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Houlton youth lands Subway commerical

By Joseph Cyr
Staff Writer

HOULTON — Local residents might get a chance to see one of Houlton's own during a Subway commercial in the coming weeks.

Ellie Grant, the 9-year-old daughter of Fred and Renee Grant of Houlton, was one of nine youths

"Basically it started with an email to the (radio) station asking if they knew of anyone or had family who might like to try out for a Subway commercial and if so they could send their information along to this advertising/marketing agency," Renee said. "Fred immediately thought of Ellie, as she loves to perform (sing, dance, act ... you name it). For about three years she has asked me several times, after watching shows on Disney and Nickelodeon, 'I want to do that! I want to be on TV. How can I get on TV?'"

The Grants asked Ellie if she was interested in auditioning for the commercial, and got enthusiastic "Yes!"

The Grants submitted Ellie's name and photo for the commercial and were surprised to hear back so quickly that their daughter was one of the children selected to audition. Renee said her daughter was "very excited" to do the commercial, which was filmed in Portland on Jan. 16. The reading included a hair and makeup session.

"She had fun doing it and got to sit in hair and makeup and find out what it's like doing a commercial and what's involved," Renee said.

The commercial is slated to start running starting Feb. 1 in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and northern New York.



MAKEUP — Ellie Grant, the 9-year-old daughter of Fred and Renee Grant of Houlton, gets her hair and makeup done by a stylist prior to shooting a commercial for Subway restaurants in Portland Jan. 16. Grant was one of nine youngsters selected to audition for the restaurant.

Should forest rangers be armed?

By Joseph Cyr
Staff Writer

HOULTON — Should Maine's Forest Rangers be allowed to carry firearms as part of their duties in the state?

That is the question currently being discussed in Augusta with the Maine State Legislature. LD 297, an Act to require forest rangers to be trained in order to allow them to carry firearms, has been a popular topic of conversation in recent months.

The bill was tabled on Dec. 11 by the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee in Augusta after issues of how the bill would be funded arose. The bill's status is currently up in the air.

A task force was created by Gov. Paul LePage to review the matter and a legislative committee voted 9-2 Jan. 15 to move the bill forward. It remains to be seen if the appropriations committee will support the measure and provide the funds needed to purchase firearms and train the rangers.

Forest Ranger Jeremiah Crockett of Houlton certainly hopes the funding is found. A second-generation forest

ranger, Crockett has been a Maine forest ranger with the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for the past 14 years.

During that time, Crockett has had a couple of close calls investigating wood harvesting complaints where the situation could have turned ugly. In those instances, he said, a firearm would have gone a long way to aiding his ability to diffuse the situation.

"There are a handful of incidents in my 14 years where I felt endangered to the point where a firearm would have been an advantage," he said. Two of those incidents were routine harvest inspections where he was meeting with a landowner or a harvester where the conversation degraded to the point of con-



Contributed photo

FOREST RANGERS — State Legislators are considering a bill to provide firearms for Maine's forest rangers.

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RSU 50 board explores technology

By Gloria Austin
Staff Writer

DYER BROOK — There are many opinions on iPads in school.

At the RSU 50 meeting on Jan. 13 in Dyer Brook, school board members not only viewed a joint PowerPoint presentation on the benefits of the iPads from the district's two elementary principals Chris Cunningham, Katahdin, and Peggy White, Southern Aroostook, but they also got to use the tablet computers.

RSU 50 Superintendent Larry Malone thanked the principals for the presentation, as the board was able to see how technology is being implemented in the district.

"Our focus is that, the iPad is a tool," he said. "It is not a device that replaces the teacher. The teacher is what make the most important impact on learning in the classroom."

The two principals, along with a small group of K-2 teachers had the opportunity to attend a two-day Leveraging Learning Conference in



OLD/NEW SCHOOL MEET — Former Lambert School principal Barbara Burton, center, along with Rhoda Howtz try out the iPad, while Katahdin Principal Chris Cunningham assists on the exercise. Burton, a teacher/principal, is now a member of the RSU 50 school board. She and her fellow board members had a chance to see how the tablet technology works in the school setting at RSU 50's meeting held in Dyer Brook on Jan. 13.

Pioneer Times photograph/Gloria Austin

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Mill Pond crowns spelling champ

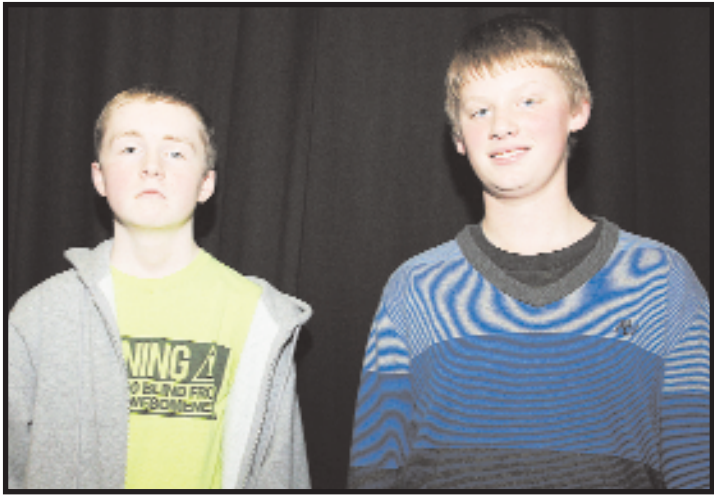
By Joseph Cyr
Staff Writer

HODGDON — It took 12 rounds, including six "championship" sessions before a winner could be crowned in the Hodgdon Mill Pond School Spelling Bee Jan. 15.

Fifteen sixth- through eighth-graders competed for the right to advance to the Aroostook County Spelling Bee. Brendan Curran and Cody Tucker battled back and forth through six "championship rounds" before Curran was able to lay claim to the title. Curran, an eighth-grader, successfully spelled "complacency" followed by "circumstantial" to capture the school's spelling championship.

Sarah Williams served as "bee master" for the event, while Sara Deveau, Maryann Sylvain and Stephanie Harris served as judges. Each student was given a warm-up word that when put together formed a helpful message for the students competing in the bee. That mes-

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Pioneer Times photo/Joseph Cyr

MOVING ON — Brendan Curran, left, and Cody Tucker of Hodgdon Mill Pond School will be advancing to the Aroostook County Spelling Bee on Feb. 6 after finishing as the top two spellers in the school. Curran won the bee, while Tucker finished as runner-up.

Houlton man pleads guilty to fraud

By Joseph Cyr
Staff Writer

BOSTON — A Houlton man has pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud and three counts of wire fraud.

Aaron Peabody, 42, of Houlton and his business partner Gary Como, 49, of Warren, Mass., pleaded guilty Jan. 14 in U.S. District Court in Springfield, Mass. The two are former co-owners of New England Equipment Company, a

Palmer, Mass. equipment company.

U.S. District Judge Michael A. Ponsor scheduled sentencing for April 10. Como and Peabody face a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison, three years of supervised release, and a \$250,000 fine on each count of wire fraud.

According to a press release on the Federal Bureau of Investigation website, Peabody and Como were co-owners of

New England Equipment Company between 2006-10. Prosecutors charge that during that time, Como and Peabody engaged in a long-running scheme that was perpetrated in a variety of ways, resulting in losses of more than \$1 million.

U.S. attorney Carmen Ortiz stated Peabody's and Como's methods included obtaining fake loans using the names of

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GHCA awards top speller

By Gloria Austin
Staff Writer

HOULTON — It may have only been a small crowd, but standing in front of anyone to speak can be unnerving. That is what 12 sixth- through eighth-graders at the Greater Houlton Christian Academy undertook at the academy's annual spelling bee last Friday.

It was 12 rounds and about 45 minutes later that Mercedes Farn out-spelled her eighth-grade classmate Angela Nam to win this year's bee. Farn spelled "insinuate" and then followed it with the word "bulbous" to become the champion.

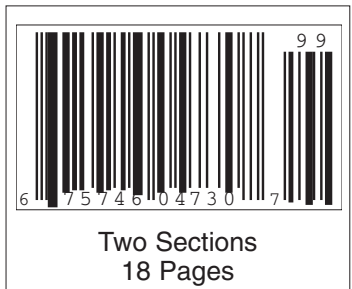
Students are given words in a random order from "Bee Master"

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TOP SPELLERS — Mercedes Farn, left, won the annual GHCA spelling bee Friday, while Angela Nam was runner-up.

Pioneer Times photograph/Gloria Austin



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