Avenue Skowhegan
612-5500 or
drgaillamb@harmonyosteopathic.com
www.HarmonyOsteopathic.com

Whittemore's Real Estate enjoys a 50-year history

BY VALERIE TUCKER
Correspondent

One half century ago, local businessman Alton Whittemore opened his real estate office in Skowhegan. A young Van Ames started working for Whittemore and his wife Loretta and, in 1977, he purchased the business from them. Christopher Perkins joined Ames as co-owner in 1990. Today, with their team of professional agents, they continue to promote the same high standards that made the company strong since its very beginning.

"For at least three generations, our company has been an integral part of the growth and success of the region," Ames said. "One of my favorite parts of this job is getting to meet and work with the children and grandchildren of the folks we sold a home or camp to many years ago."

Services include buying and selling of single- and multi-residential homes, waterfront, land and commercial properties. Ames said many of his customers contact him when they start looking for a vacation or retirement home.

"Whether folks are passionate about boating, fishing, skiing, hiking, ATVing or snowmobiling, we can find a piece of property that works for them," he said.

No day is the same in the real estate business. An especially memorable and unexpected opportunity came along when Ames helped a 92-year-old man buy his first home.

"He was a little concerned that he wouldn't be able to get financing, but I found a lender willing to give him a loan," Ames recalled.

Prior to their careers in real estate, Ames was working as a carpenter and Perkins was with MetLife and the Skowhegan Insurance Agency. They agree that real estate has gotten a lot more complicated since they started. Today's complex purchase and sale agreements, multi-page disclosures and detailed financing requirements can make real estate transac-

tions intimidating for any customer, Perkins said.

"Buying a house is one of the more stressful things that anyone can do in life," he said. "We create a welcoming and relaxing place for our clients where they can ask all the questions they want without feeling pressured."

Ames said successful real estate agents have to master many skills to guide clients smoothly through the paperwork and interactions with lawyers, appraisers and bankers involved in the process. Trusted and experienced employees behind the scenes can make all the difference. Many Whittemore's Real Estate agents and employees have been with the company for many years.

"We are a great place to work, and I think our customers appreciate that," he said.

Ames values the time he spends with family and community. His leadership roles have included past president of the Skowhegan Jaycees and the Northern Kennebec Valley Board of Realtors. He is an active member of the Maine Retriever Trial Club and also is a 40-year veteran judge for the American Kennel Club Field Trials.

Perkins also is active in the community and is past president of several groups, including the Redington Fairview Hospital board of directors, the Skowhegan Rotary Club and the Downtown Business Club. He also hosts Community Access Channel 11's monthly Now You Know program, which airs several times a week. For more information about Whittemore's Real Estate, visit whittemoresrealestate.com or call (207) 474-3303.

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Make bread, break bread at the annual Skowhegan Kneading Conference

BY KATE CONE
Correspondent

July in Skowhegan—after a long hiatus since the jelly-judging of last year’s agricultural fair—Skowhegan State Fair grounds comes back to life. It’s wicked hot, but no one cares. The smell of baking bread wafts through the summer air, along with pizza, pita, tortillas, focaccia, baguettes and croissants. Put on your cook’s apron. It’s time for the annual Skowhegan Kneading Conference, celebrating its 13th year.

Converging on the grounds and inside its kitchens, classrooms and under tents will be bakers, millers, maltsters and brewers, farmers, chefs and the curious and eager workshop attendees. Get ready for all things grain. Professional bakers mingle with serious beginners. All are welcome. The energy is palpable.

Somerset County was once a prolific producer of grains, wheat production alone feeding over 100,000 people annually until the middle to late 1800s. Enter the railroad and other factors of the times. Exit grain-growing to the Midwest.

Enter interested people who believed it was essential to bring back that grain production to Somerset County and the entire state of Maine. Maine Grain Alliance was born.

There’s more, and all the people responsible too numerous to mention here. But the Kneading Conference is their mission statement brought to life for two days every year.

Each year, farmers, millers, bakers, maltsters, researchers, and grain enthusiasts gather from around the world gather for two days of intensive baking workshops, wood-fired oven building workshops, and discussions about grain growing and running grain businesses. Attendees choose from hands-on workshops, live demonstrations, lectures, panel discussions, field trips and more.

Don’t let gluten intolerance or aversion stop you. Alternative grains abound.

This year’s workshops include:

- Flour as flavor: how to use wheat alternatives such as barley, buckwheat and corn in your baking.
- Corn tortillas: a deep dive into the history and science of maize, then making tortillas, ending with sampling them as part of lunch.
- Bake your vegetables: Squash is the new flour: incorporate veggies into your bread.
- Rediscovering baguettes: explore how to amplify flavor with use of flours and fermentation processes.
- Creating seaweed bread with Jim Amaral of Borealis Breads.
- Chinese dumplings using local flour, sourdough and organic ingredients. Learn how to make two classics: baozi and potsticker.
- Doughnuts, roti, naan, crispbreads, pretzels and



Contributed photo

Blair Marvin brings on the bread.

bagels. Not enough time in the day.

In addition to hands-on baking workshops (roll up your sleeves), there are several do-it-yourself classes and demonstrations that one would be hard-pressed to find anywhere else.

Stu Silverstein will lead attendees in a two-day workshop making their own backyard ovens that are low-cost, fully-insulated and ideal for baking bread or pizza. On day two, they’ll cook in their newly-constructed oven. Talk about instant gratification.

Like beer? Jason Perkins, head brewer for Allagash Brewing Company in Portland, will walk people through the process of brewing, on a much smaller scale than Allagash. It’s a primer for getting started on home brewing with one of the most highly-respected brewers in the world, and another illustration of how Maine Grain Alliance and the Conference’s participants hold dear the production and use of local grains. Allagash has pledged to buy one million pounds of Maine-grown grain by 2021.

By making this concrete

pledge, they aim to give farmers and growers around the state a solid feeling for future demand so they can invest in the equipment and storage required for a higher yield.

This is one of many examples of how the Kneading Conference has influenced action, food justice and the increase of new grain economies in the state, according to Maine Grain Alliance Executive Director Tristan Noyes.

“The Alliance has supported people who have allowed local grain economies to thrive,” Noyes said. “Bread, beer, distilling and whole berries used as farro — the human consumption has quintupled.”

The Somali Bantu Community Association in Lewiston helps refugees from Somalia by providing vital transitional services, advocacy and programming that empowers members of the refugee community. Liberation Farms provides these new American farmers access to culturally-appropriate resources for the means of sustainable food production for themselves, their families and their communities. There, they are growing the type of

flint corn they used in their homeland.

Because of the generosity of members of the Alliance, who donated an antique corn-sheller and a gravity table, the Somali Bantu have stepped up production, allowing them to use what they need for their personal consumption, and to sell some. Lynne Rowe, owner of Tortilleria Pachanga in Portland, uses some of this heirloom corn to make her tortillas.

Numerous past attendees of the Conference have opened their own bakeries, prompting the Alliance to now sponsor a two-day workshop (separate from the Kneading Conference) that teaches and coaches participants on every aspect of owning one’s own bakery—from financing to the actual baking.

Check the website for all the details and register early. It can sell out. This event can be life-changing. This writer became acquainted with sourdough bread after giving up on ever getting it right 40 years before. Two days of intensive classes with passionate bakers, millers and brewers, among many others, leaves a lasting imprint—four sourdough starters are lurking in her refrigerator.



Photo contributed

Ambition Brewing in downtown Wilton offers Mug Club membership levels with varying costs and perks. Owners Josh Michaud and Jeff Chaisson also hold regular mug drawings, discounts on growlers, bi-weekly Mug Club nights, and Ambition T-shirts, pint glasses and stickers to take home.

Partners take passion public with Ambition Brewing in Wilton

BY VALERIE TUCKER
Correspondent

A decade ago, friends Josh Michaud and Jeff Chaisson partnered to launch Expenet Technologies in Wilton. They had enough success to add a Farmington store. Then, they decided they needed to do more than just sell, install, repair and service computers and other digital equipment.

Having long shared a passion for brewing beer and testing the results on their friends and family, they decided to take their hobby public, launching Ambition Brewing at 295 Main Street in downtown Wilton. Their offerings include ales, lagers, porters and stouts. They serve the standard crowd pleasers but leave plenty of room for the nontraditional sours and specialty brews.

They offer Mug Club membership levels, with varying costs and perks. Members get their own mugs, which hold 33 percent more beer. There also are mug drawings, discounts on growlers, bi-weekly Mug Club nights, and Ambition T-shirts, pint glasses and stickers to take home. For \$500 annually, the top tier Legendary Mug Club membership offers a personalized brew day with Chaisson and Michaud.

“Members can bring their

own recipe to create a special brew,” Chaisson said. “We keep them in the loop throughout the process, and when it’s ready for consumption, we invite them to bring everyone to celebrate.”

For those unfamiliar with growlers, these small jugs are one of the best benefits of small batch brewing, according to Chaisson.

“Customers can bring home their beer in a growler straight from our brewery,” he said. “There’s something special about that first taste of a beer that you could never find in a store cooler.”

The partners offer customers at least 10 brew choices and they continue to experiment with recipe variations, including their Derivation Series, which features English traditional beers.

Chaisson provided a quick tutorial on some of the similarities and differences.

All beers, no matter how famous or obscure, start with a basic combination of water, malts, hops and yeast.

Ales are made with a top-fermenting yeast at room temperatures and they have a fruitier and spicier flavor than lagers. They are sold as pale ales, India pale ales, amber ales, porters and stouts. Lagers’ bottom-fermenting yeasts works best in cooler temperatures, which emphasize the hops and malt flavors. The process is slower and more stable, so it can be stored longer. Pilsners, bocks and dunkels are in the lager family.

Hops create the distinctive flavors and smells that distinguish the ales from their peers. India Pale Ale (IPA) beers remain favorites of the craft beer crowd. According to Beer Connoisseur magazine, popular but unverified historical beer lore claims the British pale ales just could not survive the six-month voyage from England to India. The foreign colony wasn’t hospitable to heat-sensitive yeasts nor the brewing requirements either. English brewers had to come up with a solution to keep their soldiers, sailors, merchants and general citizenry happy in the warm climate. More hops and a

More AMBITION,
PAGE 4

KNEADING CONFERENCE
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Good Times Unlimited prepares RV travelers for the long haul

BY VALERIE TUCKER
Correspondent

When retirees or vacationers start shopping for a fully-motorized RV, a fifth-wheeler, travel trailer, pop-up camper or slide-in truck camper, they should do plenty of homework before they hit the road in their shiny new home on wheels.

Debbie Davis, co-manager of Good Times Unlimited in Farmington said a summer vacation in an RV should be a memorable adventure. An unexpected breakdown after dark on an unfamiliar road shouldn't be part of the trip.

First-time owners on their maiden RVing voyages may experience buyers' remorse if they didn't learn how to properly set up and level their home on wheels. Davis said shoppers can avoid most of these headaches if they start with a thorough operational demonstration from their dealer before taking their new camper home. Matching the RV to the proper towing vehicle is the first challenge.

"For example, people sometimes find the RV of their dreams will require more towing power than they currently have," Davis said. "So they have to decide whether to buy a smaller RV or buy a larger vehicle to tow the RV they want."

She suggested choosing an easily maneuverable camper for those who plan to camp mostly at off-the-beaten-track destinations. Back roads can be in poor shape, or even impassable in bad weather, so advance planning is key.

"Know the terrain before you get to your destination, and understand the limits of your RV and towing vehicle," she said.

Drivers must learn to position mirrors correctly and learn to judge the available width, length and height of parking spaces. Maneuvering into a crowded space after a long day on the road should be as trouble-free as possible. Today's back-up cameras, whether part of the RV a package or purchased separately, can make short work of backing safely into a site or positioning the trailer hitch efficiently, she said.

"Some campgrounds have pull-through sites, so RVers don't have to worry about backing up," Davis said. "Campgrounds often have people who guide you when you check in, and usually there are experienced campers willing to help out."



Photo contributed

Good Times Unlimited in Farmington offers a wide range of RVs and all of the accessories that help make any trip as safe and stress-free as possible. They provide customers with a thorough explanation of the electrical, plumbing and safety systems, and they give some basic lessons in maneuvering, whether the RV is a single unit or a towable fifth-wheeler.

Experienced staff at Good Times Unlimited offer customers some basic lessons in maneuvering, whether the RV is a single unit or a towable fifth-wheeler. They'll ensure the hitch equipment is hooked up correctly and that the owner knows how to maintain it regularly, as it will get a lot of wear and tear. New drivers should practice as often as necessary until they and their passengers feel confident.

"Practice making turns with your RV and learn to back up smoothly," she said. "No one wants to back into a picnic table on their first trip, especially in front of other campers or the family."

New RVers must spend lots of time studying the vehicle's manual, Davis said. They should learn about the electrical system and the basic plumbing. They should have an RV first aid kit with basic repair items, including spare drinking hose washers, plumber's tape, rubber roof patch and lap sealant, WD-40 and essential

tools. Include a tube of ball hitch lubricant to minimize grinding while towing. Be sure that carbon monoxide and smoke detectors are in good working order and tested periodically.

"RV owners can make many repairs themselves, but if the propane system is involved, contact a professional for assistance," Davis said.

Today's RVers can choose how connected they want to be. Wireless hotspots are more common, and many campgrounds and visitor centers also have access. Do some research if that's an important factor, Davis said.

"Some carry their own satellite dish," she said. "There's not much RVers have to give up when they're traveling."

Travelers should decide their permanent legal address for drivers' licenses, vehicle inspections, voting registration and other important communications. Provide loved ones with travel plans and emergency contact information.

Extended traveling includes important financial decisions that require advanced planning. Some RVers have helped finance their travel with seasonal positions at campgrounds or parks or with temporary jobs through online organizations such as Workamper, Davis said.

"Discount cards and passes can stretch the budget," she said.

The National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass Series offers a free annual pass for U.S. military, seniors, disabled and for those with 250 volunteer hours of participation in federal agencies. For those planning a winter escape to warmer destinations, avoid disappointment by making reservations well ahead of time. Most popular RV parks are booked weeks, and even months, before the start of the season.

Travelers must make sure they are adequately insured in case of damage, theft and coverage for loss of personal belongings. Coverage can be added to the tow vehicle's insurance or through an RV specialty company such as Tobin Insurance. RV owners need to make sure that the outside awning and air conditioner are included in the coverage, Davis said.

For more information about Good Times Unlimited, visit them at 372 Farmington Falls Road (Routes 2 and 27), online at goodtimesrvsales.com or on Facebook. Hours: Mon. through Fri., 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Sat., 8 a.m. to noon. Phone: (207) 778-3482. Email: goodtimesrvsales@gmail.com

Tranten, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

North Anson and moved it to Phillips. After the town was devastated by a fire, they moved to Kingfield, where they reopened their store in 1955.

Harold and Mary's son, Neal, and his wife, Mozelle, ran the family business until they retired, eventually passing it on to their sons, Clay, Donald and Neal. Today, Donald Tranten's sons, Kyle and Nick, take part in the decision-making and daily operations of the Kingfield and Farmington locations.

Clay Tranten said the family business has faced and embraced generational changes.

"Having a large family running a single family business can have its moments," he said. "But we all have our responsibilities and our expertise, and we respect each other's decisions."

Ten years ago, they pioneered the effort to discourage the use of plastic shopping bags and encouraged customers to bring their reusable grocery bags. They give customers 5-cent credits for each plastic bag saved.

"Last year, we gave nearly 19,000 of those credits," he said. "About 50 percent of our customers bring their own bags."

Tranten's store in Farmington is open seven days a week, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekdays, from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturdays and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sundays. For more information, or for weekly sales flyers, coupons and specials, visit trantens.com or call 778-2202.

Ambition, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

higher alcohol content solved the problem, and the IPA was born.

Although Ambition Brewing might be the new kid in town, it draws a crowd of regulars and plenty of visitors from out of town. Currently, they are open from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m., Thursday through Saturday, with hopes to expand those days and hours. To sign up as a Mug Club member, stay up to date with details and hear about specials, visit Ambition Brewing on Facebook or at ambitionbrewing.com.

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