

## Speed, inexperience cited in firetruck crash

BY NICK SAMBIDES JR.  
OF THE NEWS STAFF

SPRINGFIELD — Cole's Shingle Mill was burning, and volunteer firefighter Peter Beebe-Lawson really wanted to help his friend and the mill's owner, Jim Cole, so he decided to fetch Springfield's tanker truck.

Beebe-Lawson's decision led to his death in an accident on May 7 as he drove the tanker from the fire station along Route 169 toward the fire scene on Mud Pond Road in Prentiss, a state police investigation has determined.

"Nobody ordered him to get

the truck," Trooper Jarod Stedman said Monday. "His wife and everybody else said that he

knew the people whose place was on fire, and everybody agreed that he was trying to go above and beyond to give them a hand."

Stedman's nearly 50-page report does not say whether the tanker was actually needed at the fire. Fire Chief John Krapf did not return a telephone mes-



Beebe-Lawson

sage seeking comment Monday.

Among other factors in the crash, according to the report, were excessive speed for the tanker on that road; Beebe-Lawson's lack of firefighter training; his inexperience as a truck driver; and legal modifications to the tanker that changed its center of gravity, causing its tank's contents to shift dramatically.

Beebe-Lawson, who was not wearing a seat belt, died of chest injuries after he lost control of the tanker truck just beyond a sharp curve. The tanker first went off the right side of Route 169 and then veered into pine trees on the road's left side, land-

ing on its passenger side at about 11:45 a.m. Beebe-Lawson was pronounced dead at the scene.

"It is my opinion that the cause of the crash was a combination of speed and driver inexperience," Stedman wrote.

Fire Department records show that Beebe-Lawson had only 37½ hours of logged firefighter training, including 22½ hours of truck driving and 7½ hours driving the 3,500-gallon Freightliner tanker, when he got behind the wheel at the station, Stedman's 41-page report states.

"The documents do not indicate what portions of training time with [the truck] were actu-

ally emergency driving," Stedman wrote. "Since the training time with [the truck] was only 7½ hours, I feel that Beebe-Lawson was fairly inexperienced with that truck, specifically as it pertains to the handling, stability and weight shift in corners."

The modifications made to the former heating oil tanker, including an elevated tank and holes punched in the baffles that keep the tank's contents from sloshing, commonly occur, Stedman said, but they made the truck less stable and more difficult to handle.

"Since the firetruck tank was normally kept at around three-

quarters full, this would cause the water to shift and move throughout the entire tank while in movement, especially in cornering as well as in starting and stopping," Stedman wrote.

The shifting water likely contributed to the accident as the vehicle was coming out of the sharp curve, helping to create "extreme and constantly changing weight shift on the vehicle since 48 percent of the entire weight of the vehicle" — 22,830 pounds — "was in the tank," Stedman wrote.

The truck was well-maintained, and investigators found

See *Crash*, Page B4

## She's Got Him Eating Out of Her Hand



BANGOR DAILY NEWS PHOTO BY KATE COLLINS

Cherie Stewart of Stockton Springs pauses while raking blueberries to feed some to her dog, Bailey, last week. Stewart and her husband, Jay, own Stewart's Blueberries.

## Woman, 90, rescued from burning house

BY DIANA BOWLEY  
OF THE NEWS STAFF

DOVER-FOXCROFT — A local girl is credited with saving the lives of her parents and siblings and her father is credited with saving the life of his wife's 90-year-old grandmother Sunday after a fire broke out in a bathroom on the first floor of the family's home.

Jonathan and Nancy Seavey of Winter Street were awakened at about 10:30 p.m. Sunday by their 14-year-old daughter, Jen Seavey, who heard the hard-wired fire alarms sound off in the 2½-story house.

After the couple woke their two other children, Nancy Seavey guided the children down the stairs and called 911 while Jonathan Seavey ran downstairs to wake Nancy Seavey's grandmother, Margaret Libby, 90, who was in a first floor bedroom. Libby had recently been discharged from a local nursing home.

As he came down the stairs,

Seavey said Monday that he could see thick black smoke on the ceiling of the dining and living rooms. He said that as he felt his way to Libby's bedroom, he could hear her faintly crying and coughing.

"I kicked the door open and I could see a flicker of orange in her bathroom," Seavey recalled Monday. He said the smoke was so thick he could not see. "I'm kind of patting the bed to see if she's lying down and I finally feel her and I just kind of grabbed her and scooped her up," he said.

Seavey said he carried Libby to a room on the other side of the house where his wife and children helped her to safety. With his family outside the house and going to a neighbor's place as they had rehearsed for fire safety, Seavey said the adrenaline kicked in and he tried to extinguish the fire with water. He quickly realized that was futile and he too, fled the house, he said.

See *Rescue*, Page B4

## Canada eyes ban on LNG tankers

Officials seek to protect Bay of Fundy waterway

BY CHRIS MORRIS  
CANADIAN PRESS WRITER

ST. ANDREWS, New Brunswick — Federal politicians say Canada is considering regulations to ban liquefied natural gas supertankers from a sensitive waterway in the Bay of Fundy east of Maine, risking renewed territorial tensions with the United States.

Maxime Bernier, Canada's new minister of foreign affairs, assured a citizens' group on Sunday that Canada is strongly opposed to the prospect of LNG supertankers navigating the treacherous waters that lead into Passamaquoddy Bay between Maine and New Brunswick.

Although Bernier would not take questions from reporters and did not tour the disputed waters by boat, he told the Save Passamaquoddy Bay citizens' group what they wanted to hear — Ottawa will consider regulations banning supertanker traffic in the area.

"This passage is internal waters and it's very important for us," Bernier said in a brief statement. "We want to protect our people and the

environment. ... The prime minister has been very clear on this."

Passamaquoddy Bay lies between Maine and New Brunswick and any supertanker traffic would have to cross through Head Harbor Passage, a narrow waterway that Canada considers internal waters.

The U.S. State Department considers the passage a territorial sea in which commercial ships enjoy the right of innocent passage under international law.

Currently, two U.S. proposals for LNG terminals on the Maine side of the bay are making their way through the U.S. regulatory process.

Although Prime Minister Stephen Harper recently told President Bush that Canada will not permit tankers through Head Harbor Passage, the Maine LNG proposals are continuing to be reviewed.

"It's surreal," said Janice Harvey, a Canadian spokeswoman for the Save Passamaquoddy Bay organization, whose members are from the U.S., Canada and the Passamaquoddy tribe. "The U.S. has been aware of Canada's strongly held

See *LNG*, Page B4



BANGOR DAILY NEWS MAP BY ERIC ZELZ

## Police in Caribou bust burglary ring

BY JEN LYNDS  
OF THE NEWS STAFF

CARIBOU — Police in Caribou believe they have uncovered a major burglary ring that may have been going on since February.

Five people, all of whom live in the West Gate Trailer Park in Caribou, are facing multiple burglary and theft charges stemming from the spree, Caribou Police Chief Michael Gahagan said Monday.

The individuals charged are Paul Morse, 38; Tammie Howard, 38; John Carpenter, 34; Craig Bryant, 26; and John Drake, 36.

Police believe that Morse and

Howard, who held independent contractor positions delivering newspapers for the Bangor Daily News, may have used their routes to target potential locations to burglarize.

All of the suspects were arrested Friday. Two of those charged made bail immediately, while three were arraigned Monday. Further information about their bail conditions was not available.

The spree is believed to involve more than a dozen burglaries, according to Gahagan, encompassing territory that could stretch from Fort Kent to Mars Hill. Police believe the suspects were working as a

See *Caribou*, Page B4

## Familiar voice, visiting rabbi to mark holidays in Bangor

BY JUDY HARRISON  
OF THE NEWS STAFF

BANGOR — In synagogues around the world, the shofar, a ram's horn, will be blown 100 times on Thursday to ring in Rosh Hashana — the Jewish New Year 5768.

Rosh Hashana, which begins at sundown Wednesday, is a day of joyous celebration balanced against a humbling and solemn consideration of how well or poorly Jews have used the gift of the previous year. The High Holidays, which encourage profound self-examination and repentance, end with Yom Kippur on Sept. 21 and 22.

It is one of the few times of

the year when Jews are called to worship in community led by a rabbi and cantor rather than by lay leaders or marking a holiday such as Passover at home. Synagogues without rabbis or cantors hire them for the holidays.

Beth Israel, Bangor's Conservative synagogue, will bring a familiar voice to town to serve as its cantor: Max Furmansky has visited the Queen City since 1998 for the High Holidays. Rabbi Slomo "Steven" Zacharow of Jerusalem, on the other hand, will visit Maine for the first time this week. The synagogue needed to hire a rabbi for the High Holidays this year as it continues its search for a permanent rabbi.

"I am looking forward to spending the most spiritually intense and concentrated time

See *Holidays*, Page B5

## 'Extreme Makeover' selection process a big task

BY AIMEE DOLLOFF  
OF THE NEWS STAFF

MILBRIDGE — When "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" rolls into town, there often is hype about how a certain family was selected to be on the show and receive a new home.

With more than 15,000 applications to sort through per episode, ABC has some tight guidelines that families must meet in order to be selected.

"Everywhere we go, somebody talks about how much money the family secretly has, and this is our 102nd episode," Denise Cramsey, the show's executive producer, said Monday.

"We don't comment on the personal finances of a family, [but] every family that we give a house to has passed our very strict background check for finances."



BANGOR DAILY NEWS PHOTO BY GABOR DEGRE

Ron Smith (left), his wife, Brittany (right), and their three children, Thomas, 8, Bayley, 11, and Joseph, 3, at the press conference Sunday near their home in Milbridge to announce that they were chosen by "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" to receive a new home.

To start, applicants can nominate themselves, or be nominated by someone else.

In the case of Milbridge family Brittany Ray, Ron Smith and their three children, the family

didn't nominate themselves, but rather were nominated by members of the community.

At 15 pages, the written application is lengthy and requires that a number of things about the family be disclosed. A video of the family and their house also is required as part of the selection process.

Basic information, such as name, age and occupation is requested in addition to household income, amount and type of debt the family has incurred, whether anyone in the family has been involved in a lawsuit, and an item marked "IMPORTANT" in bold lettering requires disclosure if anyone in the house has been charged or convicted of a crime.

See *Makeover*, Page B4

Inside

Milbridge hagfish operation lures reality TV show selection

Page B4