Tax Cap Debated

The Island Times asked representatives of both sides of the tax cap debate to write about their views on the upcoming initiative. Both were then asked to respond to the other's views.

Larry Mead, who writes in opposition to the tax cap, is Portland's assistant city manager and served as the city's administrative assistant from 1997 to 1999. Deon C. Gray, who writes in favor of the ballot measure, has been campaigning in favor of the ballot measure.

**Pro**

**BY DAVID TYLER**

It's a bright, sunny day in September, and we're on the breakwater heading up the New Meadows River. Our destination is Peaks Island, the baykeeper for Peaks Island, Jo Parne, the breakwater for Friends of Casco Bay (FOC), tells a story of a legendary settler in this area. Her name was Grammy Young, and one day she went out to Bomb Island to go fishing or berry-picking. And as she was rowing back, a bear swam alongside her trying to take her fish or her berries, and she just repeatedly whacked him with her oar until he gave up and went back. Parne chuckles at the image of this intrepid grandmother. It's just one of many stories that Parne tells about Casco Bay this day. Unless you are fortunate enough to own a boat, most island residents rarely get to see the bay outside of the Casco Bay Lines ferry route. There are 292 islands, at six major rivers which drain into it and countless scattered harbors and coves. Casco Bay is also an incredibly complex ecosystem, with about 25 percent of the state's populations living in the watershed and 12 communities directly bordering the bay.

As part of his job as baykeeper, Parne has developed an encyclopedia for Casco Bay.

**Con**

**BY LARRY MEAD**

There is no question that Maine's property-tax plight, unfortunately, the simple fix offered by the Palesky tax cap initiative is that on the November 7th ballot is not the answer.

Plesky's plan is not good for homeowners. Plesky would cut $550 million from towns, cities, and school districts all across Maine. That represents about 1/3 of the total revenues. Plesky would reduce Portland's property-tax collections by $41 million, 37% of the total revenue. As in almost all Maine towns, 2/3 of property taxes go to fund schools, police and fire. Those three areas will be hit hard with reductions. Peaks Island follows the same pattern. The biggest expenditures of tax dollars are for the school, and for public safety.

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**BY DAVID TYLER**

The School Department would be required to reduce staff by about 290, said Otto Thompson, a Peaks Island resident and member of the School Committee. Even that, it would be difficult to keep the island's schools open, Thompson said.

Thompson said closing the island school would pose a hardship on families, especially those with young children. Kids, even kindergartners, would have to ride the 7:15 a.m. boat to be on time for school. The School Department would have to hire people to accompany the children on the ferry.

Proponents of the tax cap argue that city and town officials across the state are using scare tactics to frighten people out of voting for the tax cap.

**BY DAVID TYLER**

When you go to the polls on Nov. 2, you might be just a bit confused when you get to the section on state legislators. That's because the Portland islands have switched both their House district and Senate district.

As of this election, the new legislative redistricting plan goes into effect. This plan came about as a result of population changes in the 2010 census. The State Legislature didn't agree on a new plan, so in July 2003, the Maine Supreme Judicial Court drew new legislative district lines for the entire state.

Peaks Island and Casco Bay

**Sacreed and Profane**

Island soldier becomes conscientious objector

**BY DAVID TYLER**

Island native Perry L. O'Brien's application for conscientious objector status has been approved and he expects to be shortly discharged from the U.S. Army.

O'Brien, 22, is a specialist in Company A, 97th Forward Support Battalion of the U.S. Army's 82nd Airborne Division, stationed in Fort Bragg, N.C. He served as a medic for his unit for eight months in Afghanistan from January through August, 2003.

For O'Brien, the journey to conscientious objector (CO) status has been a gradual one. Although he initially backed the Afghanistan war, after he served a couple of months in that country he slowly began to question the American mission and his own spiritual and philosophical beliefs about war. "That was the first beginning of a sense that maybe not everything we were doing was correct," O'Brien said. "It is definitely different when you get direct face time with the victims of war. Being a medic, that's pretty much all I did."

In the United States military, to be classified as a conscientious objector, "you must be conscientiously opposed to participation in war in any form," said Bill Brinvin, counseling coordinator for the Center for Conscience and War in Washington, D.C., a group formed during World War II to defend the rights of conscientious objectors. The U.S. Army reported 100 CO applications in 2003, according to the website of the Center for Conscience and War.

**Inside**

Over the past few months, the Island Times has been focusing on the city's communities and the challenges they face. We asked our readers to respond to the questions we asked

Please see ELECTION, page 7

**By Mary Lou Wendell**

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School Superintendent Mary Jo Connor said listing the cuts that would be likely if revenues were reduced by $32 million, which she said would result from the tax cap, was a painful process.

"We are hoping that the tax cap is defeated," O'Connor said. The list of school cuts also included closing one of the city's middle schools and one of its two high schools.

"We have been told by representatives in the Legislature that the school district would be required to reduce staff by about 290, said Otto Thompson, a Peaks Island resident and member of the School Committee. Given that, it would be difficult to keep the island's schools open, Thompson said.

Thompson said closing the island school would pose a hardship on families, especially those with young children. Kids, even kindergartners, would have to ride the 7:15 a.m. boat to be on time for school. The School Department would have to hire people to accompany the children on the ferry.

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Proponents of the tax cap argue that city and town officials across the state are using scare tactics to frighten people out of voting for the tax cap.
The service was originally budgeted for 70 riders a day. Continued or support can dominate a tourism service right now and will continue. The from local governments. The other 20 percent the hotels, while other services receive the matching federal funds from local governments. Willauer says the hotel participation as the key factor to save the service. "We're predominantly a tourism service right now and continued or growing hotel support can make all the difference," says Willauer. He is optimistic this will happen and the service will continue. The explorer program has and continues to experiment with fires to help offset costs. Over the summer, the Explorer was free, but it switched to $1 fare in September. With an average weekday ridership of 30 passengers per day however, the fare funds don't go very far. The service was originally budgeted for 70 riders a day. The Explorer is one of the few transportation entities in the region that links with all other forms of public transportation. The bus runs routes between other bus terminals as well as ferry, rail and airport terminals.

Green mussels in Peaks Island resident Marc Green will try his hand at mussel farming in a new company. Made in Maine Musselks. Green is currently collecting seeds in the Buck Cove. He has chosen in hanging bags with lobster bait bags strung along the length of the ropes in the hopes of increasing the surface area the seeds can attach themselves to. In November, when the seed has grown to an ample size, Green hopes to transfer them to two, 60-foot-by-60-foot mussel rafts, anchored off the western side of Jewel Island, pending the approval for a lease from the state Department of Marine Resources. The Buck Cove seeds are anywhere from 1/8 to 1/2 of an inch long, Green said. Green had been testing the waters of the Buck Cove mussel seed density for weeks before deploying the collectors in early July. But he fears he may have put them in about three weeks too early. The water and found a sufficient density but in hindsight, I think I was off, because there's a lot of floating organisms growing on the first, explains Green. The organisms will make the collection process a little more tedious as they will need to be hatched off the line.

Green, who has a doctorate in Oceanography, has taught for 10 years Saint Joseph's College of Maine, in Standish. He enjoys teaching, but he hopes to branch out. He's been considering mussel farming for eight months now, and has taken this opportunity while on sabbatical from teaching to launch the experiment in growing seeds. "I hope this works out and I can continue farming. It's a very sustainable resource and very be may environmentally friendly under other forms of aquaculture," said Green.

Coming home Gabriel Joseph O'Toole, 24, is expected to return to Peaks from Iraq on Oct. 22, according to his mother, Jeanie Alves. O'Toole is deployed in Baghdad. His family has been in close contact with him over the Internet. He has said the kids love him there and they blow him kisses, his mother said. His family plans to have a big party for him at St. Patrick's Hall in Portland on Oct. 23. Jeanie Alves said there will also be a block party and all are welcome.

CBITD elections Along with taking part in state and national elections, island voters will cast ballots for seats on the Board of Directors of the Casco Bay Lines Transit District, which governs Casco Bay Lines. In this election, there is no competition for any of the seats. Patrick Flynn, appointed to fill out the remainder of the term left vacant with the death of his father, John Flynn, in June, is the only candidate for the one-year interim seat representing Peaks Island. Uncountable Gene Taylor, Peaks Island resident, is the only one running for an Islands-at-Large seat. Chuck Bews, also an incumbent, is the sole candidate for a three-year seat representing Peaks Island. Incumbent Lee Carter is also unopposed for the three-year seat representing Cliff Island.

Construction begins Construction on the $2 million new senior and health center on Peaks Island began the week after Labor Day. By the end of the month, the site work was finished and the foundations for the building had been poured, according to Julius Wilcock, director of Program Development for Volunteers of America (VOA), the agency completing the project. Wilcock said the agency hopes the building will be framed and roofed by December. During the winter, all interior work will be completed. The target date for finishing the building is March, with opening expected for April, Wilcock said.

In addition to the affordable apartments for seniors, the 10,715-square-foot building will also house the Peaks Island Health Center. The general contractor for the project is C.M. Ciminillo of Westbrook. The apartments are for those who are 62 or older and making $21,950 or less, if they are single or $25,100 or less if they are a couple, said Federal Housing and Urban Development rules require that applicants cannot be sent out until a specific date has been fixed for opening the center. The VOA will send out applications 60 days before that date. Starting in January, the agency will send out monthly updates to those interested in applying. They VOA will also hold meetings for those interested in the center. Once the applications are sent out, the units will be assigned based on who gets the VOI mailing list, call the VOA's Bill Utley, at 737-1140.

Fiber arts at the Children's Workshop

When fiber artist Sue Hanley volunteered "Please see BRIEFS, page 3"
Thirty-five exchange teachers from China, Thailand, Turkey, and Argentina are expected on the island from Oct. 21 to 24. They will spend the weekend sightseeing in Portland and attending workshops where they will learn and discuss new skills in adjusting to a new culture and teaching in a foreign classroom. The teachers are currently teaching in classrooms throughout the northeast, including seven in Maine. "Maine has always had good representation in the exchange program both teacher and student," said Leslie Kaynor, an AFS volunteer.

The conference will conclude with a pot luck dinner at the Peaks Island School on Sat., Oct. 23 from 6-8:30 p.m. The exchange teachers and AFS volunteers will be preparing and sharing dishes from their native countries. "The pot luck is open to anyone who wishes to attend. We only ask that you contribute by bringing a dish of your own," says Kaynor. A talent show featuring examples of their cultures with dance, music and demonstrations will follow the dinner.

In May and June of this school year Peaks Island School will be hosting an AFS exchange teacher, only the second Portland school to do so. Most exchange teachers are English teachers in their home countries, often regarded as the best teachers in their countries. While most teach at the high school level at home, they are usually asked to teach in elementary schools here.

AFS does most of its work with exchange students. There are 90 AFS exchange students in Maine, says Kaynor. One of Peaks' own is currently studying in Thailand. Emmett Hughes, a Portland High School junior who wishes to become a doctor, is attending the Bodindecha Single Singha School in Bangkok since July. His mother Lois Cetacean says Emmett is adjusting well, although some early challenges with his original assigned family made for an uncomfortable situation. "They just didn't click well but he's grown a lot in handling the situation as well as he did and he's happily living with a new family now," says Kaynor.

Mary Lou Wendell

Peaks' hosts AFS conference
Maine annually hosts an American Field Service (AFS) Northeast Visiting Conference, but this year Peaks Island will be hosting the event for the first time.

While volunteers have come in previous years, staff at the Workshop haven't been able to maintain contact and keep up with the effort. So having a coordinator will be a big help, Kelso said. Volunteers could work with the kids on anything from cooking projects to arts and music; said Kelso, adding that the staff and board of directors are still developing the volunteer program.

In the meantime, the kids have another session with Hanley, who said she would be happy to come back and work with the kids again.

"They had something they all love: pound and smash," says Kelso, team leader and program coordinator. The workshop plan to continue doing a more organized way now that they have received a $640 grant from the Peaks Island Fund to hire a volunteer coordinator. The idea is to get members of the community to work with the kids on a regular basis, said Kelso, adding that the staff and board of directors are still developing the volunteer program.

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Island Views
Opposing sides present views on the tax cap

Larry Mead responds:
Unfortunately, the assertion that property values will be rolled back 25% is a fallacy. There is no evidence to support the claim that property values will be reduced. Additionally, the tax cap proposal would be a significant burden on the state's ability to fund essential services.

Devin Gray responds:
The tax cap proposal would result in a significant reduction in state revenue, which would lead to cuts in vital services such as education, health care, and public safety. It is essential to acknowledge the potential impact on these services.

CON, from page 1
safety. Keeping the school open will be difficu. Retaining 24-hour police protection would be unaffordable. Library hours would be greatly reduced at best. These are not scare tactics! These are the cuts that communities will face if Palesky passes.

Palesky is not good for business. Portland's largest tax pay- ers and businesses are being affected and there is a need for more tax property tax reform. Let's think this through and then decide on a course of action. Palesky tax cap is not doing what they said it would do.

The process will be the same for fire and police and trash collection. If the voters want to raise monies to pay for services or buildings or whatever the community chooses, the 1% Property Tax Cap allows it. If it is provided for special services when approved by two out of three voters, the law would actually put the authority in the hands of the people, instead of in the hands of public servants who see the need for local needs. Furthermore, if the people of Maine decide they want to vote for this law, they can vote to change it.

Devin Gray:
Island Tunes, 146 Ledgwood Road, Peaks Island, Maine 04108

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PRD, from page 1 to $225,000. This is closely associated with the next Fact of Law.

Fact C. Property tax rates are capped at 1% of the assessed value. Taken together, these two facts of law mean that property taxes are allowed to increase up to 4% a year. It would take 25 years for your property taxes to double — instead of the way it has recently.

Fact D. Property transferred within a family will retain its assessed value — not be reassessed as the present market value — this way will be able to have our children or grandchildren inherit our property. With the cost of taxes what they are now, the home we want to bequest to our children is a liability that requires what’s essential to a continuing mortgage payment in the City.

Fact E. When the property is sold, the sale price then becomes the assessed value — folks know what they’re going to be paying for taxes — young families can budget and not have their property taxes overwhelm their family obligations, perhaps forcing them to sell their homes.

Fact F. This law will take effect next April, if the Voters of the State of Maine pass it.

By the Way — this Law is not identical to California’s Proposition 13 and more than 40 other States have successfully enacted similar property tax laws to protect homeowners. This initiative has been updated so it’s perfect for use in Maine. And remember that the US Supreme Court has upheld the constitutionality of using this kind of assessment for property taxes. Other Tax Reform is needed — but this is the first step — and it’s urgent.

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On page 1, it is noted that the property tax reform proposal in Maine has recently been the subject of much discussion. The proposal, known as Proposition 13, aims to limit property tax increases to a specified percentage of the assessed value of a property. Opponents of the proposal argue that it would be unfair to property owners, particularly those who have lived in their homes for many years. Supporters, on the other hand, believe that it would provide relief to homeowners and prevent the burden of high property taxes. The article notes that the proposal has been controversial and has sparked debates among policymakers and the general public. The article also mentions that there have been similar property tax reforms in other states, such as California’s Proposition 13. It highlights the importance of considering the potential impact of such proposals on local communities and the need for balanced and thoughtful discussion.
This island life

BY GEORGE ROSOL

All right class, what did you do this summer? Well, I spent part of my time playing "Where's Waldo"—looking for the familiar face in the crowd. And it was a mix of fun and a little worry. See, the nation just changed island life over Peaks Island.

Our yearly trans-continental tests run by researchers in Augusta are pretty much in the back of our minds as we enjoy the pleasures of the island. And it was a spectacularly stupid species of competition. But it does make us wonder if they enjoyed most was to be cooked and eat.

On the back shore put the left side of my volcano into the weeds. And we are still wondering whether the complaint, it is the yearly growth in size and number of vehicles on our roads. A Hummer can propel an iron manhole cover hundreds of feet into the air. Ask any Puritan. This same rule can be tapped and piped into the tunnel and buried to supply heat to coffee plant roots while their growing optimum mushroom growing temperatures. Compost from the transfer station and fallen leaves mixed with locally available horse droppings would provide additional heat and match for the mushrooms. Coffee and mushrooms are much in demand and, when produced by hand in boutique quantities, command top dollar. Imagine if you will: Super Premium Beans from the slopes of Battery Steele and Limited Batch Specialty Mushrooms grown in the Natural Dark and Dark of Battery Steele. Peaks Island Foods—Specialties of the Highest Caliber. How's that for turning swords into plowshares.

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O'Brien, from page 1
the number is higher. In the past year, his group has talked to over 300 people seeking advice about seeking CO status, he said.

O'Brien enlisted in the Army on Aug. 27, 2001 and was in his first week of basic training when the 9/11 terrorist attacks occurred. When he left America, O'Brien supported the mission in Afghanistan. "I knew the Taliban was an oppressive regime. Obviously I thought it was important to go after the people who were behind 9/11," he said.

At the start, he was optimistic, particularly about the humanitarian missions carried out. He was so excited, he was considering becoming an officer to work in the Army's Civil Affairs branch, which specifically works on humanitarian missions and resettling refugees, among other missions. "Then you realize the humanitarian missions are really just there to offset the damage to the culture and the damage to the Taliban image of Americans by other operations that were going on," he said.

O'Brien started talking to interpreters, both American and Afghan, who worked with him to get an understanding of what that meant: that most people picked up and jailed for being Taliban or Al Qaeda sympathizers, by the Afghanistain military, were innocent. "I started to be less and less gung ho about the whole operation," he said.

It led him to reconsider his views on war in general. O'Brien said the Afghanistan "is easily the most justifiable conflict we've gotten into. But if I'm having questions about Afghanistan, how do I feel about an Army that's going into Iraq and likely to go to other places in a couple of years?"

He realizes that when he enlisted, he did not have a full understanding of what he was getting into. "I would be the first to admit that I was very naive when I enlisted. When confronted with mutilated or armless people, it really forced me to re-think the things I believed in and the way I felt about war."

O'Brien, who was a philosophy major at the University of Southern Maine before he enrolled in the Army, said he began a serious spiritual and philosophical search. He began reading books about Buddhism, and realized that this religion appealed to him. "There was this wonderful realization, immediately followed by the fact that my current occupation wasn't going to allow that," he said. He became attracted to a Vietnamese tradition of Buddhism, and to the writings of a monk who stated that "no killing was ever acceptable and that no war is a solution."

And the more I thought about history, and what I know about warfare, I became more and more convinced that was, by its nature, never manages to solve more problems that it creates," O'Brien said. "It can be a temporary solution. But every war just begins another war. It became clear to O'Brien that he could no longer serve in the military, even as a medic. Because in the 82nd Airborne, everyone carries weapons, and everyone has to be able to defend the unit, he said. "The whole idea of the airborne operation is that we all jump out of planes. And when you hit the ground, everyone is armed."

The process to apply for conscientious objector is lengthy. First he mentioned the question to his non-commissioned officer. Then he turned down an offer that he seek promotion to sergeant.

But it was his chaplain, a Baptist minister, who first suggested that O'Brien consider seeking conscientious objector status. O'Brien applied in June. The process includes an evaluation by a military chaplain who does not know the applicant, and a psychiatrist to investigate the seriousness of the request. Finally, an investigating officer takes up the case, interviews the applicant, other people in the unit, family and friends.

The investigating officer interviewed O'Brien for an hour in front of his commanding officers. Throughout the process, O'Brien said he was never attacked or criticized for what he was doing. "I think that was because I had already been in the unit for two-and-half years, and I had already done one deployment, and I had no negative counselings or anything like that, and no disciplinary record," he said, about the support he received.

Now that his CO status has been approved, O'Brien is just waiting for a decision as to what type of discharge he will receive before he can come home. His company recommended that he receive an honorable discharge. "It was a very personal decision, I wasn't trying to make a statement."
Election 2004

Senate race, District 8

Ethan Strimling - D
Age: 37. Executive director, Portland West, nonprofit social services organization.

Why are you running for this office?
Ethan Strimling: I am running to offer Portland voters a choice, my opponent and I have fundamentally different views on many issues facing Portland; the role of government, taxation, entitlements and small business, to name a few.

Strimling: I want to fight for Portland and for the islands in Casco Bay so that we all receive the investment we need to continue being the economic engine for this state. My top priorities are cut the waste, increase funding for education, and providing fair property tax relief.

What do you think about the Palesky Tax Cap ballot question?
Ethan Strimling: Our current legislators have ignored support for the state’s tax cap and have not passed any real legislation to limit their spending of our hard earned tax dollars. Twenty-three other states have tax caps.

If the tax cap falls, what will you or your opponent propose in the Legislature to help solve the property tax problem in Maine?
Ethan Strimling: The Tax Payers Bill of Rights will solve our problems. I urge everyone to read and support and sign the petitions for Tax Payers Bill of Rights. Let’s get it on the ballot this year.

Strimling: We need an expanded circuit breaker program that will target relief to island families that cannot afford the exponential rise in their property tax bill.

What do you hope to accomplish in the Legislature?
Ethan Strimling: I believe it is our responsibility to protect our children, our elderly, and our disabled citizens. We need to protect them from the cuts that our legislators are making in the budget that will affect them the most.

For the challenger: What would you have done, if you were in the state Legislature, to address the property tax problem in Maine?
Marc Lamontagne: I’m fed up with the Legislature. Rather than white and complain, I decided to step up to the plate and try to do something about it. I’m going to make strong changes, fiscal in particular. The current state budget is $1.5 billion in 1993 and climbed to $3.3 billion in 2003.

What is your position on the Palesky Tax Cap ballot question?
Ethan Strimling: It’s unnecessary. It came to this and I feel the proposal itself is too agressive. I would like to see it pass and send a message to our government. If I were to pass, things can be done to bring the property tax under control.

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The Tax Payers Bill of Rights will solve our problems. I urge everyone to read and support and sign the petitions for Tax Payers Bill of Rights. Let’s get it on the ballot this year.

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The New Guy

Marc Lamontagne
Responsible & trustworthy candidate for District 114

EAST DEERING NEIGHBORHOOD AND THE ISLANDS
Phone: 774-8909

Serves on the city's Parks Commission
Volunteers for the Bayside Little League

The present legislature has failed.
I feel strongly that a change is needed now!

I use common sense approach. I've been a responsible businessman for over 30 years.

As your new representative in Augusta, I will demonstrate aggressive vocal support for your concerns and your opinions. (Here are some of my concerns and possible solutions)

- Reducing government spending (cap at growth of population plus inflation)
- Making state government more efficient (eliminate duplication and waste)
- Reducing income tax (especially for lower income people)
- Reducing property tax (and support taxing open land based on current use)
- Supporting state funding for education at 55% - Special Ed at 100%
- Reducing cost of health care and prescription drugs (for all Maine people)
- Improving the business climate in Maine (reduce regulations/restrictions)
- Increasing jobs in Maine (create a job market that will attract workers)
- Returning our state to "MAINE - THE WAY LIFE SHOULD BE!"

Vote for
Marc Lamontagne
for State Representative
on November 2nd

PAID FOR BY LAMONTAGNE FOR STATE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Island Police Log

Sept. 1: Parking complaint, Lower A Street.
Sept. 2: Intoxicated person, Upper A Street; EMS call, no address given.
Sept. 3: Suspicious activity, no address given.
Sept. 4: EMS call, Welch Street.
Sept. 5: Assault; no address given; EMS call, Turritngton Avenue; EMS call, fractures, no address given.
Sept. 6: Theft, Brackett Avenue; loud party, Welch Street.
Sept. 7: 911 hang-up calls, Evergreen Landing.
Sept. 8: Animal complaint, no address given; animal complaint, Pleasant Street; EMS call, bleeding, Island Avenue.
Sept. 9: EMS call, Adams Street.
Sept. 11: Theft, no address given; EMS service run, no address given; EMS call, New Island Avenue.
Sept. 12: EMS service run, no address given.
Sept. 13: Theft, Torrington Avenue.
Sept. 14: Persons bothering Upper A Street.
Sept. 15: General disturbance, no address given.
Sept. 16: Animal complaint, Lower A Street; EMS call, falls, Central Avenue.
Sept. 18: EMS calls, falls, Upper A Street.
Sept. 20: Accident, Seashore Avenue, police department only.
Sept. 21: Threats/terrorizing, Oak Street; EMS call, Island Avenue; alarm sounding, different address on Island Avenue.
Sept. 23: Suspicious activity, Seashore Avenue.
Sept. 24: Suspicious activity, no address given.
Sept. 25: Suspicious activity, no address given.
Sept. 26: Possible OUI, no address given.

Happy Halloween!

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Star Gazing

BY MICHAEL RICHARDS

The Earth’s northern hemisphere is now tilted away from the sun, bringing us more dark than light with each passing day. During October, we best about 1.5 hours of light, but star-gazers delight in getting both a view of the heavens and a good night’s sleep.

On Wednesday of the last week of this month, the moon turns full just as it crosses the ecliptic, creating a total lunar eclipse by 10:30 p.m. so everyone may see it and get to bed on time (assuming you can sleep after such a thrill).

The brightest planet is still Venus, slowly descending in the eastern morning sky, but mighty Jupiter is rising earlier each morning and is clearly visible below and to the left of Venus by month’s end. Mars rises in the evening too, but it’s too small and close to the horizon to see, as it is Mercury in the evening. Saturn rises around midnight and by October, we best in the wee hours of the morning, but why bother? The Cassini-Huygens spacecraft is circling Saturn and providing amazing photos available on the internet at saturn.jpl.nasa.gov. For those with telescopes, Uranus and Neptune are high in the sky after sunset, in prime viewing time and space.

The stars do seem brighter now. In the morning before dawn, Sirius—the brightest star we see here in Maine—blazes low in the southeastern sky, with the Orion constellation now visible above and to the right of it. In the evening, go outside and look straight up; directly overhead you can see the North Cross, the asterism within the constellation Cygnus, the Swan, with the bright star Deneb at its short end; to the west of Deneb is beautiful Vega, the blue-white alpha star in Lyra. To the south is Alnitak, the alpha star in Aquila, which forms a triangle with Deneb and Vega. To the west is the red giant star Arcturus, the alpha star in Bootes (pronounced Boo-a-ter). The Hedsword. Moving objects are visible, too. Before dawn on most October mornings, the International Space Station can be seen making its pass across the northern horizon, toward the end of October, the Orion meteor shower occurs early each morning.

Oct. 1 The sun rises at 6:30 a.m. and sets at 6:31 p.m., so it’s dark outside most of the time (finally!).

Oct. 3 Venus is just one-quarter degree above and right of Regulus, the bright alpha star in Leo. One-quarter degree is about half the moon’s width.

Oct. 5 The moon is at its apogee, its furthest away from the Earth this month (or “moonest,” as it was first pronounced, showing its root).

Oct. 6 Last quarter moon is high in the sky this morning. Combined with the moon’s greater distance from Earth, this produces small “deep” tides of just over 5 feet, less than half of what they will be later this month when the moon in its elliptical orbit, gets closer to Earth.

Oct. 9 The moon is illuminated (tipped) toward us, bringing good views of craters Bailly andichard on the southeastern limb for those who can get themselves up and out early on a Saturday morning.

Oct. 10 This Sunday morning before dawn, the crescent moon sits to the left of Regulus (above) and Venus (below).

Oct. 12 The moon is in a thin crescent just above Jupiter in the east, easily visible over the islands for those on the 6:15 a.m. boat to town this morning.

Oct. 13 Again, those on the early boat can get a research to see the thinnest crescent moon, just 16 hours from new, rising at 6:09 a.m. The moon turns red at 10:48 p.m. tonight and creates a partial solar eclipse near sunset in Alaska and Hawaii.

Oct. 14 Tides are highest this month at 1:03 p.m., then drop 12 feet to their lowest at 7:25 p.m. Why so high? Because of the moon.

Oct. 17 The moon reaches perigee, its closest to Earth, at 8 p.m.

Oct. 18 Saturn is at quadrature, 90 degrees west of the sun, making the shadows there the longest from our point of view, giving it a real 3-D effect.

Oct. 20 First quarter moon is high in the sky at sunrise.

Oct. 21 The Orionid meteor shower peaks tonight, and the moon is out of the way, so a few hours before dawn you can see 15 to 30 meteors per hour, as grains of sand left in the wake of Halley’s Comet hit Earth’s upper atmosphere, creating a partial solar eclipse near sunset in Alaska and Hawaii.

Oct. 27 Full Hunter’s Moon rises at 9:27 p.m. and sets at 6:34 a.m. Tonight, the moon is fully eclipsed by the Earth. The Earth’s lighter outer shadow or penumbra reach the moon at 6:30 p.m. but won’t be noticeable; the darker inner shadow or umbra begins to cover the moon at 6:43 p.m., and by 10:22 p.m. the moon is fully inside Earth’s shadow, but it still glows a dark red as the Earth’s atmosphereBrandon brings light around it and paints the moon with subtle earthy and sunsets and sunrises put together at once.

Oct. 30 Saturday night; turn your clocks back before bed and get an extra hour of sleep tonight.

Oct. 31 Daylight-saving time ends at 2 a.m. this morning; sunset today is now at 6:16 a.m., sunset is at 4:45 p.m., and the moon doesn’t rise until 6:57 p.m., so it’s going to be quite dark when the trick-or-treaters go out for Halloween fun tonight.

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The Solution is Key to a better future, make a difference for the land.

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Jamie Hogan

ISLAND TIMES
CASCO BAY, from page 1
productions of Casco Bay. And he shares the knowledge he has as he takes the staff of the Island Times on a whirlwind tour of the bay. It takes us past Peaks Island, out past Hall's Head, Rock, into Quahog Bay, up the New Meadows River, through Cornet Strait, down across Great Ledge Sound, up Middle Bay to the former fuel depot on Harpswell Neck and back upper Popham and Lower Goose Islands, between Chebeague and Littlejohn islands, and back to Peaks.

After leaving the Casco Bay Lines wharf, we head out past Ram Island Ledge Light, built in 1905 with granite shipped from Vinthrop on the island. Then we pass just off Outer Green and Junk of Pork. These barren islands with steep cliffs and no trees feel like being on the edge of Newfoundland, not near Maine's largest city. Payne says that volunteers from the Casco Bay Association look out on them all summer. "They are trying to repopulate terrains," he says. "They scare off gulls, they do all the things they do in the oil industry." From Outer Green, we head through choppy seas to Halfway Rock Light, as named because it is about halfway between the two boundaries of Casco Bay. Cape Elizabeth and Cape Small. The tower was built in 1937. Initially, the keepers lived in rooms inside the tower. Keepers lived out here until 1990. U.S. Coast Guard took over in 1997. As we ride near the east side of the island, we see dozens of seals pulled out on the ledges, and their heads bobbing up and down with the waves. Payne says that the cleanest water in Casco Bay is between two islands.

Now we're heading into Harpswell and Quahog Bay. On the way, he points out a treacherous group of ledges which include Bold Dick Rock. "I always wondered why this is called Bold Dick," Payne says. "Is that from a guy named Dick who was a little too tall, and put his boat on that rock?"

As we head in to Quahog Bay, Payne says it is one of the big water quality mysteries facing Friends of Casco Bay. "It's really beautiful," he says. "But the water is in trouble there, and there is no obvious reason why." He says the organization has over 100 volunteers who do regular testing at the bay's water, in addition to regular trips taken by FOB with scientists. A key measure of the bay's health is the amount of dissolved oxygen in the water. A healthy reading is between 8 and 14 parts per million is normal in Casco Bay. Water that has 5 parts per million or less starts to get unhealthy, and will choke that area, Payne said. "Last week in Quahog Bay, we saw oxygen levels at 4.4 parts per million," he said. "And that's not good at all."

Go to Portland's Back Cove, which is historically one of the most polluted places, on Portland Harbor, and it would be significantly above 4.4. So what's going on?

What makes the readings even more puzzling is that, with the exception of a single bayou and a lobster pound, there is not a lot of man-made activity here. Entire sections of this bay consist of undeveloped woods. Payne describes a couple of theories as to why dissolved oxygen levels are so low here. Perhaps, because the bay is V-shaped, the opening to the bay is not wide enough in order to flush out all the old water. "So we have a lot of water in here," says Payne. Or the warm water in the bay floats above the cold water, and when the tide goes out, the warm water just sits on top of the cold layer "so this water isn't exchanging," he said. "There are so many questions in here." We make a pit stop at the Great Island Boathouse in Orrs Cove. Then we head out around Peaks Island, an open site for the bay, which has become extremely popular with day-trippers. As many as 77 boats can be anchored here on a weekend.

Then we go to Yarmouth Island, and pass between two islands which now have political significance. "This is that odd place in Casco Bay, where we pass between George and Bush islands," Payne says. On Yarmouth Island, Payne points out the summer place of Brunswick boat builder Richard S. Pulifer, who builds a wooden boat, the Pulifer Hampton, modeled on a working boat which was popular in Casco Bay in the early part of the 20th-century. "It was one of the boats that these lobster boats used," Payne says. "It went from rowing and still to power. They are beautiful boats," Pulifer's design is based on a workshop in Sebasco, not too far from here.

We head out around West Candy Point, where Payne points out the former summer home of Maine Senator Margaret Chase Smith. Then he takes us up into the Basin, a completely enclosed harbor with just a narrow entrance on one side. Out at Halfway Rock, the wind is strong and the waves choppy. In here, it is calm, warm and peaceful. It's one of Payne's favorite places. He points out a home and said one of Friends of Casco Bay's first volunteers rented it. When he moved out, the new owners signed on a water-quality volunteer, as well. "And then the house was sold again, and a condition of the sale was that they keep monitoring," he said. "I have a lot of pride in that." Payne says, "As big as this bay is, there are volunteers all over it who are watching the water quality." Without regular readings from this army of well-meaning volunteers, there would be no data from which to track the quality of the bay's water.

From the Basin, we go to Cornet Strait, the narrow opening between the mainland and Yarmouth Island in the bay. "It means 'a place of fast water.'" At times, the current under the bridge runs at four knots. In the east side of the bridge, there is a spot where the water is just two feet deep; on the other side, there's a spot 30 feet deep. "You can see, there isn't anything this two-feet-deep area around here. This hole is just churned out of that area, because there is a big whirlpool here, and the tidal rip is just unbelievable."

Now we are in Long Reach. There are almost no homes in sight; just the nans and the marsh. Payne says it is one of the best fishing places in the bay. We also played a concert of Klezmer music from Ashkenazi tradition (Eastern European Jews), as well as Sephardic music (Jews of Spain, Greece, Turkey, the Balkans and North Africa), and some Yiddish Theatre tunes, peoples some early written history. We also played a concert in Koper, Slovenia, former southern coastal Yugoslavia, staying three nights in the village with a pop-potato family overlooking the Adriatic. We had some good jamming with local musicians under a ripe fig tree. And that's Tummler Paradise.

Peaks Island Baptist Church

Sunday worship 11 a.m. at the old monastery, 235 Pleasant Ave.

If you need a ride please call 797-0287  Pastor Boyle

The Tummlers on tour in Italy last month. From left: Carl Dimov, Julie Goell, Nancy's Hoffman, Hayes Porterfield, Steve Groverman.

This report of the Tummlers recent tour comes from Julie Goell.

We played a concert and two programmed jam sessions at a festival near Padova called "Anche, Baci E Canzoni: Musica E-Migrazione" about music and migrations. The festival tours from Campania and Provence, singing in their own dialects and unfamiliar sonorities. There were ensembles from the Basque region, Piemont and Puglia. There was an exhibit of rustic instruments made from farm tools. The Tummlers played a single-stringed stand-up bass which resonates against an inflated pig bladder. Hearing it bowing was the high point for Julie. An ongoing accordion repair clinic was just the thing for Nancy. The Tummlers played a concert of Klezmer Music from Ashkenaz tradition (Eastern European Jews), as well as Sephardic music (Jews of Spain, Greece, Turkey, the Balkans and North Africa), and some Yiddish Theatre tunes, peoples some early written history. We also played a concert in Koper, Slovenia, former southern coastal Yugoslavia, staying three nights in the village with a pop-potato family overlooking the Adriatic. We had some good jamming with local musicians under a ripe fig tree. And that's Tummler Paradise.

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Government Spending Is Out Of Control Ready to Tax Burden In The Country Small Business suffers at the hands of our current legislators HAD ENOUGH? send a new team to Augusta

DINING OUT

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STATE

S E N A T E

Government Spending Is Out Of Control Second Highest Tax Burden In The Country Small Business suffers at the hands of our current legislators HAD ENOUGH? send a new team to Augusta
Hurricanes drive tanker to Portland Harbor

By David Tyler

It’s almost 900 feet long, 151 feet wide and can carry 57 million gallons of oil. For almost a month, the new, bright-blue oil tanker Polar Adventure dominated Portland Harbor, moving oil from Valdez into the state.

The vessel came to Portland on Sept. 6 because Hurricane Frances prevented the vessel’s arrival at the Houston-based oil and gas company ConocoPhillips from completing work on a final check of the ship.

Polar Adventure was painted in a shipyard in Freeport, the Bahamas, but finishing work, including mirror electrical work, some piping, and some interior painting, was not finished because of the hurricane.

“We were looking for a place to go, preferably away from hurricanes, and all the places we had considered had hurricane damage. We had decided to go to Portland, which is 12 miles south of Dobbie, one of the 12 managers who came to Portland from Northrop Grumman’s shipyard in Avondale, La. The oil tanker was constructed. They worked with up to 150 Concho employees on the final work list, which included painting the engine rooms.

Several crew members on Polar Adventure are alumni of Maine Maritime Academy, including the captain, Doug Lamson. They read in the Portland Press Herald about a Norwegian manager on another oil tanker that was in Portland on Oct. 6. The Norwegian told them about the Port of Portland, which Lamson said was most unusual because it was painted in a shipyard designed to accommodate 30 years ago and were paid $16 million to go on the ship.

In the wake of the Valdez catastrophe and the release of millions of gallons of oil, the federal 1990 Oil Protection Act required the new oil tanker to undergo a series of tests including one of all 1.9 million gallons of oil. The federal 1990 Oil Protection Act requires the new oil tanker to undergo a series of tests including one of all 1.9 million gallons of oil.

Act requires that all oil tankers that operate in United States waters be tested with double hulls by the year 2015. For older tankers, this requirement begins in 1999. These tanks are less likely to spill oil if they crash into the shore or a reef. A new ship offers better protection of the marine environment than single-hull tankers.

In its current form, the ship is building five tanker vessels called the Endevance class, to carry oil from Valdez, Alaska to Puget Sound, Wash. Cali­fornia, and the eastern United States.

The second annual statewide conference to be held on Election Day, Tues. Nov. 2. On Election Day, library hours will be from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. to coincide with the hours the polls are open.

Regular monthly events include: Nurses Night Time for toddlers and tots on Wednesdays and Fridays at 11 a.m.; Preschool Story Time on Fridays at 10:15 a.m.; and Teen Story Time on the second and fourth Fridays of the month, 7 p.m. “Founding Mothers,” by Cokie Roberts will be discussed Oct. 5. The November book will be “The Passion of Artemisia,” by Susan Vreeland. Stop in the library and pick up a copy with a list of upcoming book discussion books.

Queen Mary 2 coming

At 1,312 feet long, the $800 million Queen Mary 2, the largest and longest cruise liner in the world, Christiana the Queen of the islands, is coming to Portland on Oct. 8. She is scheduled to arrive at 8 a.m. and leave at 11 p.m. The line has a crew of 1,300, including 750 from the community.

If you have any questions or extra pumpkins to donate please call the library at 786-5855. The library staff will transport your pumpkin to the Annual Pumpkin Walk on the grounds of the Portland Library and set it up for the Halloween event.

Each Tuesday during the month of October there will be a few questions about the presid­ents of the United States at the library. Stop in and test your knowledge. Books and informa­tion will be provided for all ages.

Each right answer will receive a sweet prize and all winners’ names will go into a drawing to be held on Election Day, Christiania the Queen of the islands, at 8 a.m.

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Free clinic

A free clinic for senior citizens, from 10 a.m. to noon, will be held in the Portland Community Free Clinic on 103 India Street. The clinic provides comprehensive health care to low-income, uninsured seniors in the Portland area. Call 877-8982 for more information.

Newspaper subscriptions are welcome on the ship in a tight spot. International regulations require a distance of 6.6 feet between the liner and outer boat. On Portland, it is common to oiling in case of damage to both hulls, according to a Northrop Grumman engineer.

Polar Adventure is also just the second ConocoPhillips tanker to use a new kind of paint to keep the barrels from growing on the bottom of the hull. In 2003, international regulations banned the use of a chemical called tributyltin, which reduces seaweed and barnacles, causes damage to the neurological and immune systems, and even, it was common­ly used in coating the bottom of commercial ships to prevent the growth of marine plants and animals.

Polar Adventure is painted with a silicone-based coating, which is safe for the environment.

“Just in case we had to leave Portland on Oct. 1, we found a place to go, preferably away from hurricanes,” said Dobbie, “But it doesn’t use any chemicals to prevent the barnacles from growing, they are just kept away from them using this type of paint.”

Dobbie is a licensed captain who works with an oil tanker that was painted this way. He said the vessel in its sea trials after it left Avondale, and placed the ship to the Bahamas.

Polar Adventure is the first of a series of five ships being built at the site of a traditional shipbuilding ceremony that has never happened with a major vessel in this country. The next vessels in this class are due to be built in South Portland.

On Sept. 23, executives from ConocoPhillips flew to Port­land to christen the new ship. Po­rland-based magazine editor, a member of the board of directors of the company’s board.

The Portland Fire Department will be conducting a three-hour session devoted to CPR on Tuesday, Oct. 8, at the Portland Community School. The session is open to all in­habitants and is a great opportunity to acquire or refresh your CPR skills. It’s a prerequisite for the official Citizen’s Emer­gency Response Team training starting on Oct. 16. For more information, contact Pam Williamson at 766-3050 or toll-free 800-827-1000, or the GSWA at 888-751-6350 to see if you qualify for free CPR training.

Seeking military spouses

The Portland Daily Voice will be holding an evening of storytelling at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 9, at the Portland Community Free Clinic on 103 India Street. The clinic provides comprehensive health care to low-income, uninsured seniors in the Portland area. Call 877-8982 for more information.

On Election Day, library hours will be from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. to coincide with the hours the polls are open.

Craigslist want ads

Any artists/crafts persons interested in participating in this year’s Holiday Fair at the Portland Community Free Clinic. The fair will be held on Saturday, Nov. 9, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the clinic.

Used golf carts for sale

Gas and electric, mowers &/or tractors, 4-wheelers available or rear beds, call 268-6554.

Used cars, trucks, cars and parts

1991 Toyota Corolla for sale, call 787-9971.

Community Notes

Get CPR certified

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