

Roofing installed in LHS expansion



Roofing materials and rooftop equipment are being completed on the new wing of Lewiston High School. Renovations on the existing building should be completed by August, ready for the opening of school in September. The new wing is expected to open for staff and students in November. (Photo courtesy of Lewiston Schools)

From Lewiston Schools

LEWISTON - Roofing and rooftop equipment is being installed in the new wing of Lewiston High School as the expansion continues toward a scheduled completion in November.

The renovation and expansion of the high school are on schedule and on budget, according to Jay Doherty, project lead architect for Lavallee/Brensinger Architects.

The renovation of the existing building and construction of the new main entrance will be ready for occupancy at the end of August, and the new wing is on schedule for completion this fall, according to clerk of the works, Tim Brochu.

Brochu said, "On the exterior of the building, masons are completing the insulation and laying of the bricks. Framers are working on the iconic blue arch, which will surround the main entrance," he notes, adding that "roofing and rooftop equipment are being completed, and windows are being installed."

"Inside the building, all of the partitions have been framed, and drywalling and painting are in progress," Brochu said. "Mechanical, electrical, and plumbing utilities are being roughed in."

One stairwell has been installed, and the angled-feature staircase in the main

See Expansion, page 9

Goodwill is more than just stores

By Nathan Tsukroff

GORHAM – Goodwill of Northern New England is more than just stores where used items are sold.

Goodwill NNE has multiple programs to help people and families in Maine, New Hampshire and northern Vermont to achieve better or more stable lives.

With a motto of, "A hand up, not a hand out", Goodwill sees part of its mission as teaching people the skills to achieve personal stability, which includes skills like job preparedness and career training.

Headquartered in an industrial park area on Hutcherson Drive in Gorham, Goodwill NNE has additional offices in central Maine and New Hampshire, with retail stores sprinkled throughout the three states.

The stores are an important fundraising tool that support the work of Goodwill, including neuro-rehab services, cleaning services, and other workforce and health-care services.

In Maine, Goodwill manages 23 residential homes throughout the central and southern part of the state, for adults with an acquired brain injury, an intellectual disability or other barrier to independence that requires the support of Goodwill staff.

There are also community support facilities based in Augusta, Waterville, South Portland and Lewiston, which are "safe places for adults with disabilities to come learn, play, and learn how to live more independently," Heather Steeves, a spokesperson for Goodwill NNE, said.



Nick Bennett, interim manager for the GoodTech department at the Goodwill NNE facility in Gorham, evaluates a donated video game system for possible resale. Donated computers, phones, games systems and peripherals are tested, refurbished if possible, and either sold in the stores or online. Items that can't be refurbished are passed along to computer companies for parts, or to recycling companies. (Tsukroff photo)

Goodwill also provides neuro rehabilitation services at facilities in Lewiston and Scarborough. "That's where our medical staff helps people recover, rehabilitate from a brain injury," Steeves said. "So if you have a stroke, for instance, your brain might need help getting its function back."

Goodwill also has "so many workforce programs!" Steeves said. About

28,000 people were helped by Goodwill NNE last year to find jobs or with job training.

At Take 2 YouthBuild, a Goodwill program in Lewiston, 17-24 year olds who have a history in the juvenile justice system learn new skills and give back to their community.

See Goodwill, page 8

Art Walk L/A is in-person on Friday

From LA Arts

LEWISTON - The next Art Walk L/A begins at 5 pm on Friday, with fully in-person arts experiences downtown including artist receptions, a poetry reading, live music and more.

Art Downtown

Look for artist displays along Lisbon Street and in Dufresne Plaza, Lewiston. And check out these visual arts events:

The Studio, 291 Lisbon St. Reception for artist Grayling Cunningham and friends

LA Arts Gallery, 221 Lisbon St. Bates Dance Festival's Performance | Portrait installation remains open until 7 pm.

Lewiston Public Library, 200 Lisbon St. Student reception for "I Wish My Teacher Knew .."

Kimball Street Studios, 191 Lisbon St. Reception for current exhibition, "Women in Art"

110 Lisbon St. Artist Melanie Therrien's botanical series

Craft Brew Underground, 34 Court St., Auburn. Artist Iris Scott

Gritty McDuff's, 68 Main St., Auburn. Lewiston artist Thor Smith

Events

5-6 pm: Lewiston Public Library hosts a public reception for Lewiston High School students

exhibiting in the current show, "I

See Art Walk, page 11

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

CMCC Athletics open house on Aug. 5



Visitors to the CMCC Athletics open house on Aug. 5 will be able to tour the new Turf Fields for soccer, softball and baseball. (Photo courtesy of CMCC)

AUBURN – Central Maine Community College is hosting an Athletics Open House on Aug. 5. The event, which is tailored to high school athletic directors and coaches, as well as recreation and club sport directors, will have two sessions – 9-a.m.-noon and 2-4 p.m. Guests will be able to tour the new athletic facilities at the college which include Turf Fields for soccer, softball and baseball; the Dave Gonyea Court; a Weight Room; and the Esports Arena. Guests will also be able to tour the college and meet with CM coaches as well as support personnel. Interested prospective student-athletes and their families are also invited. Interested parties can contact Dave Gonyea at, (207) 755-5251 or dgonyea@cmcc.edu

Downeasters at Sawyer on Friday

GREENE - The Downeasters Chorus will perform at the Sawyer Memorial on Friday at 2 p.m. and at 7 p.m. The Araxine Wilkins Sawyer Memorial is located at 371 Sawyer Road, Greene. Admission to the event is free. For more information, call 946-5311, or visit sawyer-foundation.com

Uptown Cruizahs car show on Sunday

OXFORD - Bring a Kid to a Car Show! Young and old alike are invited to join the Uptown Cruizahs on Sunday for their 12th Annual Car Show! The show will again take place at the New Balance Factory Store on Route 26 in Oxford. This is a rain or shine event. There will be 23 classes, from antique autos and street rods, to trucks, present day vehicles, alternative fuel vehicles and special interest vehicles. There are three awards in each class, and there will again be Best in Show award. Registration is from 8-11 a.m. and the cost is \$10 per car. As always, admission is free for spectators, but donations will be gratefully accepted. The show participants will vote in each class up to 12:30 p.m. and awards will be presented at 2 p.m. Food will be available throughout the day along with music. Proceeds from this event, as well as the clubs Monday cruise night at Daddy O's in Oxford, benefit local organizations such as Responsible Pet Care and Maine Veterans' Home activity fund. For more information on the show or cruise nights please call Dan Tripp at 890-8778 or Garry Allen 595-2691.

‘My Best Moments With Sherman’ on Aug. 10



Christopher McDougall spends a few moments with his rescued donkey, Sherman. McDougall will discuss his book about rescuing Sherman during a Zoom session on Aug. 10, hosted by the Auburn Public Library. (Photo by Matt Roth)

From Auburn Library try. However, when Sherman arrived, he was so sick he could barely move. Chris decided to undertake a radical rehabilitation program designed not only to heal Sherman's body but his mind as well. The best way to soothe a donkey is to give it a job, so Christopher decided to teach Sherman to run. He'd heard about burro racing--a unique type of race where humans and donkeys run together in a call-back to mining days--and decided he and Sherman would enter the World Championship in Colorado. See <http://bitly.ws/fKwL> This program will take place via Zoom. To register, go to www.auburnpubliclibrary.org and click on Events at the top of the page; or contact the Reference Desk at 207-333-6640, ext. 4; or email dwallace@auburnpubliclibrary.org. This program is part of the library's Adult Summer Reading Program, "Tales with Tails" which runs through August 31. The final program of this summer's series will be a virtual visit with Misfits Rehab, a local wildlife rehabilitator, on August 24. More details about this and other programs planned for the fall can be found on the website, on Facebook (Auburn Public Library Advocates), or inquire via email (as above).

Summer Music Festival Sunday

From Court St Baptist ly-known and much-loved musician and singer-songwriter. His lyrics provide social commentary on themes of justice, hunger, and relevant Christian charity. He will be joined by other musicians and singers for the festival. Medema is a wide- All are welcome at this free event, which promises to be uplifting and energizing. For more information, call the church office during business hours, 207-784-6661, or email Office@CourtStreetBaptist.org.

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Summer Reading continues at Lewiston Library

From LPL

LEWISTON – Summer Reading continues through Aug. 7 at Lewiston Public Library with this year’s theme of “Tails and Tales,” with reading programs for children, teens, and adults.

See the library website at <https://lplonline.org/> for more information and calendars.

Questions? Please call 207-513-3134 or email us at lpreference@lewistonmaine.gov

KIDS programing features weekly themes, LIVE performers, staff

virtual programs, take & make kits, and book & prize giveaways

TEEN programming features Discord gatherings, virtual book groups and games, and book and prize giveaways

CHILDREN/FAMILY PROGRAMS

Judy Pancoast LIVE and in-person in Kennedy Park July 31 at 10:30 a.m. - No reservations required. In case of rain, program will be streamed LIVE on Facebook from the library.

Nature’s Nightshift with The Center for Wild-

life VIRTUAL On Zoom and Livestreamed to Facebook Tuesday, August 3 from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm.

Learn about creatures of the night from the Center for Wildlife, a wildlife rescue and rehabilitation center located in Cape Neddick, ME. Using live animals, the Center for Wildlife will answer many of our questions about how these animals survive in the nighttime. Gather your friends and family around to get up close with their live non-releasable animal ambassadors and their fascinating nocturnal adaptations. For more infor-

mation, please contact the Reference Desk at 207-513-3135 or at LPLReference@LewistonMaine.gov

Stargazing in Kennedy Park LIVE and in-person August 6 at 8 p.m. - No reservations required. In case of rain, program will be streamed LIVE on Facebook from the library.

VIRTUAL Preschool Babytime & Storytime Every Tuesday 10:30-11:15—Lewiston Public Library Children 0-5 are welcome to join the fun on Zoom as Ms. Jackie uses interactive songs and stories to introduce children to the world

of books, learning, and the library. Call 207-513-3133 for details and registration.

TEEN PROGRAMS

Visit the VIRTUAL Teen Library on Discord All Summer Long. Join LPL Teen Discord to connect with other young adults online & participate in our virtual teen programming!

“I Wish My Teacher Knew” Art Walk Reception LIVE and in-person at Lewiston Public Library, Friday, July 30 from 5-6 p.m. From a COVID school year, Lewiston High School’s Art Depart-

ment presents “I Wish My Teacher Knew,” a collection of digitally created and shared art work, stories, poems, and collages created by our local students.

All You Can Game: VIRTUAL Teen Gaming continues on Wednesday Aug. 4 and Aug. 18 at 4:30 p.m. An ongoing, online game night. Try a little of everything as we test out a sampling of different games throughout the summer, including Among Us, Jackbox Games, and more. Hop on Discord for a new multiplayer game every other week, June through August.

Charter review to go before City Council

From City of Lewiston

LEWISTON – The final report and recommendations of Lewiston’s Charter Review Committee will go before the City Council on Aug. 3

The report can be reviewed at <http://bitly.ws/fKyq>

The review committee, appointed by the Mayor, began its work in March, and at its final meeting on July 19, members unanimously approved this final report. Membership consisted of Ed Barrett, Patti Gagne, Francis Gagnon, Steve Morgan, Roger Philippon, Linda Scott, and Jennifer Williams.

The current City Charter requires the Mayor to appoint a Charter Review Committee in calendar years ending in 1.

The committee was charged with completing a comprehensive review of the City Charter and presenting recommendations designed to improve the operations of city government.

During their review, the committee members received comments and suggestions from a wide variety of individuals interested in and knowledgeable of Lewiston city government and its history. This included school and city elected officials, mem-

bers of city staff, the City Attorney, and members of the public. A summary of the comments and suggestions of these individuals and groups is part of the final report.

The current charter was originally adopted by the voters in 1979. While it was periodically amended in the following years, the document was not completely reviewed and updated until 2011 when the City Council created a charter review committee charged with reviewing the entire document and recommending changes. That committee proposed ten amendments to the charter, nine of which were subse-

quently adopted by the voters. Among those amendments was one requiring a charter committee to be established every ten years to review and recommend additional changes and updates with the vision of ensuring that the city’s foundational document is adjusted to meet changing needs and issues.

Send all items for What’s Going On to the Editor. Deadline is Friday by five.

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Guest Column

Wild about words

From Grammar Guy

I’m a proud “word nerd.” I love words; I collect them like baseball cards.

I like weird words, wonky words, witty words and even a handful of Welsh words (fun fact: the word for “carrot” in Welsh is “moron”). As a person prone to collecting things, I hoard words like a doomsday prepper stashes toilet paper. Is it an illness? Probably. But it’s cheaper than golf.

Do you bow down at the altar of epeolatry? If so, you worship words. I promise you’re not the only adherent to this phonetic pastime. Other words for word-worship are “grammatolatry” and “verbolatry.” While I’m not qualified to dole out spiritual advice, your words have the power to give life or to take it from someone. Even when anonymous or over social media, your words can either make someone’s day or make them miserable.

Verbomania is a

“craze for words.” I’m not a psychiatrist, nor am I Dear Abby, so I can’t prescribe medication or give medical advice. However, if you have an appetite for language, maybe consider a helping or two of alphabet soup. By doing so, you can rightly call yourself a “verbivore.”

You may consider yourself a “logolept.” If so, you’re a word lover — a verbal virtuoso. A word wizard. A defender of diction. A prose pro. A lexical legend. You get the idea.

On the other hand, maybe you know someone who’s terrified of words. I doubt you have gotten this far into my column while suffering from “logophobia” — the fear of words. Many people have a fear of speaking in public or have an aversion to speaking altogether.

Did you know there’s even a word for people who have a fear of long words? It’s called “hippopotomonstrosesquipedaliophobia.” Weighing in at fifteen syllables, this word is a tongue-

in-cheek word that means the same thing as “sesquipedalophobia.”

As someone who often gets paid by the word, I have no problem extending prose to ridiculous extents. The words we use matter and we need to make them count. It’s no wonder people get booted from Twitter for the equivalent of yelling “fire” in a crowded theater. Just as the clothes we choose to wear on our bodies can express our identities, the words we allow to flow from our mouths and keyboards shape how people see us.

While life can often feel like a nonstop chwyrligwgan (Welsh for “merry-go-round”), our words give us the opportunity to shape it into something either awesome or awful. It’s up to you.

Curtis Honeycutt is a syndicated humor columnist. He is the author of “Good Grammar is the Life of the Party: Tips for a Wildly Successful Life”. Find more at curtishoneycutt.com.

Bill increases protections for loan borrowers

From ME Legislature

AUGUSTA —Gov. Janet Mills recently signed into law a bill from Sen. Eloise Vitelli, D-Arrowsic. LD 1645, “An Act To Establish Protections for Private Student Loan Borrowers and a Registry of Lenders.”

The new law will increase protections for borrowers of private student loans and their cosigners.

“For decades, people have been told the best way to advance their career is to further their education. Unfortunately, regulations around student loan companies did not keep pace with the increasing cost of getting an education. As a result, far too many hard-working Mainers found themselves taken advantage of by predatory lending practices, even as they were trying to responsibly pay down their debt,” said Sen. Vitelli. “We’ve made great progress to protect student loan borrowers over the last few years, and this new law will help even more people.”

More than 70,000 Mainers hold private student loan debt, with all Maine student debt holders owing an average of \$32,788.

During the pandemic, when many borrowers of federal debt have not had to make payments on the debt and have not accrued interest, many private lenders have not made similar accommodations. As students look to finance their education, parents and grandparents often step in to cosign private loans. Nationally, the amount of student loan debt held by borrowers over the age of 60 increases by 50 percent every five years. As of 2018, more than 20,000 Mainers over the age of 60 owed student debt.

As amended, LD 1645 would require private lenders, except for state-chartered banks and credit unions, to register with the state, as the Student Loan Bill of Rights requires of other lenders. The bill prohibits lenders from placing loans into default or acceleration in most circumstances, except for payment default, and outlines other collection practices designed to protect borrowers and help them fairly pay down their debt. The bill also requires lenders to publish any flexible or alternative repayment options they offer, such as income-based repayment plans, and to offer these plans equally to all borrowers.

The bill also extends

to cosigners of private student loans the same protections afforded to the primary borrower. Lenders must provide cosigners with the conditions of debt release upfront and must require no more than 12 consecutive on-time payments as a condition of release. The bill also requires lenders to discharge the debt, for both borrowers and cosigners, if the borrower dies or becomes totally and permanently disabled. If it is the cosigner who dies or becomes totally and permanently disabled, they must be released from the debt.

“For decades, financial companies have run roughshod over student loan borrowers simply because those people chose to pursue a better life for themselves and their families,” said Seth Frotman of the Student Borrower Protection Center in his testimony supporting the bill. “The legislation before you today creates protections for hundreds of thousands of borrowers across this state — your neighbors, your constituents — who took on debt to chase the American Dream, only to be left with very few rights and even fewer protections.”

LD 1645 will go into effect 90 days after the Legislature adjourns.

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Bill would ensure the safety of personal care products

From Sen. Collins

AUGUSTA – Maine Senator Susan M. Collins (R-ME) aims to ensure the safety of cosmetic and personal care products with a bill she recently introduced in Congress.

The bipartisan Personal Care Products Safety Act I introduced with Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) would bring the law governing the Food and Drug Administration’s oversight of these products into the 21st century.

By strengthening FDA oversight of the ingredients in personal care products for the first time in more than eight decades, this legislation would help protect the health of consumers and provide regulatory certainty for manufacturers. It has been endorsed by nearly 20 organizations, including Burt’s Bees, which was founded here in Maine.

In 2014, a 9-year-old girl in Colorado used a new shampoo her mother purchased because it was advertised as being extra gen-

tle and made without harsh chemicals. She stopped using it after just three washes when her hair began falling out in clumps. Three weeks later, she was bald. Although her hair fortunately began growing back, she was teased at school for having bald spots for years afterwards.

Americans use a variety of cosmetics and other personal care products daily, including lotions, shampoos, and make-up. Most Americans, however, do not know that the federal government currently lacks the authority to ensure the safety of these products. In fact, the consumer safety law pertaining to these products has not been updated in more than 80 years.

The FDA and product safety experts have noted concerns about the use and concentration of certain ingredients in personal care products that have not been independently reviewed for health effects. According to the FDA, some hair smoothing and straightening products release form-

aldehyde gas, a known carcinogen. Formaldehyde exposure can cause short- and long-term health problems.

Currently, when the FDA finds an unsafe ingredient in a personal care product, it usually cannot force a company to stop selling it.

The Personal Care Products Safety Act would empower the FDA to review product ingredients and provide companies with clear guidance, including whether ingredients should continue to be used and if consumer warnings are necessary. It would also require the FDA to issue recalls on products likely to cause significant harm if companies refuse to do so voluntarily – an authority the FDA now lacks.

In addition, it would require the FDA to issue regulations outlining good manufacturing practices for personal care products and to provide technical assistance and additional flexibility for smaller businesses to comply with the law.

Red Cross needs donors during shortage

From Red Cross

PORTLAND - While donors across the country have rolled up a sleeve to give this summer, the need for blood and platelets remains crucial for patients relying on lifesaving transfusions.

The American Red Cross continues to experience a severe blood shortage and donors of all blood types – especially type O and those giving platelets – are urged to make an appointment to give now.

Right now, the Red Cross needs to collect more than 1,000 additional blood donations each day to meet current demand as hospitals respond to an unusually high number of traumas and emergency room visits, organ transplants and elective surgeries.

To thank donors who help refuel the blood and platelet supply this month, all who come to give July 7-31 will receive a \$10 Amazon.com Gift Card via email and will also receive automatic entry for a chance to win gas for a year (a \$5,000 value). More information and details are available at rcblood.org/fuel. Also, all those who come to donate throughout the entire month of July will be automatically entered for a chance to win a trip for four to Cedar Point or Knott's Berry Farm. To learn more, visit rcblood.org/CedarFair.

Schedule an appointment to give blood or platelets by using the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting RedCrossBlood.org, calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or enabling the Blood Donor Skill on any Alexa

Echo device.

In most cases, those who have received a COVID-19 vaccine can donate. However, knowing the name of the manufacturer of the vaccine they received is important in determining donation eligibility.

Locations:

Androscoggin
Lewiston
7/29/2021: 9 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., Ramada Conference Center, 490 Pleasant St

Cumberland

Brunswick
7/31/2021: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Midcoast-Parkview Health, 329 Maine Street

Portland
7/31/2021: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Clarion Hotel, 1230 Congress Street

South Portland
7/29/2021: 9 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., Portland Sheraton at Sable Oaks, 200 Sable Oaks Drive

Standish
7/30/2021: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., Standish Town Hall, 175 Northeast Road

Yarmouth
7/30/2021: 12 p.m. - 5 p.m., American Legion

Post 91, 196 Main St

To donate blood, individuals need to bring a blood donor card or driver's license or two other forms of identification that are required at check-in. Individuals who are 17 years of age in most states (16 with parental consent where allowed by state law), weigh at least 110 pounds and are in generally good health may be eligible to donate blood. High school students and other donors 18 years of age and younger also must meet certain height and weight requirements.

New President and CEO at Maine Public



Rick Schneider joins Maine Public as the network's new President and CEO, starting Aug. 2. (Photo courtesy of Maine Public)

From Maine Public

LEWISTON – Maine Public has selected Rick Schneider, an experienced public media leader with a strong background in journalism and local content creation at stations across the United States, as the network's new President and CEO.

Schneider will begin his new position with Maine Public on Aug. 2.

Schneider started his career in commercial broadcast news as a reporter and anchor. After serving as Washington bureau correspondent for Post-Newsweek Stations, he became news director at WUFT-TV in Gainesville, Florida.

He was named president and CEO of KNPB in Reno, Nevada, in 1998, where he led a capital campaign for the transition to digital television and expanded service to Lake Tahoe.

In 2004, he joined WPBT in Miami, Florida, which produced Nightly Business Report for national broadcast. The station expanded local production under his tenure.

In 2013, Schneider became Chief Operating

Officer of WETA, the major PBS producer and classical music radio station for Greater Washington.

Schneider joined the National Center for Family Philanthropy in 2018 as senior vice president for advancement.

"Rick's extensive background in public broadcasting and journalism position him well to lead Maine Public," stated Clare Hannan, Maine Public's Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. "As we continue to broaden our reach and relevance across the state, his vision and passion for our mission will certainly strengthen our work. We're enthusiastic to welcome Rick as Maine Public's next President and CEO."

Marion Freeman, the Chair of Maine Public's Board of Trustees, said,

"Rick has the experience and vision to lead the network to an exciting new level of audience outreach with meaningful, relevant content as we embrace the technological changes in public media."

Schneider earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Florida and a master's degree from Columbia University. He and his wife, Karen Bryant, have two adult children and will be relocating to Maine from Alexandria, Virginia.

Formed in 1992, Maine Public is an independently owned and operated nonprofit organization with office and studio locations in Bangor, Lewiston, and Portland, Maine Public airs content from PBS, NPR, and other independent producers.

For more information, visit mainepublic.org.

Letter to the Editor

Climate action good for business

As negotiations continue on the infrastructure package, climate action is frequently framed as being at odds with the economy, where taking any sort of effective action would come at a large cost.

This could not be more wrong.

First are the long-term implications, as unaddressed climate change spells disaster for future jobs and way of life. These climate related disasters have come with a price tag of almost \$2 trillion since 1980, a number that continues to climb.

Even in the present however, many solutions present opportunities to grow jobs, innovate, and stimulate the economy. A carbon fee & dividend structure is a perfect example of this. Endorsed by over 3500 economists, it would increase international competitiveness, push forward innovation, and provide rebates to citizens.

However, we can even go a step further, looking at CO2 as a resource rather than refuse, through carbon capture and utilization. From enhancing agricultural soils, to neutralizing dangerous wastes, to even creating carbon-tech products, firms such as Microsoft and Strip have already invested millions into these technologies, seeing the value available, as well as consequences of inaction.

Addressing the climate crisis is good business now, and will be critical for the economy of the future.

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Manchester, ME



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Arts & Entertainment

Art in Auburn a community-wide effort



Auburn artist and sculptor Andy Rosen will be one of the judges for the second annual Art in the Park event in Auburn on Aug. 21. (Photo courtesy of Auburn Rec)

From Auburn Rec
AUBURN – Saturday, Aug. 21, will surely be a busy day in downtown Auburn. And city officials wouldn't have it any other way. Things will be busy because the City of Auburn

will be hosting its second annual Art in the Park event on the very same day that Auburn serves as co-host of the State of Maine Bicentennial Parade, presented by Poland Spring. "Art in the Park" will be held at the corner of Main and Academy Streets in downtown Auburn, adjacent to Community Little Theater, and will include a juried art show with cash prizes, as well as a vendor area, where artists, food trucks and other vendors from near and far will connect with people who are there to take part in the parade festivities. "After taking last year off, we are so excited to partner with L-A Arts once again," said Haley Warden, member of the Auburn Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and Chair of Art in the Park 2021. "Artists from across Maine are warmly invited to participate in this exceptional art event." Details about the event can be found at www.artinauburn.com. The juried art show will feature two well-known Maine artists who will serve as judges: Auburn's own Andy Rosen and Kate Cargile. Cargile is an Auburn resident and is a long-time middle school art teacher. She works in a variety of media, including painting, drawing, printmaking, appliqué quilting, and papier-mâché sculpture. Rosen is an Auburn native whose artwork has appeared in national and international exhibitions, including the Portland Museum of Art (Portland, ME), Jim Kempner Fine Arts (New York, NY), Tacoma Museum of Art (Tacoma, WA), Cuchifritos Gallery (New York, NY), Pulse Art Fair (Miami, FL), & Tetra Projects (traveling exhibition) Mytilene, Greece. Artists registered for the juried show can submit two pieces of original work (3D art is permitted). The cost to register for the Juried Art Show is \$35 (non-residents \$45). For those wanting to sell their art or other products in the vendor area, there is a \$20

registration fee for a 10x10 space (the vender area is open to anyone and is not required for participation in the juried art show). **Art legacy grows**
The City of Auburn is also delighted to announce that multiple public art pieces will be installed throughout the downtown district in the months ahead. "What began as one public art piece made possible by the Creative Communities Grant from the Maine Arts Commission (via L/A Arts and L-A Metro Chamber of Commerce) quickly evolved into three incredible pieces," said Auburn Recreation Director, Sabrina Best. "Auburn has a real appetite and excitement for public art and that's contagious and so much fun. We are building a legacy of public art and it is a community-wide effort." Anniversary Park will be home to two of the new public art pieces. "The Fish," a nine-foot stone sculpture by Maine artist Thomas Berger, is scheduled to be unveiled at the July 30 Artwalk. Following that, a piece by Auburn's own Charlie Hewitt - an LED illuminated rose with the words, "French Beauty" - will be installed sometime this fall. The third piece of public art is Hugh Lassen's "Bud Form," a life-sized abstract sculpture that will stand roughly six feet tall (with the ability to rotate). The sculpture will be placed in Longley Park, near the start of the bridge in one of Auburn's busiest gateways.

Storywalk expansion
Auburn's art-related projects for 2021 will culminate with the installation of eight additional Storywalk displays, from Longley Park to West Pitch Park. With the new displays, the Storywalk, which follows Auburn's Riverwalk along the beautiful Androscoggin River, will feature a total of 16 display cases, from Bonney Park up to the falls at West Pitch Park. July's Storywalk theme will be a celebration of National Parks and Recreation Month. Each of the eight original displays will showcase a local park or facility, encouraging viewers to visit and enjoy local parks and trails. The eight newly installed displays will showcase a variety of poems written by local authors. For more information on Auburn's Art in the Park, the city's public art projects, or Storywalk, please reach out to the Auburn Recreation Department at 333-6611 or Art in the Park Coordinator Haley Warden at hwarden@auburnmaine.gov.

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Complete the meal benefit at school this year

From Maine DOE

AUGUSTA - Maine needs all parents and caregivers to take action this school year—by taking the time to complete the confidential Meal Benefit Application through your local school, even if school meals are already free for all students.

Families, schools, communities, and our state can greatly benefit from the data that is gathered from the application, and this application is important for a number of reasons.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, when school meals became complementary, there has been a significant drop in Meal Benefit Application returns—meaning fewer families are filling out the application.

The family income data provided by the application informs key funding for school resources. This includes school meal reimbursements, funding for Title I programs, funding and resources for after school programs, funding provided to schools from the Maine State Legislature for essential programs and services at school, funding for special education, teacher loan forgiveness, and much, much more!

Federal and state government use the aggregate data from the application to distribute education funding to schools across the county and state of Maine. In other words, if there is no data to inform the needs of the community, it could result in less education funding for your local district and for Maine.

By completing the Meal Benefit Application, you are directly investing in your child’s education and the children and families in your community.

Specific programs that are funded by the data collected from Meal Benefit Application include:

- Title I schools
- Elementary & Secondary Education Act (ESEA)
- Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)
- Essential Programs and Services (EPS) funding allocated directly to Maine

Schools through the Maine Department of Education (State funding)

- Before/After School Programs
- Summer School Programs
- Special academic programming, and grant opportunities initiated by the Maine Department of Education (DOE)
- Teacher student loan forgiveness

The application is available through your local school administrative unit (SAU) school nutrition program and it is completely confidential. Most SAUs have the application available to be completed online.

A printed version of the application is also required to be available—it will often be part of beginning of year paperwork that comes home with your child.

This past school year has certainly had its challenges due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite these challenges, all Maine children have had the opportunity to access free healthy school meals on a daily basis.

EPR for Packaging Will Save Taxpayer Money

From NRCM

AUGUSTA - Maine has now joined more than 40 jurisdictions around the world to require companies that create packaging waste help pay for the costs of recycling.

It becomes the first state in the nation to pass an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Packaging law (LD 1541) in response to a steady increase in packaging materials, including those from online retail, that is driving up costs for local cities and towns.

According to the Natural Resources Council of Maine, EPR for Packaging has long been proven to be a successful policy in Canada, Europe, and elsewhere around the world for reducing costs for municipalities, increasing recycling rates, and spurring innovation toward more eco-friendly packaging.

Ten states were considering enacting such laws this year, with Oregon likely to be next, with the governor expected to soon sign a bill that has already been passed by the state’s legislature.

“I’m proud that once again, Maine is a nation-

al leader when it comes to common-sense environmental protections. This new law assures every Maine community that help with recycling and lowering the property tax burden is on the way,” said State Representative Nicole Grohoski (D-Ellsworth), who introduced LD 1541. “It’s time for packaging producers to take responsibility for their waste stream in the Pine Tree State, as they do in more than 40 other countries and regions worldwide.”

“Maine will be a model for other states as the United States joins much of the rest of the developed world in creating a product stewardship regime that will increase recycling, improve waste management, save property taxpayers money, and put the cost of packaging disposal onto the producers and brand owners where it belongs,” said lead bill co-sponsor State Senator Rick Bennett (R-Oxford).

Maine’s Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) estimated in a 2019 report that it costs Maine municipalities between \$16 million and \$17.5 million each year to manage packaging waste

through recycling or disposal. Towns have no say in how much packaging waste companies generate and then ship to consumers.

“This bill is the first step toward reviving local recycling programs and getting municipal waste management back on track,” said Neal Goldberg, Legislative Analyst at the Maine Municipal Association, which has supported the bill since its inception.

“For too long property taxpayers have been shouldering the hefty cost of managing packaging material for the world’s biggest producers of waste. LD 1541 not only shares that cost with producers but also encourages Maine’s goals of reducing overall waste generation and increasing recycling rates at affordable prices.”

The new EPR for Packaging law was developed after three years of work and input involving the Maine DEP, Maine Municipal Association, international experts in EPR policies, and a wide variety of in-state stakeholders, including local businesses.

Once the program is underway it will require corporations responsible for much of the packaging waste in Maine to reimburse cities and towns for the costs of recycling packaging materials associated with the products they sell to consumers in the state. The policy also provides an incentive for companies to design and manufacture packaging that is easier to recycle and reuse.

Founded in 1959, the Natural Resources Council of Maine is the state’s leading nonprofit membership organization protecting Maine’s land, air, waters, and wildlife.

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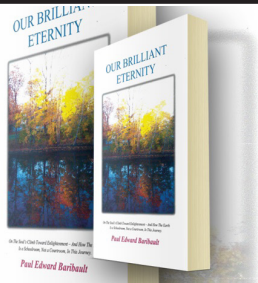
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Goodwill

Continued from page 1

In Take2 young people learn construction skills in the National Center for Construction Education and Research program while working toward their high school equivalencies and learning valuable life and work-readiness skills. “They’re rebuilding Lewiston’s dilapidated housing stock,” Steeves said.

To help people with multiple sclerosis (MS) in Maine and New Hampshire live active, independent lives, Goodwill is a contracted partner with the National Multiple Sclerosis Society.

Goodwill manages AmeriCorps programs that strengthen communities in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont by placing volunteers in local non-profits, municipalities, and schools. These AmeriCorps members support the long-term health of communities through their selfless commitment, according to Goodwill.

GoodTech

Goodwill NNE created GoodTech, a program where its trained staff refurbishes donated electronics. Donated computers, phones, game systems and peripherals all must pass strict testing guidelines before being sold in the retail stores or online. Not only does GoodTech keep electronics out of the waste stream, it creates jobs for people in the local community by training them in the skills needed to test, repair and recycle all electronics.

GoodTech is a Microsoft Registered Refurbisher and follows stringent guidelines for wiping previous owners’ data, repairing and testing PCs. All hard drives are wiped to U.S. Department of Defense Standards.

Items are checked to determine if they should be resold in stores or online. Items that are not acceptable for immediate sale are either refurbished or passed along to computer companies for them to refurbish. Items that are beyond refurbishing are

transferred to companies that recycle the electronic parts.

Store Donations

Store staff accept lightly-used clothing, household items and electronics. Donations are made at the stores. The donation bins that used to be found at businesses and strip malls throughout the area, were removed as Goodwill found that people were leaving items that could not be sold in its stores.

Items are cleaned, then sorted and placed in the various stores. Items that don’t sell are marked down in price, then eventually pulled back to the

warehouse and placed for sale in the “Buy The Pound” outlets in Gorham and in Williston, VT, and Hudson, NH.

These outlets are distinct from the retail stores as there are no clothing racks organized by size, or pre-sorted shelves stacked with housewares. Instead, shoppers find large, waist-high blue bins on wheels lined up in rows and piled with donated goods of all kinds.

In one bin might be anything from a Maine-shaped wall clock to holiday decorations, infinity scarves, and an inflatable unicorn pool toy that appears to have never been



Michelle Atwell of Portland looks for decorations for her upcoming wedding in the Buy The Pound outlet at the Goodwill NNE warehouse building in Gorham. Items that don’t sell in the retail stores are eventually brought to the Buy the Pound outlets in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont, to be sold by weight. (Tsukroff photo)



Workers in the warehouse area at the Goodwill NNE facility in Gorham fill big blue bins with items for sale in the Buy The Pound outlet that is part of the warehouse. Other workers sort items into boxes for sale in the retail stores, or for eventual recycling. (Tsukroff photo)

used. There are also separate bins for clothing, shoes, glassware, and books.

Payment is by the pound, with the shopping cart being weighed at the checkout area.

Clothing items that are unsuitable for sale are repurposed into Goodwill Wiping Cloths, eco-friend-

ly cleaning cloths for at home and in the workplace. These washable, reusable wipes are absorbent, more durable than paper towels, and available in different fabric types—sweatshirt, color t-shirts, white t-shirts, flannel and terry cloth.

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Expansion

Continued from page 1

lobby will be set in position soon.

With a new, secure main entrance, and the renovations to the 48-year-old building finished for the beginning of school, and the new wing fully ready for use by November, Phases I and II of this three-part project will be completed.

The work is the result of forethought by the Renovation and Expansion Committee; planning by the architects; and the abilities and attention to detail by the tradespeople, led by Ledgewood Construction.

The high school is part of the Lewiston Public Schools district.



Construction continues on the new Arts wing at Lewiston High School, with expected occupancy in November. Renovations on the existing building will be completed before school begins in September. (Photo courtesy of Lewiston Schools)

La Rencontre returns to the Franco Center

From Franco Center

LEWISTON – The La Rencontre luncheons return to the Dolard and Priscilla Gendron Franco Center on Thursday, Aug. 12.

La Rencontre (French for “the gathering”) as a way for our extended Franco-American family in the area to reconnect with each other and with our neighbors.

Meals and stories are shared, friends are reunited, and memories are

made. La Rencontre is not restricted to French-speakers, or even those of Franco descent.

Entertainment will be provided by the well-known, and accomplished Nel Meservier and Mike Willette

The Meal will be lasagna, salad, roll, and desert. Coffee and tea are included with the meal. Full bar service will be available.

The fee for the meal and entertainment is \$15. Parking is included in the price of the ticket. All proceeds to benefit the Franco Center.

The Franco Center is located at 46 Cedar Street in Lewiston.

Tickets can be purchased by contacting the Box Office at (207) 689-2000 or at www.francocenter.org.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Rural Development

NextGrid Mangrove, LLC: Notice of Availability of an Environmental Assessment

AGENCY: Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS), USDA

ACTION: Notice of Availability of an Environmental Assessment.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the RBS, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act, is issuing an environmental assessment (EA) in connection with possible impacts related to a project proposed by NextGrid Mangrove, LLC. The proposal is for construction of a 5.55-megawatt (MW), groundmounted solar photovoltaic facility (solar farm). NextGrid Mangrove, LLC has submitted an application to the RBS for funding of the proposal.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Brian Wilson, P.E., Business & Cooperative Programs Director, USDA Rural Development, 967 Illinois Avenue, Suite 4, Bangor, Maine 04401-2767, 207-990-9125, brian.wilson@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NextGrid Mangrove, LLC proposes to construct a 5.55-MW solar farm on an approximately 213-acre site which contains agricultural land and forestland. Approximately 20 acres of the project site would be disturbed as a result of the construction activities associated with this project. The Proposed Project Area would be located west of Main Street near the intersection of Main Street and Merrill Road in the city of Lewiston, Androscoggin County, Maine. The Proposed Project would interconnect to the Central Maine Power (CMP) pre-existing electrical distribution system. The power generated from the facility would be sold to CMP through a long-term Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). The Proposed Project would be accessed from Merrill Road. An interior road would be constructed inside the perimeter and is anticipated to be flat and would match existing grades to minimize earth work. The Proposed Project Area would be secured by a security fence with standard gates for emergency and maintenance vehicle access.

True North Consultants, Inc., an environmental consultant, prepared an environmental assessment for RBS that describes the project, assesses the proposed project’s environmental impacts, and summarizes as applicable any mitigation measures used to minimize environmental effects.

NextGrid Mangrove, LLC intends to seek financial assistance from USDA, RBS for the construction and operation of a solar farm. The Proposed Project consists of a fixed-tilt solar array installed on ground screws as supports connected to racks of solar panels. The Proposed Project Area is currently undeveloped forestland previously used as pastureland.

If implemented, the Proposed Project will convert approximately 2,717 ft2 of wetland fill from the construction of an access road (permanent loss) and from clearing and grubbing of forested wetland (these wetlands will not be permanently lost and will be maintained as emergent wetland vegetation). Additionally, there will be approximately 754 ft2 of wetland vegetation removal (i.e., conversion of scrub-shrub wetland vegetation to emergent wetland vegetation with no grubbing required). All wetland impact areas, whether conversion or grubbed/fill areas, will be maintained as low growing wet meadow and/or emergent cover types by means of hand trimming or periodic mowing (no more than two times per year) during operations and maintenance in order to keep vegetation from shading the solar array. These wetlands will continue to provide groundwater recharge/discharge, sediment and nutrient removal, wildlife habitat and other valuable functions for the duration of the Proposed Project. Fill associated with the access road, however, will result in permanent loss of wetland function and value. In accordance with Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands, and USDA Departmental Regulation 9500-3, Land Use Policy, the purpose of this notice is to inform the public of this proposed conversion or effect and request comments concerning the proposal, alternative sites or actions that would avoid these impacts, and methods that could be used to minimize these impacts.

The environmental documentation regarding this proposal is available for review at 967 Illinois Avenue, Suite 4, Bangor, Maine 04401-2767. For questions regarding this proposal, contact Brian Wilson, P.E., Business & Cooperative Programs Director, USDA Rural Development, 967 Illinois Avenue, Suite 4, Bangor, Maine 04401-2767, 207-990-9125, brian.wilson@usda.gov.

Any person interested in commenting on this proposal should submit comments to the address above by August 12, 2021.

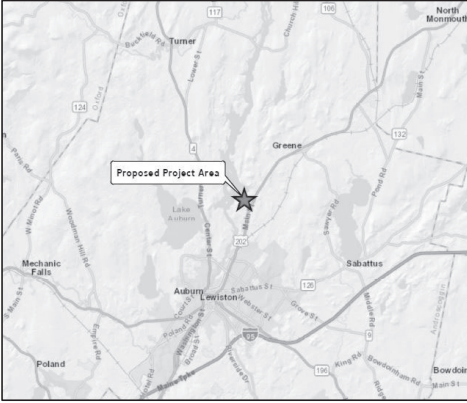
RBS has conducted an independent evaluation of the environmental assessment and believes that it accurately assesses the impacts of the proposed project. No significant impacts are expected as a result of the construction of the project.

Questions and comments should be sent to RBS at the address provided. RBS will accept questions and comments on the environmental assessment for 14 days from the date of publication of this notice.

Any final action by RBS related to the proposed project will be subject to, and contingent upon, compliance with all relevant Federal environmental laws and regulations and completion of environmental review procedures as prescribed by 7 CFR Part 1970, Environmental Policies and Procedures.

A general location map of the proposal is shown.

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Seniors Not Acting Their Age

Revisiting the Puffins



Kayakers finally land on Loud’s Island after five hours in their boats. (Ron Chase photo)

By Ron Chase

One of my favorite kayak adventures is visiting the puffins on Eastern Egg Rock in outer Muscongus Bay.

Each year, the colorful enigmatic seabirds arrive at the tiny barren atoll to breed and nest for a few weeks in June and July.

Traveling to Eastern Egg is an ambitious undertaking. The roundtrip from Round Pond is about sixteen miles with substantial exposure to the vicissitudes of the open sea with few opportunities to land.

For a decade, I’ve

organized almost annual Penobscot Paddle & Chowder Society treks to distant Eastern Egg. After receiving confirmation the puffins had arrived in mid-June, I began studying the weather and tides for safe conditions to attempt the journey. With light winds forecast and advantageous tides scheduled, June 16th appeared to be an ideal day so I announced the trip.

Unknown to me, Tropical Storm Bill was forming off the Carolinas. Two days before our planned departure, the forecast changed dramatically. Strong winds and

high seas were predicted. I postponed the trip to the 17th but the adverse conditions continued unabated. Three more postponements followed. Given conflicting obligations and a commitment to leave Maine to visit family beginning June 27th, it didn’t look like Eastern Egg was going to happen this year.

One possible date remained, June 24th. The tides weren’t right but the winds moderated and seas had calmed to a tolerable 2 to 4 feet. An afternoon onshore sea breeze was expected. After polling interested participants, a de-

cision was made. The trip was on!

Seven solo kayakers met at Round Pond Boat Landing early on a sunny morning. The scene was chaotic. Most of the parking spaces were taken and a large sailboat about to be launched was being repaired in the middle of the parking lot. Maneuvering around the many obstacles, Team Puffin carried boats to the water and began their quest departing south in Muscongus Sound.

Light winds continued as we passed between Ross and Haddock Islands and entered Muscongus Bay. Western Egg Rock could be observed in the distance southeast. Western Egg is a strategic location on the trip since it is the only potential landing spot between Haddock Island and Eastern Egg. Landing on Eastern Egg is prohibited.

About midway between Haddock and Western, the swells began to increase in size. I didn’t bring a yardstick but my guess is we had 4 to 5 foot seas instead of the predicted 2 to 4; but the waves weren’t breaking and the winds continued to be negligible. Another concern, a presumed shark approached close to one paddler before moving away. After some discussion, we concluded it was actually a sunfish. While safety concerns had been alleviated, a real shark would have made for a much more compelling story.

Another setback was encountered as we converged on Western Egg. Surf was crashing against the rocky shore. A safe landing was not possible. That meant remaining in



A kayaker enjoys a close encounter with two puffins next to Eastern Egg Rock. (Ron Chase photo)



A group of puffins pose for pictures on Eastern Egg Rock. (Ron Chase Photo)

our boats for at least four hours if we proceeded to Eastern Egg. A predominantly senior group, our inability to land was a significant concern. After a group conference, the consensus was to push on the Eastern Egg. The revised plan was to enjoy a brief stopover with the puffins while hoping a change in tide would allow us to land on Western Egg during our return.

More large swells were experienced departing Western Egg but they diminished in the open water approaching Eastern Egg. Our anticipation increased as we neared the rugged island. Another setback was endured. In the past, the vast majority of the puffins had been located on the western side of the island. Not this time; only a handful were spotted.

Since a tour boat was circumnavigating the island, we reluctantly decided to extend our trip and do the same. Our efforts were rewarded as scores of the delightful seabirds were feeding and swimming in large swells on the south side. Numerous additional

sightings were made as we persisted around the rock.

Immediately following our successful puffin encounter, we hurried northwest to Western Egg. Alas, landing was still unsafe. Attempts to disembark on Haddock or Ross Islands also failed. After about five hours in our boats, we finally found relief at Noyes Preserve on the southern end of Loud’s Island.

A strong tailwind propelled us north in Muscongus Sound. Whitecaps were building as we entered Round Pond Harbor. Despite a multitude of obstacles, ours had been another successful puffin endeavor.

The author of the “The Great Mars Hill Bank Robbery” and “Mountains for Mortals – New England,” Ron Chase lives in Topsham. His latest book, “The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine” is scheduled to be released by North Country Press later this year. Visit his website at www.ronchaseoutdoors.com or he can be reached at ronchaseoutdoors@comcast.net.

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Art Walk

Continued from page 1

Wish My Teacher Knew ...”

5:30 - 6 pm: Anniversary Park, off Pulsifer St., New Auburn. Party to welcome Thomas Berger’s “Big Bass” sculpture to the park. Bring the family!

5:30 - 6 pm: Du-fresne Plaza, Lewiston. Juggling demonstration by LA Arts’ Bates intern Ben Hoffinger

6-6:30 Auburn poet Lynn Schmidt reads from her “Dead Dog Poems” collection at the Wicked Wings murals, behind Mother India Restaurant, 114 Lisbon St, Lewiston. In case of rain, the poetry reading will take place at Quiet City Books, 97 Lisbon St., Lewiston.

Music in the Park
The LA Arts Music in the Park Concert will run from 7-10 p.m., with live music at Kennedy Park performed by local artists Black Cat Road, Michael Krapovicky, and Random Ideas.

Online Gallery
LA Arts and the Art Walk LA Committee present the 2021 Art Walk Artists online gallery at <http://bitly.ws/fKyQ>

Artists and artisans included on this page each have works for sale; please support them with your purchases!
Visual artists and artisans can register free and we’ll share your work on this web page throughout the season. 100% of art sale proceeds go to artists and makers.

Partners
Art Walk LA and all LA Arts programs would not be possible without the generous support of community partners including Community Arts Champion sponsors Acadia Insurance, Austin Associates, P.A., Bates College, Baxter Brewing Co., Berman & Simmons, the City of Auburn, the City of Lewiston, Liberty Mutual, the Sun Journal as well as the Davis Family Foundation, Maine Arts Commission, Maine Community Foundation, the New England Foundation for the Arts, the Onion Foundation, and the Ladd Foundation.

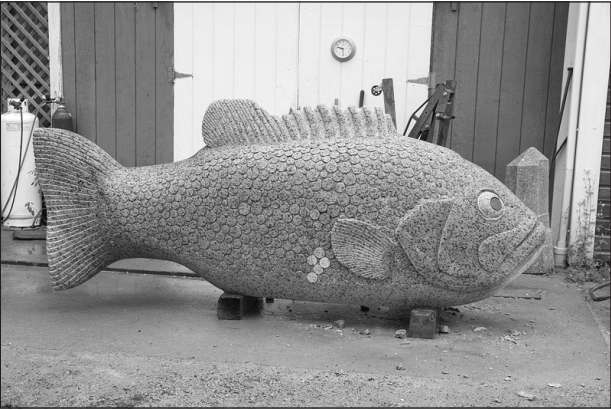
Since 1973, LA Arts, the arts agency for the cities of Lewiston and Auburn Maine, has pursued a mission to engage and inspire a vibrant community through arts and culture. The agency works with

governments, businesses, schools and local arts and cultural organizations to create opportunities for community members across the generations to experience, learn, and participate in the arts.
LA Arts organizes arts programs and initia-

tives, supports the work of local artists and arts organizations, and highlights the essential role the arts play in shaping an economically vital, socially integrated, and forward-looking future for its community. Learn more at www.laarts.org.



Auburn Poet Lynn Schmidt will read from her “Dead Dog Poems” collection at the Wicked Wings murals, behind Mother India Restaurant starting at 6 p.m. on Friday as part of Art Walk L/A. (Photo courtesy of LA Arts)



“Big Bass”, a sculpture by Thomas Berger, will be delivered to Anniversary Park, off Pulsifer St., New Auburn, at 5:30 p.m. on Friday during Art Walk L/A. (LA Arts photo)



A performance and portrait installation at LA Arts. (LA Arts photo)

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Development

NextGrid Cliffrose, LLC: Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact

AGENCY: Rural-Business Service (RBS), USDA

ACTION: Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact.

SUMMARY: The RBS has made a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) with respect to a request for possible financing assistance to NextGrid Cliffrose, LLC for the construction of the Lisbon Road Solar Project in Androscoggin County, Maine.

FURTHER INFORMATION: To obtain copies of the EA and FONSI, or for further information, contact: Brian Wilson, P.E., Business & Cooperative Programs Director, USDA Rural Development, 967 Illinois Avenue, Suite 4, Bangor, Maine 04401-2767, 207-990-9125, brian.wilson@usda.gov. The EA and FONSI are also available for public review at 967 Illinois Avenue, Suite 4, Bangor, Maine 04401-2767, 207-990-9125.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The proposed project consists of construction of a 2.49-mw solar farm on an approximately 13-acre site which contains cleared and forested areas. Approximately 10 acres of the project site would be disturbed as a result of the construction activities associated with this project. The Proposed Project Area would be located on the north side of Lisbon Road, near the intersection of Lisbon Road and South Lisbon Road in the city of Lewiston, Androscoggin County, Maine. The Proposed Project would interconnect to the Central Maine Power (CMP) pre-existing electrical distribution system. The power generated from the facility would be sold to CMP through a long-term Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). The Proposed Project would be accessed from Lisbon Road. An interior road would be constructed inside the perimeter and is anticipated to be flat and would match existing grades to minimize earth work. The Proposed Project Area would be secured by a security fence with standard gates for emergency and maintenance vehicle access. Alternatives considered by RBS and NextGrid Cliffrose, LLC include: No action; under the Action Alternative, RBS would consider financing the proposed Project. The alternatives are discussed in the Lisbon Road Solar EA. The RBS has reviewed and approved the EA for the proposed project.

The availability of the EA for public review was announced via notice in the following newspaper(s): The Twin City Times, Androscoggin County, Maine on July 1, 2021, and July 8, 2021. A 14-day comment period was announced in the newspaper notice(s). The EA was also available for public review at the USDA Rural Development office as well as NextGrid Cliffrose, LLC offices. No comments were received.

Based on its EA, commitments made by NextGrid Cliffrose, LLC, and public comments received, RBS has concluded that the project would have no significant impact (or no impacts) to water quality, floodplains, land use, aesthetics, transportation, or human health and safety.

RBS has assessed the environmental impacts of this proposal and determined that the location of the Lisbon Road Solar Project will convert approximately 1,682 ft2 of permanent wetland fill through grubbing for the construction of security fencing and the access road. Additionally, there will be approximately 2,261 ft2 of scrub shrub wetland conversion to wet meadow wetlands through vegetation clearing for panel shade reduction. Erosion and sedimentation controls will be installed prior to construction and maintained through project completion. It has been determined that there is no practicable alternative to avoiding this conversion of effect and that there is a significant need for the project. The basis of this determination is the lack of suitable alternative project areas, the mitigation efforted determined by the landowner as well as NextGrid Cliffrose, LLC, and the regional need for an affordable, reliable, and consistent supply of renewable electric power at competitive rates. No public comments were received regarding the conversion of wetlands.

The proposed project will have no adverse effect on resources listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Agency has also concluded that the proposed project is not likely to affect federally listed threatened and endangered species or designated critical habitat thereof. The proposed project would not disproportionately affect minority and/or low-income populations.

No other potential significant impacts resulting from the proposed project have been identified. Therefore, RBS has determined that this FONSI fulfills its obligations under the National Environmental Policy Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR §§ 1500- 1508), and USDA Rural Development's Environmental Policies and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970) for its action related to the project.

RBS is satisfied that the environmental impacts of the proposed project have been adequately addressed. RBS's federal action would not result in significant impacts to the quality of the human environment, and as such it will not prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for its action related to the proposed project.

Dated: July 29, 2021

Out and About

Johnny and the Rock-its! at Schooner Estates



Carl Perry on drums, Marcel Gagne on bass guitar and vocals, and John Rice on guitar and vocals play non-stop for Schooner tenants who are ardent fans of the Rock-its! (Rachel Morin photo)

By Rachel Morin

AUBURN - Johnny and the Rock-its! played to a huge crowd in the Village Green at Schooner Estates Senior Living Community in Auburn in mid-July.

Many in the audience knew the Band from previous performances, and many knew the leader, not as Johnny, the fast-playing guitarist and singer, but as Schooner’s own Director of Operations.

John was garbed in a black outfit with red accents and wore a black hat to complete his Rock-its! persona.

Well, I was taken aback!

John was good, and, truth be told, he was REALLY good! John (or is it Johnny?) played that guitar like a pro and his singing voice was great.

I settled back in my chair and enjoyed a wonderful afternoon listening to the Rock-its! as they played one popular song after another to the delight of the audience who kept time to the music, tapping their feet and swaying in

their seats.

Several women couldn’t sit still and gave their own dance interpretation “on stage” for the audience. The Rock-its! also had lots of vocals along with their rollicking music. All of this brought rounds of applause from a delighted audience.

The trio continued playing one rousing selection after another without stopping and kept our feet tapping to the music. John Rice on guitar and vocals, Marcel Gagne on bass guitar and vocals, with Carl Perry on drums. The afternoon passed too quickly and soon it was time to depart with requests for them to return soon.

The next day at breaktime, John Rice came by our table where I sat with Beverley Heath and Georgette Morin enjoying our slices of blueberry cake. He thanked us for coming to see Johnny and the Rock-its!

And I couldn’t help but say, “John, I saw a different side of you yesterday” and a little awe had crept into my voice. He

laughed and said “I will tell you how I and the Rock-its! came to be one day.”

Little did John and I know the opportunity would come the very next day, quite by happenstance! We found an hour where we sat down and John told me the interesting and inspiring story of how the band came to be. And here is John’s story, word for word, within quotes and separated in paragraphs for easier reading.

“The band formed a little over three years ago when Marcel and I started talking about music at an LA Metro Chamber event. Marcel learned that I had just bought my dream guitar and knew that I performed periodically for the tenants at Schooner.”

“Being a music enthusiast and a musician who had performed for many years, Marcel suggested that maybe we could try getting together and he could join me in entertaining the Schooner tenants. I immediately took him up on it and we set a rehearsal date.”

“Marcel and I start-

ed playing and we really clicked together. By the end of the night I was pretty excited and thought ‘how great it would be if I could get my friend Carl to join us on drums’.

“Carl and I had played together in the past and I knew his playing and personality was just what we needed. By the next week we three were officially a group.”

“We love to get together to rehearse and play shows. We do it because we enjoy the comradery music creates with fellow musicians and as a way to make a difference in our elders’ lives by sharing our joy.”

“We don’t accept money for our shows but we get paid with smiles! Last summer we toured several senior living homes. We really felt like we were on a mission. Ev-

eryone was in a lock-down status and they needed something fun to do. Every show was outside. People were spread out across courtyards and parking lots. It’s a summer we will not forget!”

John ended his story with “This year we have already booked several shows in our “Rock-its!

Senior Smiles Tour 2021” and we look forward to earning a lot more smiles!”

I came away from John’s story of the Rock-its! beginning, with a new respect for John and his band comrades and their mission of caring for the seniors in their lives.

Music and Smiles are universal languages!



Marcel Gagne gives his all in “Heartbreak Hotel”. (Rachel Morin photo)



Johnny and the Rock-its! warm up before the audience arrives. Marcel Gagne on bass guitar and vocals, Carl Perry on drums, and John Rice on guitar and vocals. (Rachel Morin photo)



Dell Hayes and Beverley Heath attend every musical event held at Schooner. (Rachel Morin photo)



Ron Frizzel with friends Claudette and Gerry Martel were really enjoying the Rock-its! Ron is the former owner of WLAM radio in Lewiston among several other radio stations he owned. He lives in Florida, but is currently renting in Auburn. Ron sets up and coordinates all the music and announcements for the Schooner Estates TV channel 1390 shown throughout the Schooner campus. (Rachel Morin photo)



Rock-its! fans enjoy a recent show at Schooner Estates in Auburn. (Rachel Morin photo)

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EVERY TUESDAY
10:30-11:15 a.m.
LEWISTON – Lewiston Public Library – Virtual Preschool Babytime & Storytime. Children 0-5 are welcome to join the fun on Zoom as Ms. Jackie uses interactive songs and stories to introduce children to the world of books, learning, and the library. Call 207-513-3133 for details and registration.

1ST AND 3RD TUESDAYS
11:30 a.m.
LEWISTON – Lewiston Public Library – Virtual Book Chat. Join LPL staff via Facebook Live for a conversation about what we’re reading. Make suggestions, share your thoughts, find resources, and get personalized recommendations from our librarians!

FRIDAY
July 30
10:30 a.m.-11:15 a.m.
GORHAM – Fraizer Preserve Trailhead – Scavenger Hunt. Join Mr. Jeff for Nature Walks throughout the summer. He will be leading these programs in different parks throughout Greater Gorham. Each one will begin at 10:30 a.m. We plan on spending 45 minutes per excursion. All ages.
Join Mr. Jeff at the Fraizer Preserve Trailhead by the High School athletic fields. We will walk up and down the trail to hunt for different colors, shapes, trees, textures, and more!
Rain date: Aug. 6-10:30 a.m.
5-6 p.m.
LEWISTON – “I Wish My Teacher Knew” Art Walk Reception LIVE and in-person at Lewiston Public Library, Friday, July 30 from 5-6 p.m. From a COVID school

Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

year, Lewiston High School’s Art Department presents “I Wish My Teacher Knew,” a collection of digitally created and shared art work, stories, poems, and collages created by our local students.

SATURDAY
July 31
10:30 a.m.
LEWISTON – Judy Pancoast LIVE and in-person in Kennedy Park – No reservations required. In case of rain, program will be streamed LIVE on Facebook from the library.

MONDAY
Aug. 2
9:30-9:50 a.m.
GORHAM – Babies on the Lawn – Baxter Memorial Library. Bring your baby and a blanket to join us for an interactive, socially distanced, outdoor lap-sit program. Ms. Dani will present stories, songs, rhymes and fun for babies 0- 18 months and their caregivers. Masks will only be required when physical distancing is not possible.
Program will be canceled in the event of inclement weather.
10 a.m.-10:30 a.m.
GORHAM – Toddlers on the Lawn – Baxter Memorial Library. Join Ms. Dani on the lawn as she uses stories, music, and movement to present and enhance early literacy skills and foster a love of reading. Mask will only be required when physical distancing is not possible. Ages 18 months to 3 years.
Program will be canceled in the event of inclement weather.
5:30 p.m.

AUBURN – City Council workshop and meeting.
6:30 p.m.
POLAND – At Poland Spring Resort. The Poland Spring Preservation Society presents the Sunset Series of concerts. This week: Sruli Dresdner.
7 p.m.
GORHAM – Planning Board meeting.

TUESDAY
Aug. 3
10 a.m.-10:45 a.m.
GORHAM – Zentangle – Baxter Memorial Library. Join Ms. Becky for Zentangle on the lawn. Zentangle is an easy-to-learn, relaxing, and fun way to create beautiful images by drawing structured patterns. All ages.
Raindate: Aug. 4 – 10 a.m.
5:30 p.m.
AUBURN – Age-Friendly Community Committee meeting.
5:30-6:30 p.m.
LEWISTON – Nature’s Night-shift with The Center for Wildlife VIRTUAL On Zoom and Lives-treamed to Facebook. Learn about creatures of the night from the Center for Wildlife, a wildlife rescue and rehabilitation center located in Cape Neddick, ME. Using live animals, the Center for Wildlife will answer many of our questions about how these animals survive in the nighttime. Gather your friends and family around to get up close with their live non-releasable animal ambassadors and their fascinating nocturnal adaptations. For more information, please contact the Reference

Desk at 207-513-3135 or at LPLReference@LewistonMaine.gov
6 p.m.
LEWISTON – City Council meeting, at City Hall, 27 Pine Street, Lewiston 1st Floor in the City Council Chambers. This Meeting and Workshop will be broadcast LIVE over Spectrum Cable TV Government Access Channel 7, streamed LIVE through the Great Falls Television web site, and streamed LIVE through the city’s YouTube channel <http://www.lewistonmaine.gov/YouTube>. Archived copies of this meeting will be available immediately after broadcast on the City YouTube Channel and within a day or two after broadcast, for viewing for up to 60 days, at the Great Falls Television web site.
6:30 p.m.
GORHAM – Regular Town Council meeting.
WEDNESDAY
Aug. 4
4:30 p.m.
LEWISTON – From Lewiston Public Library – An ongoing, online game night. Try a little of everything as we test out a sampling of different games throughout the summer, including Among Us, Jackbox Games, and more. Hop on Discord for a new multiplayer game every other week, June through August.
THURSDAY
Aug. 5
10:30 a.m.-Noon
GORHAM – Art in the Park – Baxter Memorial Library. Art in the park is an opportunity to paint outside on the lawn. We provide paint, brushes, and paper; you supply the imagination. Bring your lunch to eat while your creation dries. This is a popular family activity. During outdoor program-

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ming, masks will only be required when physical distancing is not possible. All ages
Program will be canceled in the event of inclement weather.
4 p.m.
AUBURN – Cable TV Advisory Board meeting.
5:30 p.m.
AUBURN – Auburn-Lewiston Airport Board meeting.
FRIDAY
Aug. 6
8 p.m.
LEWISTON – Stargazing in Kennedy Park LIVE and in-person – No reservations required. In case of rain, program will be streamed LIVE on Facebook from the library.
MONDAY
Aug. 9
9:30-9:50 a.m.
GORHAM – Babies on the Lawn – Baxter Memorial Library. Bring your baby and a blanket to join us for an interactive, socially distanced, outdoor lap-sit program. Ms. Dani will present stories, songs, rhymes and fun for babies 0- 18 months and their caregivers. Masks will only be required when physical distancing is not possible.
Program will be canceled in the event of inclement weather.

Chef
Continued from page 1
healthcare/medical and residential space. The project is being built around a 400’-wide natural stone quarry that is currently 300’ deep and naturally filled with water. Rock Row is expected to attract more than six million visitors a year when complete.
Rock Row’s storied past began in 1942, when Blue Rock Industries purchased a gravel pit located on the site of today’s quarry.
Announced Rock Row tenants include an 80,000 sq. ft. state-of-the-art Market Basket supermarket (open), Firehouse Subs, Big Fin Poke, The Paper Store (open), Chase, Chick-fil-A, 122-room boutique Element Hotel by Westin, REI, Starbucks, LIVE NATION Maine Savings Pavilion (open) and other retail, dining, entertainment and office tenants in the second largest retail and mixed-use development in New England.
A medical and research campus, anchored by renowned New England Cancer Specialists/Dana Farber Cancer Institute, is scheduled to open in late 2023.
Waterstone Properties purchased the quarry site in 2017. The project is the first of its kind in the state.

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uments, Admission to New Bible Museum, Tram ride through Arlington National Cemetery, Admission to George Washington's Mount Vernon and more.

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