

On the Job

Laura Kim Lee of Brunswick has been named program officer at the Maine Community Foundation. Lee coordinates grant making, advancement and donor service activities in southern



Lee

McAllister & Quinn in Washington, D.C., and held positions at Bowdoin College. Lee earned a Bachelor of Arts in history from Oberlin College and a master's and doctorate in U.S. history from University of California, Los Angeles. She serves as a deacon of First Parish Church in Brunswick.

Joseph M. Pratt has been promoted to president of Bar Harbor Trust Services in Bangor and Ellsworth. He has been managing director since 2004 and joined Bar Harbor Trust in 2000. He is a graduate of Cannon Trust School and is working toward his Certified Financial Planner designation. Before joining Bar Harbor Trust Services, Pratt was a senior trust officer at Peoples Heritage Trust & Investment Group, a trust officer



Pratt

with Key Trust Co. of Maine; and began his career in financial services as a personal financial planner with American Express Financial Advisors. Pratt is a graduate of Bangor High school, earning his bachelor's degree from the University of Maine at Orono. In 1986, he entered the U.S. Air Force as a commissioned second lieutenant and left active duty in 1992 as captain, serving in the U.S. Air Force Reserves until 2005. He serves as board vice chairman for the United Way of Eastern Maine, a trustee of Bangor Public Library and a board member of Bangor Breakfast Rotary Charities. He was the founding president of the Maine Planned Giving Council and served the Maine Philanthropy Center and Bangor YMCA. Pratt enjoys fly fishing and whitewater canoeing. He lives in Bangor with his wife, Beck, and has two adult daughters.

Dr. David Engelbrecht has joined Maine Coast Memorial Hospital in Ellsworth, specializing in rheumatology, and will see patients in The Mary Dow Center.



Engelbrecht

He received his Bachelor of Science in biology from Montclair State College in Montclair, New Jersey, before receiving his Doctor of Medicine at the University of L'Aquila school of Medicine and Surgery in L'Aquila, Italy. Engelbrecht has treated patients in private practice and hospital-affiliated clinics, most recently as clinical director of rheumatology at St. Barnabus Medical Center in Bronx, New York. He also was a clinical instructor in rheumatology at the Lupus/Vasculitis Clinic at St. Vincent's Medical Center in Manhattan until 2005, and at the Sophie Davis School of Biomedical Education in Manhattan. He and his wife enjoy hiking and kayaking.

To submit items for On the Job, please visit bangordailynews.com. Fill out the "News and Photos" form under the "Post News" button at the top of the home page and click "Publish" at the bottom when finished. Questions? Call Community Editor Julie Harris at 990-8285.



ASHLEY L. CONTI | BDN

Advanced Modifications Inc.'s Brett Bowden works to retrofit a wheelchair-accessible van at the shop in Hermon.

Success in Hermon

Town interim economic director praises efforts

BY DAWN GAGNON
BDN STAFF

HERMON — During a recent tour around town in his pickup truck, Hermon's interim Economic and Community Development Director Scott Perkins pointed out some of the commercial success stories from the previous year.

Among them was Covey Physical Therapy, which recently moved out of leased space at Morgan Hill Event Center into a new facility it built on Route 2 that houses six exam rooms, a reception area and a small gymnasium. Eventually the complex will have an outdoor walking trail, Perkins said.

Then there was Hermon Eye Care, the fourth location to be opened by Dr. John Hersey; Northeast Restorations, which used to operate in Freedom Parkway but recently completed a new 2,400 square foot building on Route 2; and Greenway Equipment, a business that is new to Hermon. It has moved to the former Maine Trailer lot, also on Route 2.

And those are just a few of the businesses on the town's main drag.

From November of 2014

through June 30 of last year, Hermon saw 17 businesses either move to or expand in town, Perkins noted in the annual report he completed last month.

In fact, since the last annual report for economic development, business growth and activity has outpaced recent years in all categories, Perkins said. Existing businesses moving to Hermon to expand, new businesses establishing a home in Hermon and local businesses moving from lease to ownership all increased in 2014-2015, he said.

Also on his list of new or expanded businesses are Lasting Impressions Family Dentistry, Waterfront Concerts, Justified Tanning, Hermon Family Hair Salon, Bangor Drive-In, Mutt Nose Best, Maine Construction Group, Valley Satellite, Weatherbee Law Offices, Carmel Electric, Advanced Modifications, Community Pharmacy and Dysart's, which expanded a warehouse in Hermon.

The new and expanded businesses, he said, represent a total of 145 new or retained jobs. Six of those businesses are in newly established TIF districts that qualified for credit enhancement agreements approved by the

Town Council.

"Collectively, these companies invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in our local economy and made major improvements to their positions — including hiring additional employees," said Perkins, who also serves as the town's public works director.

Hermon is working to make the best of its advantages, which include one of the lowest property tax rates in the region, at \$12 per \$1,000 in property valuation, a relatively simple permitting process and proximity to major transportation hubs, including Interstate 95, Bangor International Airport and rail service from Canada south to Searsport.

With a population of fewer than 5,500 residents, Hermon is a small town with a staff size to match. But Perkins said he isn't going it alone. Last spring, the council established the town's first Economic Development Committee and charged it with coming up with an economic development plan and a marketing plan, among other things.

"So we put a letter out to the community and got a lot of responses," Perkins said. "We have a really good mix of business."

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Gas prices in state dip closer to \$2 a gallon

BY DARREN FISHELL
BDN STAFF

PORTLAND — Maine's average price for a gallon of regular gasoline dipped again in the past week, maintaining a trend that has brought the price of gas in the state to a six-year low.

The average price of a regular gallon of gasoline dipped to \$2.05 statewide Sunday, down about 2 cents from one week ago and down 10 cents from one year ago.

The national average also dropped 2 cents, to \$1.97, according to surveys by the price tracking website GasBuddy.

Maine's average was 10 cents higher than New Hampshire's, at \$1.95 per gallon, and lower than Vermont's, at \$2.08 per gallon.

The prices come as low demand



BDN FILE

The average price of a regular gallon of gasoline dipped to \$2.05 statewide Sunday.

has paired with continued high production by oil producing countries in the Middle East, according to Jeff Pelton, a GasBuddy senior petroleum analyst.

"History has shown that 12 of the past 16 Januarys [sic] have yielded the worst demand for the year," Pelton said in a news release.

The average price in Maine approached an average of \$2 last winter, but started to rise again in late January. The current average is the lowest in Maine

since early 2009, according to GasBuddy data.

Around the country, GasBuddy and AAA have projected that prices below \$2 per gallon will be more common this year, with some southern and midwestern states already reporting averages below that per-gallon amount.

GasBuddy and the U.S. Energy Information Administration have forecast that 2016 will bring a lower annual average price for gasoline, down to about \$2.36 for the year.



2nd-chance resolutions for smart consumers

BY RUSS VAN ARSDALE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NORTHEAST CONTACT

Have you abandoned all your New Year's resolutions? Here's a chance to start over (good consumers deserve second chances).

CONSUMER FORUM

Take the pledge to be more aware of your spending, saving and other monetary decisions. We're well aware of the ads, store displays and peer pressure during the recent holidays. Let's agree to be attentive to our finances year-round.

A great goal for the end of 2016 is a "rainy day fund," savings equal to one month's wages. Setting a few dollars aside each week can get you started, and the extra money could be critical in an emergency. Financial advisers say we should all eventually set aside two to four months pay for unforeseen events.

Setting up such a fund is one recommendation of David Leach, principal examiner at Maine's Bureau of Consumer Credit Protection. Leach says consumers can save themselves a lot of grief by following the most basic of advice: Always spend less than you earn. Follow that rule, and you can have part of your paycheck withheld and put automatically into a retirement account.

Leach and others at the Bureau of Consumer Credit Protection have been watching interest rates with, well, interest. While it's too soon to get any clear indication how consumers will react to the Fed's raising of the prime rate by 0.25 percent, Leach cautions consumers not to rush into a major spending spree in anticipation of more rate hikes.

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Summit Natural Gas lays off 21 in Maine

BY DARREN FISHELL
BDN STAFF

PORTLAND — Summit Natural Gas of Maine has announced it will lay off 21 employees, one quarter of its workforce, in cuts mostly at its Augusta office.

The company announced the layoffs Friday, cutting 13 positions from the natural gas company and eight more from its affiliated Natural Gas Conversion Co., which converts home heating systems to burn natural gas.

Lizzy Reinholt, the spokeswoman for Summit, wrote in an email that all but four of the cuts would be at Summit's Augusta office, and most of the cuts would be sales positions. The Kennebec Journal first reported news of the layoffs Friday.

The company and its affiliate had 80 employees and will have 59 after the layoffs, Reinholt wrote.

Kurt Adams, the company's president and CEO, said in a news

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