## Hampden Academy Beekeeping Club abuzz with sweet ideas

BY EMILY BURNHAM OF THE WEEKLY STAFF

Students at Hampden Academy are abuzz with activity, as the first year of the school's new Beekeeping Club has been officially underway since June.

Organized by school librarian Anne Cowin and assisted by her husband, Peter Cowin, a.k.a "The Bee Whisperer," the idea for the Beekeeping Club came about last fall, after the Penobscot County Beekeepers hosted the Maine State Beekeeping Association annual meeting at Hampden Academy. The meeting triggered much discussion amongst faculty and staff, with Anne Cowin eventually helping to get the club up and fly-

ing over the winter.

'Beekeeping is a unique

activity, bringing together faculty and students in learning about the importance of honeybees in the environment and encompassing many varied links to the wider curriculum," said Anne Cowin. "As well as the science aspect, it has been interesting to see connections with history, business, art, English and horticulture. It seems to be an activity that truly crosses not only all aspects of schoolwork but also attracts interest from people of all abilities and backgrounds in our school community.'

The new apiary sits just to the northeast of the school building, away from pedestrian traffic.

It's ringed with an eightfoot fence, to keep people and animals at a safe distance from the hives, and it deflects bees' flight paths skyward so people watching the hives will be less likely to encounter them up close.

When the weather gets too cold and the bees go to bed for the winter, Cowin plans to work with students on using wax and honey to make things like lip balms and hand creams, as well as studying beekeeping as a practice. She also hopes to have an observation hive in one of the science classrooms.

Both Anne Cowin and her husband, beekeeper Peter, say they aren't aware of other school beekeeping clubs in the state.

They have already received a small grant from the University of Maine, and are taking donations for further activities and potential expansions.

"We hope that our club will encourage other school districts to start beekeeping clubs, and so far have been approached by a number of schools in Maine and one in Connecticut who are keen to follow our example," she said.

For more information, or to help out the Hampden Academy Beekeeping Club, email acowin@ rsu22.us, or send checks to RSU 22 Education Foundation BEEKEEPING PROJ-ECT, care of Anne Cowin, Hampden Academy, 89 Western Avenue, Hampden ME 04444.



A bee collects pollen in this Oct. 2014 file photo.

## Bangor Public Library to close for seven-week renovation

BY EVAN BELANGER OF THE NEWS STAFF

BANGOR, Maine -- Bangor Public Library officials are planning to close the city's 101-year-old library for six weeks as renovations and upgrades to the historic

structure continue. Director Barbara McDade said the library will close Nov. 16 and will not re-open until Jan. 4, predicting the shutdown would leave the library's average daily patronage of more than 800 people 'very upset.

"We just found out that this was what we're going to have to do," she told City Council this week.

The closure will allow construction crews to install a three-story staircase in what is known as the octagon room. The staircase will connect new and old portions of the library, according to McDade.

The shutdown also will allow library staff to install radio frequency identification tags on each of the library's more than 500,000 books.

McDade said the tags will allow for self checkout at the library, as well as enable lishelved books and identify missing books using an electronic wand scanner.

Before the temporary shutdown, library staff will begin relocating the children's section from the first floor to the newly renovated third floor. That will close the children's section from Sept. 8 to Sept. 14.

In preparation for the shutdown, library staff have worked out agreements with libraries in neighboring communities for Bangor patrons to go there, though the stopgap measure will not cover the full shutdown period.

The Edythe Dyer Community Library in Hampden, the Old Town Public Library in Old Town and the Orono Public Library in Orono will accept Bangor library cards during the shutdown.

The Fogler Library at the University of Maine, the Maine State Library in Augusta and the Nottage Library at the University of Maine at Augusta in Bangor will continue accepting Bangor library cards, as they normally do, said McDade.

Additionally, from Oct. 16

to Nov. 14, the Bangor library will allow cardholders to checkout as many books as the need for the six-week shutdown. Those books will not be due back to the library until after the Jan. 4 re-opening.

The library also has electronic books, magazines and research resources available on its website.

While local patrons can go to neighboring libraries, the shutdown could impact people who use the library's Internet and computer resources.

Asked by Councilor Gibran Graham whether she had any recommendations for library Internet users, McDade said they will leave the libraries free public Wi-Fi on during the shutdown so users can log on from outside the building.

Other than that and the UMaine library, she said she was not sure where patrons could go to use computers.

The planned shutdown comes amid a large-scale renovation at the library. Those renovations, slated for completion in March of 2016, include a two-story atrium, work on the third floor to create a children's room, an



ASHLEY CONTI/BANGOR DAILY NEWS

Bill Brown works to paint a section of wall on the third floor of the Bangor Public Library in Bangor Tuesday. Aug. 25.

expanded young adult section and an art gallery that will feature work by local artists.

The library's lecture hall also is being updated, and a \$3 million repair of the library roof, including the replacement of the copper dome, already has been completed.

The updates and repairs come after a \$9 million fundraising campaign, with \$3 million donated by the Stephen and Tabitha King Foundation, \$3 million coming from city bonds and the rest coming from private donations throughout the community.

McDade estimated about \$1 million of that would go toward the library's endowment fund, which pays for library operations. Approximately 40 percent of the library's annual budget comes from the endowment with the rest coming from the city.



