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## Strong Fire Department receives \$33,630

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Senator Susan Collins, Ranking Member of the Senate Homeland Security Committee, recently announced that the Department of Homeland Security has awarded \$33,630 in grant funding for the Strong Fire Department. The funding is provided through the “Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program,” or FIRE Act.

The department will receive funding through the Operations and Firefighting Safety Program, which consists of training, equipment, wellness and fitness, and modifications to the departments’ facilities.

“The Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program is a critical source of funding for Maine’s fire and rescue personnel,” noted Senator Collins. “This grant will help provide the Franklin County’s first responders with the equipment and training that they need to better serve their communities.”

Senator Collins strongly supported the creation of the FIRE Act Grant program. These grants are awarded to fire departments across the United States to increase the effectiveness of firefighting operations, firefighter health and safety programs, emergency medical service programs, and fire prevention and safety programs, and to purchase new fire equipment.

## Camp burns down

By Ann Bryant  
 Special to the Irregular

PHILLIPS — A camp at 531 Salem Road was destroyed by fire Monday afternoon, Feb. 9, said Phillips fire Chief Jim Gould.

A passing motorist noticed smoke coming from the eaves of the unoccupied camp owned by Tom Evans of Phillips and called for the fire department, but the camp was fully engulfed when firefighters arrived, he said.

A small crew had been at the camp clearing snow from the roof earlier in the day and started a small fire in the fireplace, he said. Residue from that fire may have caused the blaze, but the cause is unclear now. The fire marshal was called and is investigating the incident, he said.

The approximately 25- by 25-foot camp with a wrap-around-porch was destroyed but firefighters were able to save a garage near it. The camp was furnished and has been leased but was unoccupied.

Gould estimated damage at around \$40,000, but didn’t know if it was insured.

Along with Phillips firefighters, crews from Salem, Strong and Kingfield were called to help at the scene.

## Man charged with theft

By Donna M. Perry  
 Special to the Irregular

STRONG — A Rangeley man was charged with theft Tuesday, Feb. 10, after Franklin County sheriff’s deputies conducted an investigation into \$847 stolen from Maine-ly Trees’ garage on Route 149 over the weekend, Lt. Niles Yeaton said.

Gregory A. “Rooster” Ferreri, 34, was arrested on a probation violation in connection with a January 2007 conviction of assault, criminal threatening and terrorizing, Yeaton said. He was then issued a summons at the jail on the misdemeanor theft charge, Deputy David Rackliffe said.

The garage manager discovered the money missing from an envelope in an unlocked cash box Monday afternoon, he said. Deputies recovered \$590 of the missing money, Yeaton said.

The theft occurred between closing Friday and Monday morning, Yeaton said.

Detective David St. Laurent and Rackliffe investigated and interviewed suspects.

Ferreri was one of three employees who worked at the garage on Saturday, he said.

## CV continued from page 1

school budget (typically in June). This was triggered by last year’s voters’ response to issues relating to school consolidation.

“It appears, based on current projections, that the net school budget will increase substantially this year from \$922,739 to \$1,053,243 or \$130,504,” Cota reported.

Also increasing is the town’s projected commitment to the Franklin County budget of \$49,015.

“In total,” Cota reports, “we estimate that the town’s net tax commitment will increase from \$2,910,871 to approximately \$3,131,700. I estimate that this will increase the mil (tax) rate from .0062 to .0066 or 6.4 percent,” Cota reports. He noted that in 2005 the town’s mil rate was also .0066 based on somewhat smaller property values.

The voters will see unchallenged officers John Beaupre and Steve Pierce renew their positions as selectmen. Pierce and Jon Clements are also looking to renew their term in the Sanitary District, as is Danielle London on the town’s School Committee. They too are uncontested.

Articles 53 on the town warrant relates to an agreement with local television broadcast station WSKI. Article 55 relates to the acceptance of the new library/community center and costs and revenues associated to the town. Article 56 relates to an agreement for rental space of the new library for the Western Maine Centers for Children at projected revenues of \$12,000, plus \$2,500 in pre-school payments.

All articles on the warrant are recommended by its respective committee or board.

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