



TWIN CITY TIMES

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\$273 Million in Unclaimed Property That Could Belong to You

Maine Treasurer, Henry E.M. Beck wants to remind Mainers that the Office of the State Treasurer is holding hundreds of millions of dollars in unclaimed property that may belong to you. Unclaimed property consists of money and other financial assets that are considered lost or abandoned when an owner cannot be located after a specified period of inactivity. This includes items such as bank accounts, uncashed checks, life insurance policies, unpaid wages, stocks and dividends, refunds, and safe deposit box contents. Unclaimed property does not include real estate, animals or vehicles. Millions of dollars are turned over annually to the state of Maine by entities who cannot locate the owners. There is no fee charged to process your unclaimed property claim.

The total unclaimed funds in Maine 1979-2021 are \$274.4 million as of June 30. The total number of accounts available is over 4.0 million. Cash that has been received for FY21 7/1/20-6/30/21 was \$31.4 million. The number of claims paid for FY21 7/1/20-6/30/21 was 28,601 claims: \$16.7 million. The average claim amount was \$585.00. The largest personal claim paid for year 2021 for July 1, 2020 to June 30 2021 was \$377,400.00. Just go to www.maineunclaimedproperty.gov and search by your name.

The Office of the Treasurer of State is established in Article V, Part Third of the Constitution of the State of Maine. The core duties of the Treasurer's Office are debt management, cash management, trust fund administration and unclaimed property administration. Other major tasks assigned to the Treasurer are directorships on many of Maine's quasi-governmental debt issuing agencies and distributions under the Municipal Revenue Sharing Program.

Former Gov. LePage and Ann Ring the Bell for Those in Need in L/A



Former Gov. Paul LePage rang the bell with former First Lady, Ann LePage for Salvation Army donations outside Walmart in Auburn. Lillian Baker from Twin City Times holds TCT Mascot, Nacho Steele, with Maine's former Governor Paul LePage, Maine's former First Lady, Ann LePage and Twin City Times publisher, Laurie Steele.

Last Friday, former Gov. LePage rang the bell with First Lady Ann LePage outside Walmart in Auburn as they greeted shoppers, encouraging donations to the Salvation Army. They later went to Hope Haven Gospel Mission in Lewiston, donating items and greeting others at the homeless shelter that provides meals to the local people and their families.

As a homeless kid living on the streets of Lewiston, LePage never imag-

ined he would one day make it to the Blaine House and become a two-term Governor of Maine. Paul LePage's life story is an example of overcoming life's challenges. Paul survived domestic violence and homelessness; he has long encouraged giving back with annual Blaine House holiday food drives and visiting shelters.

The LePages encourage the public to show their support by dropping off items at the Hope Haven Mission. The mission

has reported a need for paper products including sturdy paper plates, cups as well as food containers. The mission is also in need of canned food and boxed food. They will also take financial donations on site. During recent weeks the mission has housed up to 16 homeless men and 12 homeless women on separate dorm floors. In addition to these guests, they also provide meals to area people and families at their facility.

WinterKids Announces Maine Schools Competing in the Fifth Annual WinterKids Winter Games in 2022

The 5th annual WinterKids Winter Games begins in the new year, with 22 schools competing statewide to win a total of \$50,000 for their schools. The Winter Games is a four-week series of challenges in outdoor physical activity, nutrition,

family engagement and winter carnival starting January 17th, 2022 and ending on February 11th, 2022. This is also an Olympic Winter Games year. The first annual WinterKids Winter Games began in conjunction with the 2018 Olympic Winter Games.

The winning school will receive \$10,000, second place will receive \$7,500 and third place will receive \$5,000 in school-wide prize ceremonies. All competitive schools will receive a cash prize based on how they finish.

During the last school year, WinterKids offered an adapted, play-along version of the Winter Games to accommodate remote and hybrid learners. This model was so popular, the organization is offering it again this year. Altogether, 4,000 children and 340 teachers will participate in the competitive track of the Winter Games for a chance to win cash, while an additional 6,000 students and 100 teachers will play along and receive incentives and a chance to win weekly prizes.

"We are thrilled to offer a fun, active way to engage all kids in outdoor learning throughout the winter," said Julie Mulhern, WinterKids Executive Director. "This year, the Winter Games is focused on the Olympic Winter Games within the

context of celebrating winter through outdoor physical activity, nutrition, family engagement and winter carnivals," said Mulhern.

Embracing outdoor learning helps to counteract the negative effects of excessive screen time, particularly for those in elementary school. WinterKids provides resources for both teachers and parents to get their kids outside and active. There is also a WinterKids Winter Games Facebook group for resource sharing and downloadable activities on the organization's website at www.winterkids.org.

Let the Games begin!
WinterKids is the nonprofit organization that helps children develop healthy lifelong habits through education and fun, outdoor winter activity. The organization delivers innovative outdoor programs for families, schools and communities. WinterKids' Major Community Sponsor is L.L.Bean. WinterKids' Supporting Sponsors are Agren, CMP, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, WEX, and WMTW 8 and The CW. The WinterKids Winter Games are made possible with support from Hanaford Snack Pals, Backyard Farms, Aroma Joe's, Subway, MMG Insurance, and Kittery Trading Post. Learn more at WinterKids.org

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Collins Call to Reopen the Canadian Border

By: Sen. Susan M. Collins

At long last, the U.S.-Canada land border reopened November 8th for fully vaccinated Canadians. For many Maine families and small businesses, this day was long awaited.

The United States and our ally Canada have a long history of cooperation, which is fortunate given that our two countries share the longest international border in the world. This relationship is especially important to Maine, where our Atlantic Canada neighbors often are friends and family. In addition, residents on both sides of the border regularly need to cross to reach stores, medical care, churches, and oth-

er essential services.

These personal, social, and economic connections were threatened by ongoing and unjustified restrictions on land travel to the U.S. from Canada. In March 2020, during the early days of the pandemic, the Department of Homeland Security imposed a temporary limit on Canadians entering the United States at land ports of entry for any reason other than "essential travel." That month, bans on air travel from certain foreign countries were also put in place.

I heard from many Mainers about the harm that the extended closure of America's land border had on their families, such as a Canadian grandmother

who was not able to attend two weddings for her grandchildren and another Canadian woman who was not able to visit her disabled brother in Maine. In addition, Maine small business owners, particularly in border communities, told me that they were losing significant revenue without their Canadian customers. Our hospitality businesses also experienced losses due to the absence of Canadian tourists.

I repeatedly pushed our government to adjust or reevaluate restrictions on travel across the U.S.-Canada border. In May, I participated in a call with U.S. Senators and Canadian members of Parliament to discuss the importance of

reopening the border. In July, I joined the rest of the Maine Delegation in urging Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas to take steps to allow fully-vaccinated Canadians to cross the U.S.-Canada border for business or leisure given current health conditions.

In September, the Biden Administration announced that fully vaccinated travelers who tested negative for COVID-19 would be able to enter the U.S. via air travel. Inexplicably, however, the ban for travelers entering the United States for "non-essential" purposes via land was left in place.

It simply made no sense to allow vaccinated

air travelers to come to the U.S. but not allow vaccinated Canadians to drive across the northern border. It was baffling that vaccinated Canadians could enter the U.S. by air but not by land.

This decision was also unneighborly since Canada, which has a high rate of vaccinations, began allowing U.S. citizens and permanent residents to enter their country for non-essential purposes, including tourism, in August.

After the Administration's announcement, I joined a coalition of Senators from northern border states calling on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to provide medical justification

for the continued ban on most travelers entering the country via land. We emphasized that we support efforts to curb the transmission of COVID-19, but we shared the concerns of our constituents and communities along the U.S.-Canada border who were being harmed by the restriction of non-essential travel at land border crossings.

Following this bipartisan advocacy, the Administration finally reopened the U.S.-Canada land border. This long-overdue action will help to reunite tight-knit border communities and provide a boost to Maine small businesses that suffered significant revenue losses without Canadian customers.

Most Don't Know About Lifesaving Lung Cancer Screening

American Lung Association reveals new data; Highlights local activities for Lung Cancer Awareness Month

Survey data just released shows that only 36% of people know that lung cancer screening is available and 28% know that lung cancer is the lead-

ing cancer killer of women and men. The American Lung Association's LUNG FORCE initiative released the 2021 Lung Health Barometer as it recognizes

the start of Lung Cancer Awareness Month.

"Here in Maine and across the nation, lung cancer is the leading cancer killer. It is estimated that in 2021, 1,530 people will be diagnosed with lung cancer and 840 will die from the disease," said Lance Boucher, assistant vice president of state public policy at the Lung Association in Maine. "However, there is hope. The five-year survival rate has increased 33% in the past 10 years thanks to advancements in treatment, research and lifesaving lung cancer screening."

The 2021 Lung Health Barometer surveyed 4,000 Americans nationwide about lung health and lung cancer. Some key findings show that 29% of Americans know that lung cancer is the leading cancer killer of women and men, which is an 8% increase

from the 2020 Lung Health Barometer. Only 10% of adults understand that lung cancer is among the most likely cancers to affect women, while 35% know that it is among those cancers most likely to affect men. Only 36% of respondents know that lung cancer screening is now available for early detection of the disease for those who are high risk.

Throughout Lung Cancer Awareness Month, the Lung Association will be sharing new resources, the State of Lung Cancer Report, inspiring patient stories and lifesaving lung cancer screening information. In addition, through the Lung Association's Lung Cancer Patient Meet-up on the Go program, the organization is offering several webinars and plans to share recordings of the webinars in November. Learn more at www.lung.org/patient-meetup.

This is the sixth year of the Lung Health Barometer, which is conducted by the Lung Association's

LUNG FORCE initiative. LUNG FORCE unites the nation to stand together for lung health and against lung cancer.

The American Lung Association is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease through education, advocacy and research. The work of the American Lung Association is focused on four strategic imperatives: to defeat lung cancer; to champion clean air for all; to improve the quality of life for those with lung disease and their families; and to create a tobacco-free future. For more information about the American Lung Association, a holder of the coveted 4-star rating from Charity Navigator and a Gold-Level GuideStar Member, or to support the work it does, call 1-800-LUNGUSA (1-800-586-4872) or visit: Lung.org.

LUNG FORCE is a national movement led by the American Lung Association to unite our nation in our efforts to defeat lung cancer, the #1 cancer killer of women and men. LUNG FORCE has three priorities: 1) Make lung cancer a cause that people care about – and act on; 2) Educate and empower patients and healthcare providers and 3) Raise critical funds for groundbreaking lung cancer research. The American Lung Association's LUNG FORCE is nationally presented by CVS Health. Find out more at LUNGFORCE.org.

Find out more at LUNGFORCE.org.

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces



Central Maine Det. 810 MCL & the Military Order of Devil Dogs Lobster Pound #119 held a raffle to benefit the Barbara Bush Children's Hospital. They were able to raise \$1750.00. Pictured left to right Joyce Richmond, Associate Marine; Meaghan McNamara, Philanthropy Specialist; & Paul St Pierre, Aide-de-Camp for Central Maine

Joanne Campbell Named EVP, Enterprise Risk Management and Chief Risk Officer at Camden National Bank

Camden, Maine, December 9, 2021 – Camden National Bank announced Joanne Campbell has been named Executive Vice President, Enterprise Risk Management and Chief Risk Officer for Camden National Bank. Her appointment represents the continued evolution of risk management at Camden National Bank and its commitment to mitigating and minimizing risks to the bank and its constituents. Campbell will oversee cyber and information security, physical security and fraud, compliance and Bank Secrecy Act responsibilities, audit, corporate governance and the bank's in-house counsel.



"Joanne has led our risk management efforts for several years, and naming her Chief Risk Officer reflects her commitment as well as superior performance in this important area," said Greg Dufour, President and CEO of Camden National Bank. "Risk management in financial institutions has exponentially changed over the past several years, and Joanne is a recognized leader in this area, both within our organization and the industry. We are fortunate to have her vast experience, leadership and expertise as we work toward achieving this key strategic objective."

Campbell, a Certified Regulatory Compliance Manager (CRCM), has

nearly 40 years of financial industry expertise, spanning executive reporting and information management programs. She is highly skilled in lending and credit risk management, audit oversight, regulatory compliance, and risk alignment. For the past 10 years, she served as EVP, Risk Management at Camden National Bank, to ensure risk associated with strategy, operations and compliance were adequately monitored and managed.

Campbell joined the Company in 1996 as Vice

President, Manager of Residential Real Estate. She was promoted to Senior Vice President, Compliance, Audit & CRA in 2002, and then to Senior Vice President, Risk Management in 2005 and to Executive Vice President in January 2011. Ms. Campbell currently serves as the Chair of the American Bankers Association Risk Management Conference Advisory Board. She received both her B.S. Business Administration degree and her M.S. in Business from Husson College.

Letter To The Editor

Maine's 126,842 military veterans and active-duty service members are at risk of being targeted by scammers. According to a new AARP report, veterans, military, and their families are nearly 40% more likely to lose money to scams and fraud than the civilian population. Additionally, four out of five military/veteran adults were targeted by scams directly related to their military service or the benefits they receive.

Scammers often use military jargon and specific government guidelines to craft an effective pitch to steal money from military members and veterans.

One in three military/veteran adults reported losing money to these types of service-related scams.

To make scams easier to spot, AARP's Fraud Watch Network recommends signing up for the National Do Not Call Registry and using a call-blocking service. Additional measures include: using strong and unique passwords for each online account; using two-factor authentication when available; and placing a free security freeze on credit reports at each of the three major credit bureaus. Also, veterans never have to pay for their service records or earned benefits—if told

otherwise, it's a scam.

There are resources out there to help: Operation Protect Veterans—a joint program of the AARP Fraud Watch Network and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service—helps Maine's veterans, service members and their families to protect against fraud. The Fraud Watch Network also offers biweekly fraud alerts and a free helpline (877-908-3360) through which veterans, military and the public can report suspected scams.

Phil Chin
AARP Maine Fraud Watch Volunteer
Falmouth

Senators Collins, King Announce \$4 Million to Bolster Health Services in Maine

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senators Susan Collins and Angus King announced that two organizations in the State of Maine have received a total of \$4,047,727 to strengthen health care services. This funding was awarded through the Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Health Center Cluster Program.

"Access to affordable care is key to protecting the

health and well-being of Mainers, particularly amid the ongoing pandemic," said Senators Collins and King in a joint statement. "We welcome this funding to support health centers in Lubec and Portland as they work to serve members of their communities. We will continue to advocate for necessary resources to help Mainers stay healthy through this public health emergency and be-

yond."

The funding was allocated as follows:

Lubec Regional Medical Center received \$1,176,208.

Portland Community Health Center received \$2,871,519.

The health centers

will use the funding to improve access to health care by building healthy communities, strengthening the health care workforce, and achieving health equity. The program targets the economic and medically vulnerable as well as the geographically isolated.

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Seniors Not Acting Their Age:

Caribou Mountain, a Hidden Gem



A group of hikers negotiate Mud Brook on Caribou Mountain

When people contemplate hiking in Maine, most don't consider Evans Notch, which is situated on the border between Maine and New Hampshire and out of the mountain mainstream. Evans Notch Road travels through the notch. Most of the peaks on the east side of Evans Notch Road are in Maine and part of the Caribou-Speckled Mountain Wilderness. One of the highest and most stimulating ascents in the wilderness is 2,850-foot Caribou Mountain. Two things make the climb particularly appealing: numerous challenging stream crossings and glorious

views from the rugged mountaintop.

Although a trail leads to the summit from the east, the preferred routes begin on Evans Notch Road and approach from the west. I usually enter Evans Notch Road from the north in Gilead. From there, the drive is about 3.5 miles south on a narrow twisting paved road past Hastings Campground to a parking area on the left. Beware, the road is closed in winter.

For many years, Caribou Mountain has been a popular Penobscot Paddle & Chowder Society fall hike, so it was no surprise when four retired Chow-

derheads enthusiastically signed on after I announced a club trip. The temperature was in the twenties, but skies were clear and sunny when we arrived at the trailhead early on a November morning. From the parking area, two footpaths lead to the summit: Caribou and Mud Brook Trails. Many people elect to complete a 6.6-mile loop hike and that was our choice.

Still recuperating from hip surgery, I suggested beginning on Mud Brook Trail which, based on my aging recollection, had steeper sections on the ascent while the remainder of Mud Brook and Caribou Trails offered a more gradual descent during the return. I surmised hiking in that counter-clockwise direction would be easier on my new relatively unproven left hip. Retirees understand the frequent maladies we older folks suffer, so my suggestion was readily adopted.

We encountered multiple stream crossings while hiking gradually uphill for about two miles along Mud Brook in a sparse predominantly hardwood forest. Angling northeast, the

path narrowed and steepened. Our pace slowed as we negotiated over or around several blowdowns and up precipitous rock formations. Shortly after entering a stunted conifer growth, Chowderheads persevered to an open cliff with marvelous views of the multiple peaks of Speckled Mountain and the expansive southern Evans Notch. Just beyond, the character of the path morphed into a continuum of exposed ledges leading steadily higher. Although some trail-finding difficulties were experienced, we arrived at the spectacular open summit just in time for lunch.

Our interlude on the summit was a remarkable alpine encounter. Temperatures had risen, winds were negligible, and skies were clear. We lingered for a long pleasurable respite while savoring a 360-degree panorama that included the towering peaks of the Presidential Range in nearby New Hampshire.

My memory failed me again. The gradient descending from the summit was steep and very wet. The footing was unsteady, requiring our intrepid band to slow the pace to ensure we were taking carefully selected steps. Mud Brook Trail lived up to its name.

A layer of snow covered the ground when we joined Caribou Trail junction. Puddles and patches of mud in a sea of fallen leaves forced us to carefully negotiate down the rocky passageway. The stream crossings were steeper and more treacherous than any experienced on Mud Brook Trail.

After one hazardous crossing, I mistakenly climbed high in a stand of alders on a slippery



Hikers climb one of several steep ledges on Caribou Mountain



Climbers relax on the summit of Caribou Mountain

snow-covered embankment. While struggling to retain my balance, the suspect hip gave out. Much to the chagrin of my companions, I completed a somersault down to the path. Nothing was hurt but my pride. I thought my performance warranted at least a "9" for technique. Hard graders, the Chowderheads didn't concur.

More stream crossings were endured after connecting with Morrison Brook. One participant reminded us that a storm had washed out a bridge spanning a wide part of the stream farther down the trail. Since all of the waterways were running high, we worried that wading in deep water might be a disagreeable finish to our jour-

ney. Fortuitously, we were able to carefully negotiate from rock to rock without incident.

The remainder of the trek was easy hiking. That's what I'd recalled when advocating for our choice of direction. Seniors tend to remember the best and forget the worst.

The author of "The Great Mars Hill Bank Robbery" and "Mountains for Mortals - New England," Ron Chase resides in Topsham. His latest book, "MAINE AL FRESCO: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine" will soon be released by North Country Press. Visit his website at www.ronchase-outdoors.com or he can be reached at ronchaseoutdoors@comcast.net.

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Bangor City Council First in Maine to End Sales of Flavored Tobacco Products

BANGOR, ME - The American Lung Association applauds the Bangor City Council for the passage of an ordinance to end the sale of all flavored tobacco products in the city. Lance Boucher, assistant vice president for state public policy issued the following statement:

“By becoming the first municipality in Maine to end the sale of all fla-

vored tobacco products, the Bangor Council has shown that it prioritizes our kids’ health over tobacco industry profits.

“Last month new data from the 2021 National Youth Tobacco Survey (NYTS) data painted a grim picture of youth vaping in the U.S. showing kids are lured by flavors and are becoming regular users. The NYTS

data finds that more than two million middle and high school students were using e-cigarettes in 2021. The American Lung Association is particularly alarmed at the frequency of use by teens: 43.6% of high school students who use e-cigarettes are vaping regularly (20 or more of the past 30 days), and more than one in four (27.6%) are vaping daily. This reg-

ular use underscores how addicted youth have become to e-cigarettes.

“We applaud Bangor’s consideration of this important public health measure and urge the Maine Legislature to build on this momentum and pass a statewide measure when they reconvene next session to protect all Maine kids.”

The American Lung

Association is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease through education, advocacy and research. The work of the American Lung Association is focused on four strategic imperatives: to defeat lung cancer; to champion clean air for all; to improve the quality of life for those with

lung disease and their families; and to create a tobacco-free future. For more information about the American Lung Association, a holder of the coveted 4-star rating from Charity Navigator and a Gold-Level GuideStar Member, or to support the work it does, call 1-800-LUNGUSA (1-800-586-4872) or visit: Lung.org.

Maine Veterans Access the Economic Benefits of Hosting

As the US prepared to recognize Veterans Day, Airbnb is proud to play a role in the lives of veterans, active military members and military families in Maine and across the country who have sacrificed so much for our country—and who now open their doors to guests from around the world.

Recognizing the important role that hosting already plays in the lives of so many veterans and active service members, Airbnb is committed to creating new pathways for members of the military community to access the economic opportunity of home sharing. Airbnb is partnering with Boots2Roots—which supports transition planning for active duty military members in Maine—and Live and Work in Maine to assist Boots2Roots members across Vacationland in becoming Airbnb Hosts.

Airbnb and Boots2Roots will provide educational materials and training to recently transitioned former active duty military as they pursue hosting. Airbnb will also provide members who are exploring new work opportunities in Maine with gift cards to “try before they buy,” as

part of its larger efforts with Live and Work in Maine.

“When Airbnb approached us to offer vouchers we could use to help people give Maine a try as they consider relocating here, we thought immediately of our partners at Boots2Roots,” said Nate Wildes, Executive Director of Live and Work in Maine. “Live and Work in Maine has been working with Boots2Roots, whose efforts to attract transitioning military members, their families, as well as veterans to Maine aligns perfectly with our work to bring more professionals to the state, and we knew the vouchers from Airbnb would greatly benefit them and their constituents.”

Most Airbnb Hosts are everyday people sharing the homes in which they live. According to a survey of the global Airbnb Host community, one in five Hosts who are employed are either teachers or healthcare workers—and nearly 10 percent of US Hosts report that they are veterans or actively serving in the military.

As is the case for so many, hosting provides meaningful economic benefits to our community of

veteran and active military Hosts. New Hosts on Airbnb since the pandemic began have earned \$6 billion in income, with the typical Airbnb Host earning \$9,600. From January through September 2021, Hosts who have self-reported to be veterans or active service members in the US have earned more than \$40 million.

“We are grateful to Live and Work in Maine for connecting us with Airbnb, and for all their efforts to partner with us as we work to help veterans transition from the military to civilian life,” said Bill Benson, Executive Director of Boots2Roots. “Our goal is to attract veterans to Maine, and this program will make us more competitive, as it removes a barrier for out-of-state workers to come to Maine and look for a home, explore communities where they might want to settle and make important connections for themselves and their families.”

After 30 years in the Army, Boots2Roots members Bo and Kim Balcavage recently retired to their modern farmhouse in the centuries-old lobster fishing village of Cape Porpoise in Kennebunkport, Maine.

This past summer, they began to share their home on Airbnb.

“We built our home in a place that we believe is one of the prettiest places on earth. It’s quaint and quiet and nature surrounds us . . . and, it’s also a popular destination for tourists. After years of hosting soldiers and their families, we knew that we would enjoy sharing our home on Airbnb,” said Bo and Kim. “Besides creating an additional income stream, we really enjoy meeting new people and sharing what we know about Cape Porpoise with others. We love everything about the area we live -- from the his-

tory and the lobster fishing culture to the eateries and the nature trails. We hope to instill a desire in our guests to return to our area year after year.”

Along with creating new ways for current and former military members to leverage the opportunity of hosting, Airbnb is also working to empower the military community within our own workforce. This year, Airbnb will be partnering with Shift, a veteran-founded small business that helps past and present military members to embark on new job experiences at companies around the world. Airbnb will be working with Shift

to offer internships to their pipeline of diverse talent, enabling their candidates to discover careers and grow their skillset.

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Arts & Entertainment

Androscoggin Hires Ron Hood as Manager of Volunteer Resources

LEWISTON -- Androscoggin welcomes Ron Hood as their new Manager of Volunteer Resources, an exciting addition to their dedicated volunteer team. Hood most recently served as System Manager of Volunteer Services at Central Maine Healthcare where he was responsible for overseeing all volunteer programs operated at Central Maine Medical Center, Bridgton Hospital, Rumford Hospital and all affiliated CMH facilities.

Healthcare and Hospice's volunteer program is widely respected as one of the most extensive health care volunteer programs in Maine," said Kenneth Albert, R.N., Esq., President and CEO. "Ron's deep appreciation for the art and science of volunteerism -- what motivates volunteers -- and volunteer programming will help our Volunteer Resources Department continue to grow and positively impact our patients and their families, as well as the quality of ex-

perience for our employees who have very meaningful relationships with our volunteers." Hood earned his Bachelor of Arts in Communications from the University of Southern Maine. From there, Hood worked as an investigative paralegal and case manager at Hardy Wolf and Downing before joining Big Brothers Big Sisters as a mentor coordinator and program director. Prior to leading the Volunteer Services department at Central Maine



Pictured: Ron Hood

Healthcare, Hood held the position of Director of Owner Services at Owner Media Group, Inc. "I am looking forward to learning more about everything that makes Androscoggin special and showcasing our wonderful family of volunteers," said Hood. "It is my hope that every volunteer understands that their time, skills, and heart is appreciated by the staff, patients, and families that we serve. Together, we can bridge gaps and provide quality services to

benefit our neighbors." *Androscoggin Home Healthcare and Hospice is the largest, non-profit independent home health and hospice organization in the state. We focus on health -- not illness -- by making each individual's quality of life the best it can be. To learn more about Androscoggin, including employment and volunteer opportunities, please visit www.androscoggin.org or call the Development + Community Relations Office at 777.7740 ext. 1311.*

Maine Music Society Chorale's Triumphant Return to Singing



New Artistic Director, Dr. Richard Nickerson.

LEWISTON -- The Maine Music Society Chorale, directed by Dr. Richard Nickerson and accompanied by pianist Bridget Convey, presented its holiday concert, *A Season of Celebration*, at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, December 11th and at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 12th at the Gendron Franco Center in Lewiston. This was the first concert since the holiday performance of December 2019 -- two long years ago. The Chorale's triumphant return to singing will include many familiar works featuring Robert Shaw's *Many Moods of Christmas, Suite #3* and

Michael John Trotta's *Gloria*. Celebrating the holiday season with the MMS Chorale has become a beloved tradition in the L/A area. Its 48 volunteer singers from within and around the L/A community have enthusiastically rehearsed for weeks and made this a performance to remember. Send all items for What's Going On to the Editor. Deadline is Friday by five.

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McNamara and Partners Introduce New Farm to School Institute for Maine

A new Maine Farm to School Institute for rural middle and high schools will focus on promoting and sourcing local food and educating students about what they eat.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) awarded Jade McNamara, a University of Maine assistant professor of human nutrition, a nearly \$225,000 grant to lead the creation of the Maine Farm to School Institute in collaboration with University of Maine Cooperative Extension, the Maine Farm to School Network, Maine Agriculture in the Classroom, ReTreeUS and the Cumberland County Food Security Council. Over a dozen partnering organizations will support the project, including Falmouth Schools, FoodCorps Maine, Maine Department of Education Child Nutrition, Maine School Garden Network and more.

The institute will train school communities and other stakeholders to establish their own farm to school programs and explore approaches to promote student nutrition education programs, including school gardens and local food sourcing.

Compared to other states in New England, Maine ranks the highest in terms of childhood food insecurity, which was made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic, according to McNamara. Farm to school programs have helped schools across the country combat food insecurity and improve nutritional health and education among students. However, many in rural Maine cannot implement their own due to a lack of accessible training, McNamara says.

The nearest farm to school training facility, the Northeast Farm to School Institute, is located in Vermont and has capacity for

one Maine school to attend annually. This Maine institute will be based on this successful, evidence-based professional learning model developed by Vermont FEED (Food Education Every Day).

McNamara says by serving rural schools across Maine, thousands of students and families who are currently not reached will be impacted by system and program changes that can improve nutritional health and knowledge of agriculture and build partnerships with rural producers. She hopes the new institute will offer the professional learning, training and support secondary schools need to create their own farm to school initiatives.

"Involving middle and high school students is a unique approach we are using compared to other farm to school institutes," McNamara says. "By including the students, we aim to prioritize their

voice and help them develop farm to school programming that they would be excited about seeing at their school."

Co-investigators for the project include Viña Lindley, a food systems and 4-H youth development professional with University of Maine Cooperative Extension; Renee Page, a member of the Maine Farm to School Network (MFSN) leadership council; Richard Hodges, founder and program manager for ReTreeUS; and Willie Grenier, executive director of Maine Agriculture in the Classroom (MAITC).

The institute will launch with a three-day workshop in summer 2022 at the Ecology School in Saco. Teams representing six schools will create farm to school action plans and participate in hands-on learning. Workshop sessions will focus on local food procurement, food security, agriculture and

nutrition education, diversity, equity and inclusion, school gardens and other pertinent topics.

After completing the workshop, school teams will implement their action plans with technical assistance from Maine Farm to School Network leaders. They also will receive toolkits and funding for their efforts.

Part of the institute also involves teaching middle and high school students how they can implement farm to school-related service-learning opportunities that will broaden their peers' understanding of food, nutrition and agriculture.

College students trained by McNamara and her colleagues in UMaine Extension and 4-H will host a one-day workshop to mentor middle and school students on facilitating educational activities in their schools, such as building or expanding school gardens,

creating a school food pantry or backpack program, or offering fruit and vegetable taste tests to increase food consumption in their schools. They also will help the secondary school students develop social media plans to highlight their programming and provide additional training, including cooking demonstrations, food preservation, gardening and more.

College mentors will continue meeting with middle and high school students to assist them as they implement their service-learning initiatives in their schools.

"College students will gain important soft skills, such as leadership, problem-solving and advocacy, as they implement their classroom learning into community action goals," McNamara says.

For more information about the institute, contact McNamara at jade.mcnamara@maine.edu.

UMaine Going Viral with Lobster Video

The University of Maine is calling attention to the blue economy conversation and its goal of providing global marine leadership with a light-hearted drive to go viral with a YouTube video promoting the safe handling and consumption of lobster. The featured University of Maine Cooperative Extension video has helped more than 1.8 million viewers safely boil, steam, grill and enjoy Maine's most famous seafood.

Posted nearly a decade ago, the "Lobster Cooking and Eating" video is among the top 10 most-watched videos on the UMaine YouTube channel this month. Its 12,854 views in the last 30 days is outpacing other UMaine Extension fan favorites, such as "Getting Strawberry Plants Ready for Winter," "How Do I Prune Raspberries" and "Tick

Removal."

UMaine is releasing a new video that features UMaine Extension professor and food safety specialist Jason Bolton, one of the original stars of the "Lobster Cooking and Eating" video. The vintage, VHS-style video offers viewers a chance to win free Maine lobster for joining the blue economy conversation and helping UMaine push its video up over 2 million views.

"Online clout has never been a goal of mine, but as an educator, I am happy to help people safely prepare and enjoy lobster," says Bolton. "The blue economy is an important focus of conversation at UMaine and taking this video viral, in a good way, is a great way to invite people to take part."

UMaine President Joan Ferrini-Mundy welcomed more than 100 blue economy

researchers, policymakers and stakeholders to a virtual discussion last week, hosted by the UMaine MARINE Initiative. The event highlighted the impact of UMaine's 110 marine-oriented researchers, contributions to more than \$75 million in global research projects, and 32% enrollment growth in the UMaine School of Marine Sciences. The UMaine MARINE Initiative strives to make Maine a global leader as a marine state.

The free lobster contest includes a Facebook and Instagram promotion providing a chance to win free Maine lobster shipped anywhere in the United States, and a second prize, for students at the University of Maine and its coastal campus, the University of Maine at Machias, to enjoy a lobster dinner with Bolton in Orono.

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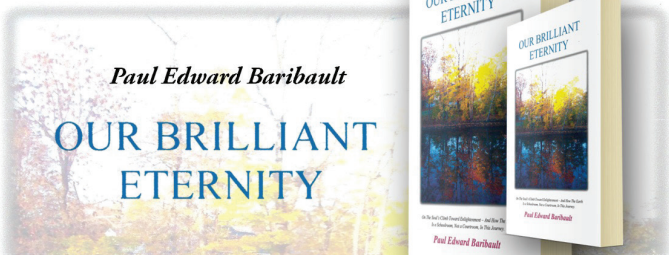
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Stewart and Thatcher Promoted at Geiger

LEWISTON - Geiger announces the promotion of Sam Stewart and Winter Thatcher.

Sam Stewart has recently been promoted to the Program Manager position in Corporate Programs. She began her career at Geiger in 2013 as a Mail/Sample Room Clerk, was promoted to Customer Relations Specialist in 2016, and promoted again in 2019 to Key

Customer Service Specialist. In her new role, her primary duty will be to serve as primary contact person for her assigned programs and to be responsible and accountable for their overall performance. Sam lives in Auburn, Maine with her dog Lucy.

Winter Thatcher has recently been promoted to the Key Account Manager position in PSG/Corporate Programs. She



Sam Stewart

began her career at Geiger



Winter Thatcher

in 2019 as a Key Customer

Specialist. In her new role, Winter will serve as primary contact person for key Geiger Global Accounts, being responsible and accountable for overall performance of those assigned programs. Winter has a Bachelor's degree in Psychology/Behavioral Health from the University of South Florida and lives in Langhorne, PA with her fiancé Marc, their three boys and their dog Kota.

Headquartered in Lewiston, Maine, Geiger is the largest family-owned and managed promotional products distributor in the world. Geiger operates from offices across the US and Europe and is affiliated with over 300 independent sales representatives. Geiger is a socially conscientious company, providing proactive, comprehensive marketing solutions to their clients.

Day's Jewelers receives "Best Places to Work in Maine" Award



WATERVILLE, ME - For an astounding seventh year, Day's Jewelers has been named one of the Best Places to Work in Maine. Best Places to Work is a prestigious and exceptional award that recognizes 100 excellent businesses each year who go above and beyond to give their employees the best possible work environment and experience.

Started in 2006, the Best Places to Work in

Maine program pays special attention to companies' workplace policies, practices, demographics, and overall workplace environment. With 75% of the program's evaluation process coming from the direct input from active employees, Day's Jewelers truly does stand out as an exceptional workplace.

Since 1914, Day's Jewelers has held the important core principle of

value. Not only does this family-owned business understand that the value of a piece of jewelry goes so much further than just the market price of the item, but they understand what it means to value their employees. With the opinions of the employees at the forefront of every decision made at Day's, employees can feel understood and heard in their concerns and needs.

From the company's earliest years, employees remarked at what a wonderful workplace environment it was. In fact, in the mid-1900s, Day's Jeweler's current owner's father was just a young

worker himself and, when discussing his father's involvement in the company, Jeff Corey (current owner of Day's) says, "Dad always talked about how much fun they [employees] had. He was just a stock boy at first, but he always had fun at work."

Now, over a century after the first Day's was opened, this goal of a fun, rewarding workplace experience remains one of the fundamental principles of the Day's Jewelers business model. Joseph Corey, recently hired as President of Day's, represents the 3rd generation of Corey leadership.

Day's Jewelers was

recognized in the October 18th edition of Mainebiz where the rankings were revealed for the first time, following a planned awards event. For more information on the Best Places to Work in Maine program, visit www.BestPlacesToWorkME.com or contact Jackie Miller at 717-323-5237. Day's Jewelers is a Maine based family business, founded by the Davidson brothers in Portland in 1914 and employs approximately 140 people in Maine & New Hampshire. Kathy and Jeff Corey, natives of Madawaska, Maine, purchased Day's from the original founders in 1988.

Day's Jewelers has eight physical store locations as well as a full e-commerce website. All Day's locations feature full-service departments and custom jewelry designers. Day's was selected as "Retailer of the Year" by Retail Association of Maine in 2016 and "Corporate Retailer of the Year" by the Woman's Jewelers Association of America in 2017 and Maine's Family Business of the Year in 2019. The company has been selected among "Best Places to Work In Maine" for the past 6 years. To learn more about Day's Jewelers visit www.daysjewelers.com.

Find Your Game at the Maine Golf Show

AUBURN, ME - The City of Auburn and Norway Savings Bank Arena are delighted to announce the Maine Golf Show held on Saturday, March 26, 2022 from 9:00AM to 6:00PM and Sunday, March 27, 2022 from 9:00AM to 4:00PM. The Show, promoted as "Maine's Premiere Golf Show," will provide a first-rate opportunity for exhibitors in the golf industry to introduce, educate, demonstrate new products, and sell product lines over the course of two days. Event organizers are proud to feature some of the biggest names in golf who have committed to attend the show - Titleist, Taylormade, Srixon/Cleveland, Mizuno, and Cobra Golf - as well as golf-related exhibits, displays and interactive elements. One major interactive element will be the indoor hitting area, where attendees will be able to speak directly with retailers, try products and attend demonstrations.

A one-day pass to the show is \$10 and weekend passes are available for \$15. Children under 8 are free. Senior and military

discounts are available, but only at the box office and at the door. Parking at Norway Savings Bank Arena is ample and is free all weekend.

Nick Glicos, Owner/PGA Director of Golf of Martindale Country Club in Auburn is a proud partner of the Maine Golf Show and has been instrumental in helping to establish

this annual event. "This show will bring vendors of equipment, technology, apparel, golf courses and other major golf-related companies together all in one location," said Glicos. "There will be specials and promotions only available during the weekend. The timing of the show will be a great lead into the golf season."

The Maine Golf Show will feature 50 plus vendor booths, the top manufacturers in the golf industry, a significant putting area and indoor hitting area with educational presentations from the Maine State Golf Association, golf instructors, professional club fitters and more.

"We are truly looking forward to introducing the Maine Golf Show to Auburn," said Marc Gosselin, Executive Director of Community Partnerships & Sports Tourism. "The Norway Savings Bank

Arena is an exceptional venue, and we are excited to team up with our community and national partners to generate another sport tourism initiative for the city of Auburn."

Phil Crowell, City Manager shared, "The City of Auburn is becoming a leader for sports tourism in Maine, and our golf show highlights Auburn's vibrant golf community! By bringing in world-renowned golf manufacturers, offering unbeatable values on products and services, not to mention

prizes, giveaways and fun, interactive elements, we have created a very special event, a destination for golf enthusiasts from across the state and beyond."

Organizations interested in vendor opportunities and individuals seeking event tickets should visit www.maine golfshow.com.

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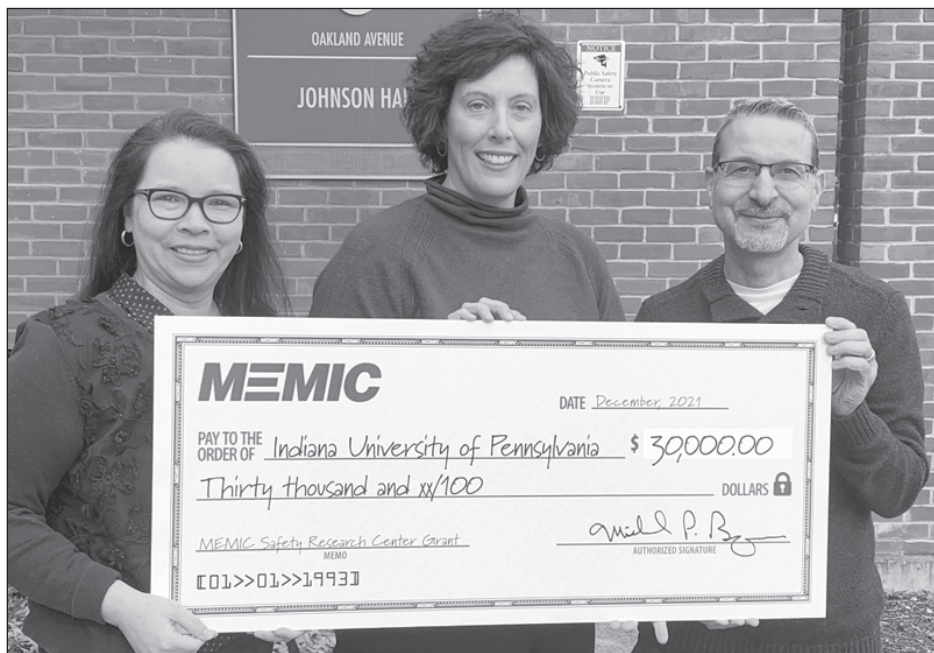
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MEMIC Grants Indiana University Of Pennsylvania \$30,000 To Help Reduce Workplace Slips, Trips, Falls



From left, Indiana University of Pennsylvania Research Team members Dr. Luz Stella Marin, Dr. Wanda Minnick, and Dr. Majed Zreiqat, of the IUP Department of Safety Sciences, will use a \$30,000 grant from The MEMIC Group to investigate ways to limit workplace slips, trips, and falls. The grant is the first administered by the MEMIC Safety Research Center, founded in February 2021 to advance the science of safety by leveraging academic research.

Portland, ME – The MEMIC Group, specialists in workers’ compensation insurance, has awarded \$30,000 to a faculty research team in Indiana University of Pennsylvania’s Department of Safety Sciences to investigate ways to limit workplace slips, trips, and falls.

Dr. Wanda Minnick will lead the research, along with two co-investigators, Dr. Luz Stella Marin and Dr. Majed Zreiqat. IUP graduate stu-

dent Cory Gaye and an undergraduate student also will be part of the research team.

The grant is the first administered by the MEMIC Safety Research Center, founded in February 2021 to advance the science of safety by leveraging academic research to effectively address new and common risks employees and employers face in the modern workplace.

In its proposal, IUP researchers noted injuries

caused by slips, trips, and falls were the second most common cause of workplace injury in 2020, accounting for 18.2 percent of all workplace injuries and illnesses with an estimated direct cost of nearly \$11 billion. The incidents are more prevalent in construction industries, which in 2019 had a higher total average rate of slip, trip, and fall injuries than the average in all industries based on U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data.

“Our mission is ‘making workers’ comp work better,’ so that means conducting research to understand and reduce the probability and frequency of occupational injuries and illnesses, including injuries from slips, trips, and falls that are preventable yet still stubbornly prevalent,” said Dr. Luis F. Pieretti, manager of industrial hygiene at The MEMIC Group and architect of the MEMIC Safety Research Center. “We are confident our first-ever MEMIC Safety Research Center grant will allow researchers at Indiana University of Pennsylvania to follow through on a number of interesting research questions that will help create actionable solutions to these preventable injuries.”

“We hypothesize construction workers constantly adjust the biomechanics of walking to compensate for the falling risks associated with various walking surfaces in a construction site,” the researchers wrote. “Thus, getting timely information of the balance disruption level will inform the implementation of temporary controls (e.g., walking speed reductions, traction mats, handrails, guidelines) to minimize the likelihood of STF-related injuries.”

Dr. Minnick and her team will simulate construction surfaces in the IUP Department of Safety Sciences Laboratory and will assess biomechanics parameters (e.g., speed, stability, motion, joint angles) using wearable devices and motion tracking system technology.

“We are very excited to work with The MEMIC Group and honored to have been selected for this grant,” Dr. Minnick said. “It’s a great opportunity to add to our department’s ongoing work in creating safe workplace environments while involving our students in hands-on research, and we are very grateful to The MEMIC Group for their commitment to this critical issue,” she said.

MEMIC Safety Research Center issued a nationwide call to higher education institutions in 2021 for grant applications to seek, understand, and reduce the probability of occupational injuries and

illnesses. The MEMIC Safety Research Center will repeat this call annually.

“We often use safety techniques designed in the 20th century to address risks created in the 21st century. Some work; some do not. This is where research comes in,” MEMIC Senior Vice President of Loss Control & Safety Services Karl Siegfried said. “We are pleased to be collaborating with IUP researchers to study slips and falls that create workplace injury, and we look forward to many more such collaborations with academia to make workplaces safer.”

Visit memic.com/ research for more information about The MEMIC Safety Research Center and to view requirements for future grant proposals.

The MEMIC Group includes MEMIC Indemnity Company, MEMIC Casualty Company, and parent company Maine Employers’ Mutual Insurance Company; all rated “A” (Excellent) by A.M. Best. The MEMIC Group holds licenses to write workers’ compensation across the entire country. The group insures and serves more than 20,000 employers and their estimated 300,000 employees with dedicated safety and injury management service teams from Maine to Florida.

IUP’s program in Safety, Health, and Environmental Applied Sciences is the program of choice for industry partnerships in the global safety, health, and environmental professions. It is consistently recognized as one of the


top programs in the nation, most recently ranked as third in the nation by *Universities.com*. The Department of Safety Sciences has grown to be the only institution in Pennsylvania to offer three degree programs in safety sciences; an ABET-accredited BS in Safety, Health, and Environmental Applied Sciences; an MS in Safety Sciences that is a qualified academic program per the Board of Certified Safety Professionals; and the nation’s only hybrid PhD in Safety Sciences (primarily distance learning classes supplemented by summer workshops). The program prepares students for work in a wide range of areas, including manufacturing, oil and gas, insurance, health-care, construction, distribution, government, transportation, and the service industry. The Department is home to the Pennsylvania Occupational Safety and Health Administration (PA/OSHA) Consultation Program, which provides a variety of trainings and informational offerings, as well as on-site evaluations.

The Department of Safety Sciences at IUP was formed in 1969 through a National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health grant. The purpose of the grant was to establish a baccalaureate program in safety management for academic preparation of students to become safety professionals in industry, government, and institutional settings. IUP’s program is believed to be one of the first safety programs in the nation and one of the only programs offering degrees through the doctoral level.



IUP graduate student Cory Gaye will be part of the research team, along with an IUP undergraduate student.

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Helping Maine Families Stay Warm This Winter

By: Sen. Susan M. Collins

A recent report that inflation has hit a 30-year high confirmed what the American people have been feeling in their wallets for months. The soaring cost of virtually everything, from gasoline to groceries, is a growing crisis that affects families across our nation.

One of the most alarming increases is in the cost of heating oil, which is up by approximately 60 percent nationally from this time last year. I have heard from many Mainers who are worried that they will not be able to afford to heat their homes given this increase. The average price of heating oil in Maine currently is \$3.16/gallon, compared to \$2.11/

gallon this time last year.

Unfortunately, the cost is expected to rise. The U.S. Energy Information Administration is predicting that families who heat primarily with propane, natural gas, or heating oil could spend significantly more on their heating costs this winter, including spending up to 94 percent more for households that use propane.

While the amount of heating oil a household uses varies greatly, a typical Maine household will spend nearly \$1,000 more this year on home heating oil. This is a 50 percent increase from last year. Maine is disproportionately affected by this rise in cost since 60 percent of Maine's households use

fuel oil as their primary energy source for home heating, compared to only four percent of households nationally.

I have long championed the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program that helps low-income families pay their energy bills. Maine was awarded more than \$35 million in LIHEAP funding in early November. Given the current state of energy markets and the lingering economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic – and in preparation for the cold weather season – I am pleased that this funding appropriated by Congress has been distributed.

Nationwide, an estimated 5.3 million house-

holds received assistance with heating and cooling costs through LIHEAP in 2020, including 33,000 households in Maine. This federal funding is particularly critical this year given that the average cost of home heating will be unaffordable for so many low-income American households.

In addition to supporting LIHEAP, I continue to advocate for improving energy efficiency to permanently reduce heating costs. Earlier this year, I introduced the bipartisan Home Energy Savings Act to encourage energy-efficient improvements for homes. This bill would help lower energy costs as well as carbon emissions by expanding and extend-

ing a tax credit.

As one of the 10 Senators who negotiated the bipartisan infrastructure package that was signed into law in November, I advocated for the inclusion of \$3.5 billion for the Weatherization Assistance Program. This bill funds energy efficiency upgrades for the homes of low-income families to help them reduce their energy bills. For every dollar invested by the Weatherization Assistance Program, \$4.50 is generated in combined energy savings and non-energy benefits such as job creation.

I have also taken other actions to address the skyrocketing cost of energy. These include leading a bipartisan letter to

President Biden urging his administration to increase domestic energy production as well as to release inventory from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve and the Northeast Home Heating Oil Reserve. Furthermore, I have opposed the administration's policies that have exacerbated energy supply issues, such as shutting down a key pipeline project to bring oil from Canada to the United States.

Families and seniors should not have to make the impossible choice between paying for heat and paying for food or medicine. I will continue to work to alleviate the serious hardships many Mainers may experience this winter.

St. Mary's Health System to Open New Behavioral Health Wing



The new behavioral health wing at St. Mary's Health System will be open to patients Wednesday, December 22.

LEWISTON, Maine – December 6, 2021 – St. Mary's Health System is pleased to announce the completion of the Carlton and Lucille Sedgeley Adult Behavioral Unit. Located on the 4th floor of the C-wing of St. Mary's Regional Medical Center, the new state-of-the-art

facility provides a safe, secure, and welcoming environment for individuals in need of psychiatric care. The opening of this unit is the culmination of a four-year capital project to improve the facilities at the hospital.

"St. Mary's has always provided exceptional

care to those in need, and our behavioral health patients are no exception," says Michael Kelley, MD, St. Mary's Chief Medical Officer for Behavioral Health. "We are very excited to be moving our Behavioral Health Unit into a beautiful healing space that matches the compas-

sion and respect that our amazing staff provides."

Prior to moving patients into the new space, St. Mary's hosted tours for donors, employees and members of the press.

"This project would not have been possible without the generous contributions of many," says Deb Anthoine, St. Mary's Executive Director of Philanthropy. "In addition to significant gifts from the community, we received donations from our own employees who care so much about the work we do here."

The new Behavioral Health wing will open to patients on Wednesday, December 22. For more information about this project, contact Deb Anthoine, Executive Director of Philanthropy at 207-329-4741 or by email at danthoine@covh.org.



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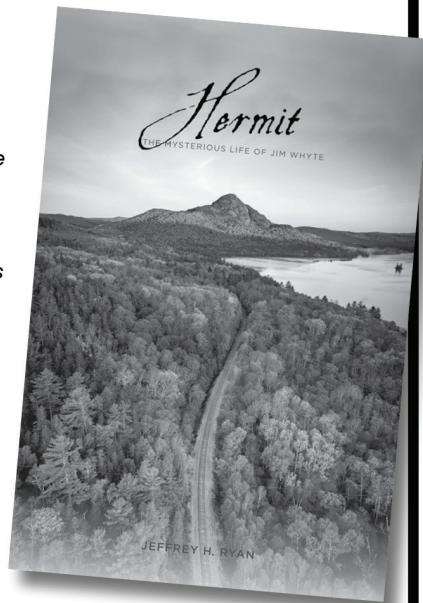
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— Bill Bushnell, Bushnell on Books

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— George Smith, Bangor Daily News

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Online Video Library Supporting Emotional Wellbeing of Educators

Schools need healthy and safe adults in order to support healthy and safe students. During these stressful times, our education workforce is working harder than ever to nurture and educate their students. They continue to be called on to re-invent and even defend their profession, addressing unfinished learning, new or increasing anxieties, and disrupted protocols on how schools and societies

should function. The school system acknowledges their workforce is short-staffed, therefore, doing more than is possible, while also trying to meet the needs of their families and themselves. They know staff, students and the families of students may also be more frustrated, exhausted or anxious. The community needs adults to take care of themselves and one another, and to take time to

attend to their physical and emotional wellbeing.

With educators' needs in mind, the Maine Department of Education is pleased to announce the development and release of SOS! Supporting our Staff (SOS), a library of online modules designed for our educator workforce here in Maine.

These free, online activities are designed to support educators in many different areas, from adult

emotional intelligence and prevention to classroom skills. The modules are available for use by anyone, including parents, caregivers, and educators. They are asynchronous and designed to be used with flexibility such as part of a professional development day, a team or staff meeting, or part of an individual self-care and professional development plan. The Maine Department of Education hopes

that these resources are a support for the educators who are doing everything they can to support students and their families.

Check out SOS by registering/logging into: sel4me.maine.gov.

The Maine Department of Education believes that together, it can be ensured that schools are places where physical health and emotional wellbeing are prioritized, creating an environment

where all students and adults can thrive.

For more information or support with the SOS modules, contact Kellie D. Bailey, Maine DOE Social Emotional Learning Specialist for the Maine Department of Education at Kellie.Bailey@maine.gov. For media inquiries, contact Kelli Deveaux, Maine Department of Education Director of Communication at kelli.deveaux@maine.gov.

MEMIC Announces \$17M Dividend

PORTLAND, ME – The Board of Directors of MEMIC has autho-

rized the distribution of a \$17 million dividend to more than 14,000 eligi-

ble employers. The 2021 MEMIC dividend brings the total amount of capital

and dividend declarations for Maine policyholders to \$316 million since 1998.

“This dividend for current Maine policyholders is just another way we fulfill our mission to make workers’ comp work better,” The MEMIC Group President and CEO Michael P. Bourque said. “It represents about 12 percent of the earned premium in 2018 and is the 10th consecutive year for a double-digit distribution.”

“Had Maine employers not been diligent in following state CDC guidance, this dividend might not have been as large. I truly applaud them and the state’s leadership in effectively communicating and taking difficult measures to keep us all as safe as possible during this historic pandemic,” Bourque said. “As a mutual insurance company owned and governed by our policyholders, we truly understand that we’re all in this together.”

The average dividend for Maine employers will be \$1,180 and more than two dozen policyholders will receive checks greater than \$40,000. Checks are expected to be mailed to eligible Maine employers in early November, Bourque said.

“What’s especially

will end up in the private, public and nonprofit sectors in all 16 counties,” he said. “Ultimately, that money is a reminder that safety really does pay dividends.”

The MEMIC dividend is not guaranteed as it is contingent upon safety results, effective injury management and efficient operations of the company, as well as investment and bond market performance. The company reviews these factors annually to determine if a dividend is appropriate.

MEMIC’s strong financial status was affirmed earlier in 2021 with an “A” (excellent) rating by industry analyst A.M. Best.

The MEMIC Group includes MEMIC Indemnity Company, MEMIC Casualty Company, and parent company Maine Employers’ Mutual Insurance Company; all rated “A” (Excellent) by A.M. Best. The MEMIC Group holds licenses to write workers’ compensation across the entire country. The group insures and serves more than 20,000 employers and their estimated 300,000 employees with dedicated safety and injury management service teams from Maine to Florida.

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**December Story
Adventures**

GORHAM -- Join Ms. Heidi and Mr. Jeff every Tuesday at 10 - 10:30a.m. as they lead families in activities on the lawn. Each week will be different and will include a book, a movement break, an activity, and fun! It may get cold and Maine weather is tough, but we are tougher! If we get extreme weather we will cancel. Just look on the BML Facebook page or call the

Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

library at 222-1190 to find out if the program will be held that day. Dress for adventure and warmth. Masks recommended when social distancing isn't possible.

Program is geared toward families and caregivers with children 2 through 5 years old.

Dec. 24
GORHAM – Municipal Center, Administrative Offices & Library closed in observance of Christmas

Dec. 31
GORHAM – Municipal Center, Administrative Offices & Library closed in observance of New Year's Day

Jan. 3
GORHAM – 7pm Planning Board Meeting Council Chambers

Jan. 4
GORHAM – 6:30pm Regular Town Council Meeting Council Chambers

Jan. 11
GORHAM – 6:30pm Joint Town Council & School Committee Workshop Conference Room A

Jan. 12
GORHAM – 7pm School Committee Meeting Council Chambers

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Maine Lobstermen's Association Announces Major Campaign to Save Industry



Onerous federal regulations threaten to sink lobster fishery.

New federal rules intended to protect the endangered North Atlantic right whale will effectively kill Maine's lobster industry yet fail to save the whale. The Maine Lobstermen's Association (MLA) says the threat is very real and urgent action is needed to prevent irreparable damage to one of Maine's most treasured industries.

"Maine's lobstering industry directly supports more than 10,000 jobs and is worth roughly a half billion dollars at the dock each year," said Patrice McCarron, Executive Director of the MLA. "Every Maine lobster boat is owned and operated by a local lobsterman and every one of those

dollars is spent in our local economy. Collectively, the lobster industry contributes \$2 billion annually to our state's economy. It is unthinkable to imagine what would happen to our state and coastal communities if federal regulations force these boats off the water and end our lobstering heritage."

Earlier this year, the National Marine Fisheries Services (NMFS) released a 10-year whale plan that requires the Maine lobster fishery to reduce risk to right whales by 98 percent. The MLA says that is an unachievable goal and that the lobster industry cannot survive, and the restrictions will not result

in saving right whales, as originally intended. Making matters worse, the government is moving the goal posts making the threat even more dire and giving the industry less time to fight back.

"This is not a choice between saving the right whale or saving the Maine lobster industry. We can do both," said Kristan Porter, a lobsterman from Cutler and president of the MLA. "Lobstermen have been honest brokers and stepped up every time the federal government has required new whale conservation measures because we care deeply about the livelihood of our fishery and the whales. This time, as we again find ourselves in the sights of the federal government, we foresee a lose-lose for our fishery and the whales. So, we have no choice but to fight back."

The MLA is executing a 4-pronged solution and today announced a three-year, \$10 million fundraising campaign to fight the onerous federal regulations threatening the future of

the industry. The solution begins with a lawsuit filed in September against the federal government to stop the 10-year whale plan that will destroy Maine's lobster industry. The MLA is working with scientists to ensure that any plan to save the right whale is using the most up-to-date, cutting edge science as its basis. The MLA is also engaging with lobstermen to continue efforts to develop innovative gear that not only protects right whales but also ensures the continuation of a successful Maine lobstering industry. The fourth part of the plan is to communicate with the public to be sure there is general awareness of the serious threat to the Maine lobster industry and the thousands of Maine small businesses that would be negatively affected or ruined by the federal regulations. As part of the campaign, the MLA established a website, SaveMaineLobstermen.org, which includes the proposed solution in greater detail, as well as opportunities to donate to

the cause or get involved.

"Lobstering is not just a job, it's a way of life," said Dustin Delano, a lobsterman from Friendship and vice president of the MLA. "We are looking at a situation where kids growing up on the coast of Maine will be told that there is no future for them in lobstering. What's that going to do to these towns and our state? We have always been willing to do what it takes to solve the problem, but our industry is sinking. We can't be expected to shoulder this burden alone—and I'm afraid if we don't fight now, we won't have a lobster fishery left."

Katie Werner, co-owner of Island Lobster Company on Peaks Island, urged businesses that rely on a strong lobster industry to step up and support MLA's campaign: "This isn't just a campaign to save Maine lobstermen, this is a vital step is saving our state's economy - not only my businesses but other businesses that survive on tourism. I'm chal-

lenging other businesses to step up and be part of this cause for the future of Maine."

One such business, Colby and Gale, an energy supplier in Damariscotta, has already pledged to help the Maine Lobstermen's Association accomplish its goal.

Matt Poole, president and CEO, says we are all in this fight together: "As Mainers, it can be easy to take the lobster, specifically the lobster industry, for granted," says Poole. "Most folks probably do not realize the seriousness of the threat the industry currently faces and the massive toll its loss would have on our economy and our state. Life in our small coastal towns is unimaginable without lobster. So many businesses that rely on a strong lobster industry would be negatively affected or, even worse, need to close. Just like the fishermen, most of the businesses that would feel the impact are small town, family owned and operated, just like mine."

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Veterans Targeted by Scams

Maine's 126,842 military veterans and active-duty service members are at risk of being targeted by scammers. According to a new AARP report, veterans, military, and their families are nearly 40% more likely to lose money to scams and fraud than the civilian population. Additionally, 4 out of 5 military/veteran adults were targeted by scams directly related to their military service or the benefits they receive.

"Our research stresses the need for Maine's veterans and their families to stay up-to-date on the latest scams and how to avoid them," said Jane Margesson, AARP Maine Communications Director. "AARP Maine continues to fight for those who proudly served our state by arming them with information and resources to avoid the financial and emotional impact of scams and fraud."

Scammers often use military jargon and specific government guidelines to craft an effective pitch to steal money from military

members and veterans. One in three military/veteran adults reported losing money to these types of service-related scams. Of those who lost money, the top scams reported include the following:

Benefit Buyouts: Turning over U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) pension and/or disability benefits for a supposed lump-sum payment that never materializes (47%).
Fraudulent records scam: Paying for updated personal military records (32%).
The fake charitable giving request: Donating to fake veteran charities (32%).

Other key findings include military/veteran adults reported losing more money than civilians on the grandparent-impostor scam (more than twice as often) and financial phishing schemes (nearly twice as often). Nearly half of military/veteran adults reported they are not using a robocall blocking service and over 1 in 4 have not registered their phone numbers on the National Do Not Call Registry. 81% of

military/veteran adults have not placed a security freeze on their credit report.

To make scams easier to spot, AARP's Fraud Watch Network recommends signing up for the National Do Not Call Registry and using a call-blocking service. Additional measures include using strong and unique passwords for each online account; using two-factor authentication when available; and placing a free security freeze on credit reports at each of the three major credit bureaus. Also, veterans never have to pay for their service records or earned benefits—if told otherwise, it's a scam.

Operation Protect Veterans—a joint program of the AARP Fraud Watch Network and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service—helps Maine's veterans, service members and their families to protect against fraud. The Fraud Watch Network also offers biweekly fraud alerts and a free helpline (877-908-3360) through which veterans, military, and the public can report suspected scams. The AARP Watchdog Alert Handbook: Veterans' Edition explains 10 ways that con artists target veterans. For more information and resources for veterans on the latest fraud and scams, visit www.aarp.org/veterans.

The survey was administered in August 2021 to a total of 1,660 people: 851 active or former U.S. military respondents and 809 non-military (civilian) adults ages 18 and older using NORC's AmeriSpeak Internet Panel. The margin of error is 4.40% at the 90% confidence level.



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