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Thursday, December 8, 2022 • FREE

Lewiston Students Create Ornaments for DC Christmas Tree

Augusta, ME (December 1, 2022)— Students at Robert V. Connors Elementary School in Lewiston created one-of-a-kind ornaments now adorning Maine's tree as part of the 2022 National Christmas Tree display on the Ellipse in President's Park outside of the White House.

Students and educators from Connors Elementary School's Civil Rights Team led the effort and designed ornaments featuring familiar Maine scenes including the outline of the state, moose, lobsters, and pine trees filled with messages celebrating the themes of belonging, inclusivity, and feeling welcome. They wanted to ensure that those who don't celebrate the holiday were also represented and highlight how Maine welcomes all.

"The students were really excited to be part of this, and we are really honored to have this opportunity," said Kelsey Boucher, an art teacher at Connors Elementary and the 2022 Androscoggin County teacher of the year. "Students were already working on a Day of Welcome project and wanted to make ornaments about what makes them feel welcome at school. They got creative by filling in outlines of iconic Maine shapes with diverse images and messages around belonging, inclusivity, and welcoming all."

Boucher joined her Civil Rights Team Co-Advisor Nesrene Griffin and Assistant Principal Travis Jalbert in Washington, D.C. today to represent Maine for the National Christmas Tree lighting this evening. The school will host a watch party for students, educators, and family members when the ceremony is aired on December 11.

The America Celebrates ornament program is an annual collaboration of the National Park Service, the U.S. Department of Education and the National Park Foundation (NPF). These ornaments adorn 58 smaller trees that surround the National Christmas Tree. The trees represent states, territories, and schools managed by the Bureau of Indian Education and the Department of Defense Education Activity. This year, more than 2,600 students participated in the America Celebrates ornament program.

UScellular Surprises Kaydenz Kitchen with Food Donation



Kevin Boilard from Kaydenz Kitchen, with UScellular's Jonathan Isacco, Dallas Phillips, and Andrea Tomer, and Brittany Carver from Airtime Cellular, a UScellular agent location. Photo by UScellular

LEWISTON, ME (December 2, 2022) – The holidays are about connecting with friends and family, and UScellular is nourishing these connections by enabling communities to share a meal with the ones they love.

In a surprise visit on December 2nd, UScellular donated food items to Kaydenz Kitchen to aid them in their mission of getting food to those in need. This donation will help stock their shelves at the food pantry

"Kaydenz Kitchen does so much for our community, so we wanted to fulfill their wish list and help them deliver the much-needed support they provide throughout the Lewiston area," said Tabatha McKay, area vice president/general manager at UScellular in New England. "Food has the power to connect people, and we believe every family deserves to come together, strengthen ties, and make memories this time of year."

In 2017, Kayden Boilard took notice of a great need in the Lewiston community and asked her parents if they could all find a way to help people get food that they desperately needed. She and her family started a small food pantry and Boilard would shop for food and deliver boxes to those in need. With her parents help, they have expanded and started a 501(c) (3) non-profit, Kaydenz Kitchen Food Pantry and operate out of 550 Lisbon Street in Lewiston.

In 2019, UScellular celebrated Kayden Boilard of Lewiston as one of the company's The Future of Good recipients. Through The Future of Good program, UScellular donated \$10,000 to youth for their inspirational acts of good in their communities. Last year during the holidays, UScellular reached out to Kaydenz Kitchen again, providing the organization with a\$500 gift card to support the organization's opera-

tional costs.

"Kayden is near and dear to our heart, she is an incredible young person making an impact on her community," adds McKay. "We are so happy to continue our support of her mission to bring food to those in need."

This holiday season, UScellular is providing food banks, pantries, and shelters with needed supplies and has a goal to support more than 135 organizations across the country. UScellular retail stores are also collecting donations for local food-focused non-profits. For more information, go to newsroom.uscellular.com/nourishing-connections.

Since 2009, UScellular has donated more than \$22.6 million along with countless experiences and technology items to nonprofit organizations across the country. For more information about the company's community involvement, go to newsroom. uscellular.com/community.



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Page 2 Thursday, December 8, 2022

Newsmakers, Names & Faces

UMaine Study: Difficulty in Addressing Student Mental Health

ORONO, ME (November 28, 2022) -- Educators in Maine's rural schools are struggling to meet the mental and emotional needs of their students due to a lack of resources, and institutional support, according to a new study from the University of Maine.

In education around the world, there is a tension between meeting institutional goals like fiscal efficiency, literacy and numeracy while also meeting the emotional needs of students. That tension can be heightened in rural communities due to fractured, distant social service networks and the declining economic well-being of many communities.

Even so, the need to address the emotional and mental needs of students in schools is greater than ever. In addition to adverse childhood experiences like neglect, abuse, mental illness, family issues and exposure to systemic adversity like poverty and racism, disruptions due to the COVID-19 pandemic have further exacerbated the need for trauma-informed

practices for students.

Biddle, Catharine associate professor of educational leadership at the University of Maine College of Education and Human Development, led a study analyzing focus group discussions with 110 rural Maine educators from 12 schools at various grade levels. Participants were asked questions about teacher-student relationships, the relationship between the school and the community, as well as strengths and challenges related to supporting student learning and healthy development.

Biddle framed her study through a lens of critical rural theory, which draws attention to the ways in which the purpose, activities and effects of education; the role of schools as institutions in a community; and the implicit assumptions in institutional and policy logics differ for nonurban areas. For example, professional norms and expectations within schools in rural areas may not be the same as those in cities; the diminished political economy of rural plac-



es may impact educational policy; and the teacher's themselves may have a different relationship to a rural community than they would in a city.

"Critical rural theory helps to highlight the ways in which our current educational system was not designed with rural schools in mind. Funding that relies on district capacity to write grants, narrowly defined credentials that ignore the many hats rural teachers must wear, and inadequate teacher support systems for those in our most remote schools are all examples of spatial inequities in education," Biddle says.

The teachers in the study described the increasing pressure on student achievement, dwindling financial resources within their districts and little institutional attention to the changing student needs around stress and mental health. Teachers

saw many ways in which stress directly interfered with their ability to address the curriculum, including rising student anxiety related to economic insecurity, such as hunger or transiency, or personal adversity such as parent death (often from substance use), removal from the home and placement with temporary caregivers or other family members.

The teachers also cited a lack of formal training in addressing these issues, and frequently worried that, in the absence of training, they were actually harming children through their lack of knowledge about childhood adversity.

To tackle these issues in light of the lack of institutional support, teachers described individual acts outside of their regular job descriptions, some that may even defy existing schools policies. Some of these actions includ-

ed small gestures, such as hugging students even in schools that had policies against such engagement, to significant forms of resistance, such as refusing to engage with mandated reporting systems or issues around documentation because they are seen as doing more harm than good.

"I think one of the most surprising findings was how conflicted teachers felt about mandated reporting," Biddle says. "Clearly, more research is needed here to understand why some rural educators may not want to report and how the dynamics of mandated reporting play out in small communities."

Addressing students needs was found to come often at a great emotional cost to teachers, contributing to more burnout in the profession, but also sometimes at a financial cost to teachers, as they discussed keeping supplies to meet students' basic needs in their classrooms, including clean clothing, snacks, toiletries and other necessities

The teachers in the study couldn't agree on

exactly what changes are needed to help them better address their students increased emotional needs, but their responses clustered around three key themes: adequate resources to achieve the high expectations laid out by the state; a broad base of community supports for families; and, finally, a model of teaching and learning that recognizes humanity.

Biddle hopes that the insights from this study may contribute to better designed policy to address both teacher burnout and childhood adversity in Maine's rural communities.

"Teachers were clear: school is about so much more than achievement for young people," Biddle says, "Children and youth need to feel that they are appreciated as people by the adults around them, that they need adequate mental health supports, and that our current staffing solutions are not meeting those needs."

The study was published in the journal The Rural Educator in Volume 43, Number 4, in 2022.

New England Sports Review with Karver Jordan

Patriots Fall in Close Battle with Rivals

(December 2, 2022) -- The Patriots fell to the Buffalo Bills Thursday night, December 1. Overall, this was an average game for the Patriots.

The offense from the Patriots would come out flat; there would be no momentum going into the game. 2nd-year quarter-back Mac Jones would go 22/36 for 195 yards with a touchdown pass, and no turnovers. Overall, this was an excellent game for

Jones, and this is something the Patriots need to build off for the future of the organization. The Patriots found a "Diamond in the rough" with their star rookie Marcus Jones. Jones would have the only touchdown for the Patriots on Thursday night.

What the Patriots' offense will have to improve is the play calling. The Patriots can move the ball at points during the game. The Patriots' offense

gets going and then stalls out. Another improvement needed is the offensive line. Mac Jones was getting tossed around like a rag doll.

Thursday night, the Patriots' defense would do an alright job but not great stopping the young quarterback Josh Allen. Allen would go 22/33 for 223 yards with two touchdown passes. Josh Allen would get strip sacked by the Patriots' Joshua Uche.

The Patriots, however, could not find a way to slow down Bills' rushing attack. Rookie James Cook of the Bills would have 14 carries for 64 yards. Devin Singletary, the other Bills' runningback, would have 13 carries for 51 yards with a touchdown.

What the Patriots' defense will need to improve is the tackling. The Patriots will need to get better at tackling if they want to push for a playoff spot.

Another improvement that needs to be made is overall better play calling on defense too.

Overall, the Patriots' performance was underwhelming. On December 12th, the Pats will visit the Arizona Cardinals.

Karver Jordan, class

Karver Jordan, class of 2024, is a sports writer for Freeport High School. Karver enjoys playing football and baseball, as well as hunting and spending time outside. Karver

loves writing about sports and is looking to pursue it as a career. Thanks for reading!

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Red Cross: Donations Help Most Vulnerable

PORTLAND, ME (November 28, 2022) — 2022 has been a year of crisis for families in Maine and around the world from extreme climate disasters to global emergencies like the conflict in Ukraine to the first-ever national American Red Cross blood crisis.

"Whether a crisis is felt by an entire community or a single person, it turns lives upside down — especially for the most vulnerable," Stephanie Couturier, CEO, American Red Cross Northern New England Region said. "This holiday season, join us to provide help and hope for people in need during future emergencies by making a financial donation or by giving blood or platelets.

On Giving Tuesday and during the holidays, visit redcross.org to make a financial donation or an appointment to give blood or platelets for patients in the U.S. Individuals can also register for volunteer opportunities in their area. Right now, there is a high priority need for volunteers to join our Maine Disaster Action Team to assist families after local emergencies like home fires, seasonal floods and damaging storms. We are



American Red Cross

also seeking dedicated volunteers to assist as Blood Donor Ambassadors at our mobile blood drives. Ambassadors register blood donors, maintain the canteen area and thank our donors for giving the gift

RESPONDING TO DISASTERS OF ALL SIZ-ES This year's extreme disasters in the U.S. are clear examples of the increasing frequency and intensity of the climate crisis. So far in 2022, 15 billion-dollar disasters have upended lives across the country — more than twice the number of billion-dollar disasters that struck annually two decades ago.

For these and tens of thousands of other disasters in Maine and across the country, Red Cross volunteers have worked 24/7 to provide shelter, food and care. In 2022, 50 Maine volunteers deployed to 91 natural disasters including Hurricane Ian.

In Maine, Red Cross volunteers have also provided relief and comfort after home fires and other local disasters. Since January, the Red Cross Home Fire Campaign, working with community partners, has installed 766 smoke alarms and helped make 256 Maine homes safer. Our goal is to help ensure no one faces a crisis of any size alone.

HELPING FAM-ILIES AFFECTED BY GLOBAL EMERGEN-CIES Internationally, the conflict in Ukraine has forced millions of people to flee for their lives. With such vast needs, the American Red Cross has provided financial donations and international crisis responders to support the global Red Cross network's response on the ground, which spans more than a dozen neighboring countries to deliver food,

shelter, medical care, emotional support and other critical aid for displaced families

Meanwhile, the American Red Cross has also provided financial support to the ongoing hunger crisis in Africa. Overall this year, as part of the world's largest humanitarian network, the American Red Cross provided humanitarian aid in more than 108 countries. Here in Southern and Mid-Coast Maine, Red Cross international efforts included reconnecting 2 international families and educating 32 youth and adults in International Humanitarian

OVERCOMING THE FIRST-EVER RED CROSS BLOOD CRI-SIS In January 2022, the Red Cross experienced its worst national blood shortage in over a decade, due to ongoing collection challenges and varied hospital demand during the pandemic. Patients in need of lifesaving blood transfusions relied on an outpouring of support from hundreds of thousands of generous blood donors to overcome the crisis.

Beyond national headlines, the need for blood is constant, as one in seven patients entering a hospital will need a blood transfusion. Every day, Red Cross blood donors are the lifeline for car accident victims, parents with complicated childbirths, individuals battling cancer and people with sickle cell disease. Make an appointment to give blood or platelets this holiday season by visiting RedCross-Blood.org.

PROVIDING SUP-PORT FOR PERSON-AL EMERGENCIES In Maine, Red Cross workers have helped people through other personal emergencies too, whether it was: connecting a loved one with a deployed service member during a family crisis or training people to provide CPR for those suffering from cardiac arrest. In 2022, Service to the Armed Forces supported 87 military families with emergency messages and provided 494 critical community services to veterans in need from York to Franklin counties.

Visit RedCross.org/ NNEHoliday for more information about how the Red Cross of Northern New England helped people in Maine in 2022.

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



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YWCA Announces Workforce **Development Program**

YWCA IS ON A MISSION

LEWISTON, (December 2022) - YWCA Central Maine recently announced a new workforce development program beginning in 2023. YW Strive is a free, 11-week professional certificate course aimed at serving the unemployed and under-employed in Maine. YW Strive is designed to provide participants with critical digital literacy and workforce skills while also helping them explore and refine personal strengths and goals. The curriculum includes the Google suite, interviewing skills, resume

building, financial independence, conflict resolution, and more.

Classes can be taken virtually or in-person at the YWCA in Lewiston, and financial assistance may be available for transportation, childcare, technology, or other barriers to participation. The program meets weekly for a total of six

Applications are open now and the first cohort begins January 9, 2023. Applicants must be at least 18 years old, have basic English literacy and math skills, and show desire and ability to complete the full

YW Strive is an evidence-based program that has been offered at YWCAs nationwide. The program aims to support women and persons of color in the workforce, in service of the YWCA mission to eliminate racism and empower women. YWCA Central Maine's Strive is partially funded by YWCA USA via grant funding from Google and Northeast Bank.

For additional information, or to apply today, please visit the YWCA Central Maine site: www.ywcamaine.org.

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Out and About

Jay Staples Sings for Schooner Estates



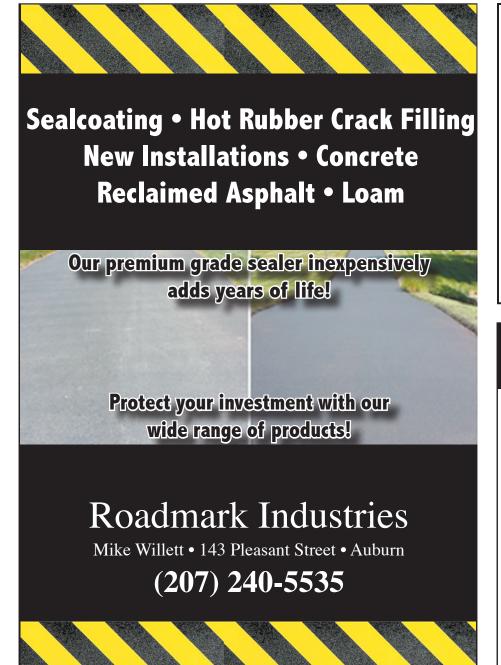
Jay Staples, vocalist and keyboard artist, sings Christmas Songs at his Santa Clause performance at Schooner Estates Retirement Community in Auburn last Thursday afternoon to a full house in the Village Green. (Rachel Morin Photo)

By Rachel Morin

Jay Staples, vocalist and keyboard artist entertained at a full house in the Village Green theater space at Schooner Estates Retirement Community this past Thursday afternoon. Wearing his bright red Santa Clause outfit from head to black boots, he was the picture of joy and happiness and his robust tenor voice filled the large room with the Christmas songs we remember so well from our childhood.

Jay is a master entertainer, and as he opened his arms wide during his songfest, much to our delight, he introduced several little dance steps he added to the Christmas songs as he sang along. The audience loved this new adaptation and showed their delight with more applause.

At the conclusion of his performance, Jay let us in on a little secret. He is returning for a New Year's Eve Celebration performance at Schooner Estates! More applause!



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Statewide Christmas Card Contest Winners Named

PORTLAND, (December 1, **2022**)---Bishop Robert Deeley is pleased to announce the winners of the Diocese of Portland's Christmas Card Art Contest, conducted by the diocese's Office of Development (winning artwork, captions below/larger size images available).

All Catholic school and faith formation students throughout the diocese were invited to participate in the contest. Each submission featured original creations by the artists reflecting a passage from Scripture, with one winner selected from each of the following grade groups: K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12. This month, the winners' creations will appear on the Christmas cards that will be sent to 2022 Catholic Appeal do-

The contest has received hundreds and hundreds of entries since its inception in 2017.

The contest winners

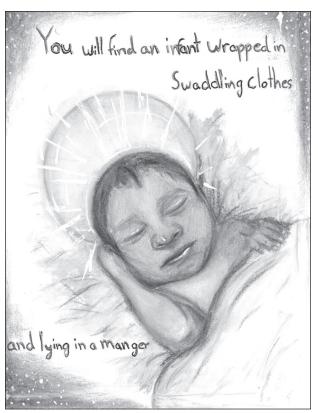
Kindergarten-Grade 2: Nataleigh Poirier of Saint Dominic



Grades 3-5: Valerie Saba of St. Brigid School in Portland



Grades 6-8: Ella Brown of Holy Cross School in South Port-



Grades 9-12: Saima Gombar of Good Shepherd Parish in

Follow us on Facebook! Don't miss our weekly giveaways!

\$800K to Support Refugee Mental Health Services in Maine

WASHINGTON, D.C. (December 1, 2022) - U.S. Senators Susan Collins and Angus King announced that Spurwink has received \$800,000 to support their ShifaME Trauma Systems Therapy for refugees. The funding was allocated through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Center for Mental Health Services. This federal funding will help to expand the trauma therapy capabilities of ShifaME, Spurwink's refugee service provider. The organization currently offers case management and counseling services to refugees across the state.

Academy in Lewiston

"No community is immune from mental health crises, but refugees SENATOR SUSAN



who fled violence, disasters, or persecution in their home countries often experience unique traumas in addition to the challenges of adjusting to a new life in the United States," said Senators Collins and King in a joint statement. "Spurwink provides vital support to Maine's refugee population, and this funding will help the dedicated staff expand access to mental health services for youth and families."

"Spurwink is grateful for the ongoing commit-

ment of Senators Collins and King, and SAMH-SA, to support our critical work with refugees in Portland," said Eric Meyer, President & CEO of Spurwink. "Refugees contribute to a thriving economy in Maine and add a richness to our community, and our team is committed to working with them on a path to better health."

The Spurwink Refugee Mental Health Project is a multi-tiered mental health promotion model used to improve access to

trauma-informed mental health services for refugee children and adolescents in Maine. The project is based on work with the Refugee Trauma and Resiliency Center at Boston Children's Hospital and multiple partners in Maine including schools, community providers and immigrant and refugee-led organizations. The initiative includes broad-based prevention and community resilience building, community-based skill-building groups for youth, and

intensive home-based family therapy for those with significant mental health needs.

Spurwink's project will increase access to effective trauma-focused services for participants by improving community awareness of the trauma-related needs of refugee youth and increasing acceptance of mental health services among refugee families.

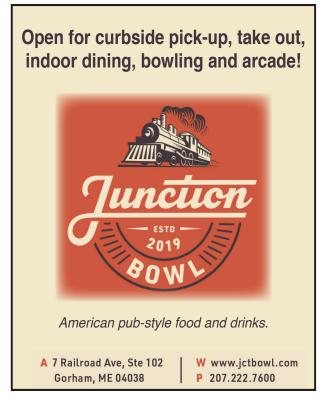
As a senior member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, in fiscal year 2022, Senator Collins helped secure a \$394 million increase to expand mental health research, treatment, and prevention programs.

> Best Source for Arts, Music and Theater!

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A Gathering of Celtic | Auburn Community Band's & Christmas at APL



AUBURN, ME (December 1, 2022) -- A Gathering of Celtic and Christmas is a mix of The Softer Side of Celtic along with familiar -- and perhaps not so familiar -- Christmas songs and tunes. It combines the music, stories and a wee bit of history from Scotland, Ireland and England. There will be singing, laughing, clapping and perhaps a bit

of foot stomping in this interactive program!

Jeff Snow is a talentmulti-instrumentalist who shares the music, and the stories behind the music. In concert, Jeff plays the guitar, autoharp, and bouzouki. He can also find his way around a drum set! More information about Jeff Snow can be found at http://www.jeffsnow.net/ concerts.html.

This program is for adults and will take place in person on Monday, December 12, starting at 4:00 p.m. in the Androscoggin Community Room. For our planning purposes, please register by visiting the Events page of APL's website - www.auburnpubliclibrary.org - or by calling the Reference Desk at 207-333-6640, ext. 4.

What do you think?

We strongly encourage Letters to the Editor, Op/Eds. columns or any other submissions from our readers. Agree with us or another columnist? Disagree? Write to us and let us know!

Email all submissions, including name, address and phone number, to the editor.

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Holiday Concert Returns



AUBURN, ME (December 1, 2022) - The Auburn Community Concert Band, under the direction of Milt Simon, will present its customary holiday concert on Wednesday, December 14 at the Gendron Franco Center in Lewiston. The free, 75-minute performance will begin at 7:00 p.m. The band's holiday concerts were cancelled in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic.

This season's 38-member concert band is comprised of volunteer musicians from 14 central Maine communities, who range in age from teens to 80's. The group will perform both traditional and contemporary songs celebrating the Christmas and

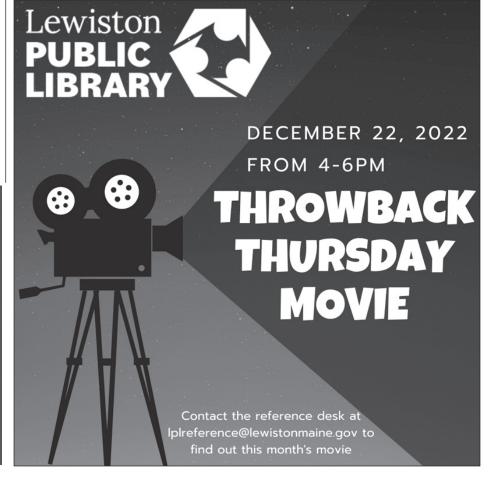
Hanukah holiday seasons. The concert will conclude with an audience singalong.

Continuing a tradition which began over four decades ago, those attending the concert will have the opportunity to make a donation to the local branch of the Salvation Army. All money collected in the Army's red kettles that evening will be used to help Central Maine residents in need of assistance this winter. Majors David Irwin and Jessica Irwin are expected to attend the concert and address the community's urgent need.

Small's Greenhouse in Auburn is providing poinsettias to decorate the Franco Center's stage. Immediately following the evening's performance, attendees will be able to purchase these plants with all proceeds going to the Salvation Army.

The Gendron Franco Center takes its residence inside a city landmark, the former St. Mary's Church, located at 46 Cedar Street in Lewiston. Ample free parking is available in the Oxford Street lot, located across the street from the Franco Center's side entrance

For more information regarding this concert, call the Gendron Franco Center at 783-1585. To check on any last-minute changes or updates, visit the band's web site at www.auburncommunityband.com



Maine International Film Festival Opens Submissions



Co-directors Daniel Quintanilla (pictured) and Jessamine Irwin won the inaugural Tourmaline Prize for best Maine-made Short Film for their film "Le Carrefour (The Intersection)" in 2022.

WATERVILLE, **ME** (December 1, 2022) The Maine Film Center has opened submissions for the 26th annual Maine International Film Festival (MIFF). The Festival, scheduled for July 7-16, 2023, will be hosted at the Paul J. Schupf Arts Center, which will be the new home for the Maine Film Center in downtown Waterville.

For the second year, MIFF will offer Tourmaline Prizes, named for Maine's state gem, which are juried awards recognizing the best Mainemade films of the festival.

On the closing night of MIFF, a \$5,000 prize will be awarded to the best feature film, and a \$2,500 prize will be awarded to the best short film. Filmmakers interested in submitting work should specify that their film that was made in Maine in their submission forms. (Films that tell stories about Maine but were not at all produced in Maine are not eligible for the prize).

In 2022, director Henry Spritz won the inaugural Tourmaline Prize for best Maine-made Feature Film for his film "Sunner," and co-direc-

tors Daniel Quintanilla and Jessamine Irwin won the inaugural Tourmaline Prize for best Mainemade Short Film for their film "Le Carrefour (The Intersection)."

Films meeting these qualifications may be submitted for 50% off normal submission fees. To receive a discount code, email miff@mainefilmcenter.org. Please allow up to 3 business days for a response, particularly when approaching a submission deadline.

This year's submission deadlines are listed below.



Director Henry Spritz won the inaugural Tourmaline Prize for best Maine-made Feature Film for his film "Sunner" in 2022.

January 3, 2023

Regular Deadline: February 18, 2023

Deadline: Late March 18, 2023

Extended Deadline: April 4, 2023

About the Maine Film Center

The Maine Film Center (MFC) brings world-class independent film to Central Maine through Railroad Square Cinema, the only Sundance Art House Project cinema in Maine and the annual Maine International Film Festival, a 10-day celebration that

Earlybird Deadline: attracts filmmakers and film aficionados from around the world, and by delivering impactful, accessible film exhibitions and education programs. MFC is a division of Waterville Creates. For more information visit Maine-FilmCenter.org.

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Central Maine Hospitals Kick Off Giving Campaign



Breast cancer survivor and Sabattus community member, Deidra

LEWISTON, \mathbf{ME} (November 30, 2022) -- Bridgton Hospital, Central Maine Medical Center and Rumford Hospital kicked off their Annual Giving Campaign with the theme "Miracles Live Here" this week. Each hospital campaign features a story of hope and survivorship by local community members undergoing cancer treatment. The campaign highlights oncology services available throughout the Central Maine Healthcare system anchored by the new Cancer

Care Center on the campus of Central Maine Medical Center which opened for patient care in May, 2022.

"Philanthropic support from our communities means so much to our doctors and nurses who, along with the entire healthcare team, spend long days caring for patients they know as neighbors, friends and family. The patients in our appeal highlight integrated healthcare across the Central Maine system and this is especially true in oncology. I thank them for their bravery in coming

forward to tell their stories," said Steve Littleson, DBA, FACHE, president and CEO, Central Maine Healthcare.

Phil's Miraculous Story from Bridgton Hospital: Five months after retiring, Phil was diagnosed with a very rare cancer called thymic carcinoma. After undergoing emergency surgery at Central Maine Heart and Vascular Institute (CMHVI) at Central Maine Medical Center, and aggressive chemotherapy treatment at Bridgton Hospital's Oncology and Infu-



Cancer Survivor and Bridgton community member, Phil



Cancer survivor and Rumford community member, Dawna

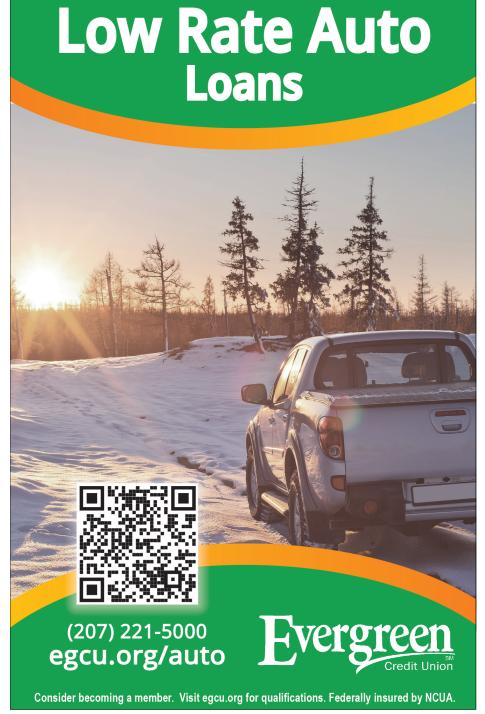
sion Center, Phil is back to enjoying his family and his favorite game of golf. Phil said, "I've always lived by my instincts, and my instincts told me to stay close to home." Phil and his wife, Pat, are thankful to CMH-VI and Bridgton Hospital for their miracle: to spend more time with their children and grandchildren.

Deidra's Miraculous Story from Central Maine Medical Center: During a routine self-exam, Deidra discovered a lump in her breast. In her early 30's, Deidra felt that her concerns could have been easily dismissed, but after an expedited visit to her primary care doctor at CMMC, she was immediately seen at the Bennett Breast Center. The mother of two young children, Deidra was diagnosed

with triple negative breast cancer. After undergoing chemotherapy treatment just miles from her home at the Cancer Care Center on the CMMC campus, she is getting stronger every day. Deidra is grateful to the caregivers who listened to her concerns and acted immediately, saving her, she believes, from a much more dire outcome. Deidra's miracle is being with her greatest champion, her husband Tom, and knowing she will watch her children grow up.

Dawna's Miraculous Story from Rumford Hospital: After a minor procedure to remove a mole from her arm turned serious, Dawna was diagnosed with familial melanoma, a very aggressive and unpredictable cancer that had reached stage four. Dawna attributes her recovery to the team at the Lariviere Oncology Suite at Rumford Hospital that allowed her to receive treatment in her hometown all the while being connected to experts at the Cancer Care Center at CMMC. Dawna said, "I feel like I'm still here because they really know me and are truly my extended family." Dawna's miracle is spending time she thought she wouldn't have with her four children and "crazy crew" of grandchil-

To support the hospital of your choice or see more of Phil, Deidra and Dawna's miraculous journeys, please visit: www.cmhc.org/donate-now-bridgton; www.cmhc.org/donate-now-cmmc; www.cmhc.org/donate-now-rumford





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Thursday, December 8, 2022

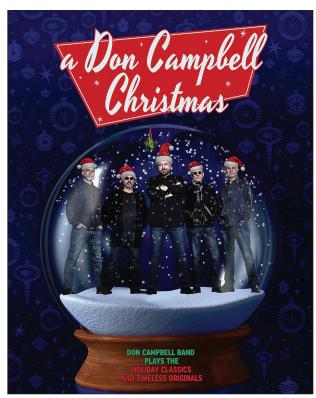
Don Campbell Christmas Concert to be Performed at Franco Center

LEWISTON, ME (November 30, 2022)— The Don Campbell Band will perform its Christmas concert on the stage in the Franco Center's beautiful Performance Hall. The concert starts at 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 16.

Campbell's Christmas show is an event for all ages with favorite holiday classics and many of Campbell's own heartfelt original creations. For example, no song better captures the sweet nostalgia of the holiday season than Campbell's original "Christmas Lights." The song gently walks through memories of Christmases past and reminds listeners that sometimes these holiday memories and traditions can be timeless, if we continue to celebrate them with joy every year.

"Snow at Arlington" is an homage to a holiday season where soldiers won't be going home to their families, and instead are laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery. This song and its message have become an anthem for Wreaths Across America, the organization that donates hundreds of thousands of handmade holiday wreaths every year to be placed around soldiers' graves at Arlington National Cemetery, and across the country.

"Giving Man" is a song about the true meaning of Christmas, drawn



The Don Campbell Christmas Concert is scheduled for 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 16, at the Franco Center, 46 Cedar St., Lewiston. The concert will include favorite holiday classics and many of Campbell's original songs.

from an experience in Campbell's own life as a volunteer gift wrapper for charity. The spirit of giving around the holidays can move all of us in small, but powerful ways, according to Campbell.

Doors and cash bar open an hour before the show. The show will have an intermission. Support for this Christmas event comes from Mechanics Savings Bank/Maine Community Bank, Maple Way Dental Care, Bennett Radio Group, Sun Journal, Turner Publishing, and Uncle Andy's Digest.

Tickets prices range from \$15-\$35 and can be purchased online at www. francocenter.org or by phone at 207-689-2000. Tickets can also be purchased in person at our box office between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

The Franco Center is at 46 Cedar St., Lewiston. Parking is available in the mill lot. The building is handicap accessible on the Lincoln St. Alley side.

Concert at Auburn UMC Features Talented Musicians



Mitch Thomas in Concert

AUBURN, ME (December 1, 2022) -- This year, the annual "Songs and Sounds of the Season" at the Auburn United Methodist Church will feature "Mitch Thomas and Friends", another favorite holiday event that has entertained audiences with concerts at the church and the Gendron Franco Center for many years. The 4 p.m. concert on Saturday, December 10 will bring together several of the church's talented musicians, with Thomas and others who have presented his beloved concert for many years.

Those featured will include The United Methodist Ringers handbell choir, soloist Caroline Young Coffin, Saxophonist William Buzza, the Park Avenue Pickers, the church's

very talented young organist, Ryan Slocum, and singer/pianist/composer Mitch Thomas.

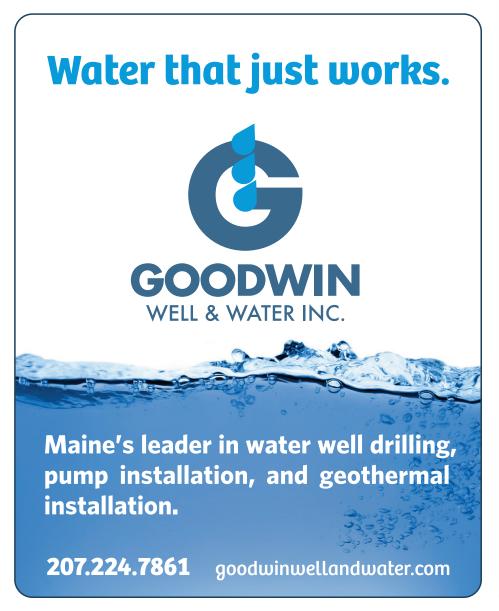
Many favorite traditional holiday songs will be performed, both sacred and secular. The bell choir, under the direction of Buzza has entertained audiences all over the region for many years and has become a holiday staple for music lovers throughout the community. Ryan Slocum, a prodigy, and music student at USM, became the church's newest organist this fall and has already thrilled the congregation with his outstanding performance on the church's Allen organ. He also plays for two other churches in the area.

Coffin, Saxophonist William Buzza, the Park Av-Caroline Young Coffin enue Pickers, the church's have performed together

for many years at both the "Friends" concert and several other events. They will perform several traditional holiday favorites, including his original "Light A Candle for Peace" and other compositions and arrangements.

The Park Avenue Pickers includes several of the church's string players and singers. They will lead a Christmas Sing-along as part of the 90-minute con-

The concert will be held in the handicap accessible church at 439 Park Avenue, Auburn, and is free and open to the public. A free-will offering will be received to support the mission and outreach programs of the church. The doors to the seating area will open at 3:30 p.m.





Page 10 Thursday, December 8, 2022

Androscoggin Home Healthcare + Hospice Hosts Chair's Reception



LEWISTON, (December 2, 2022) - Androscoggin Home Healthcare + Hospice hosts its first annual Chair's Reception as a way of saying "thank you" to the donors, sponsors, board members. and volunteers from the previous year in the spirit of the holiday season of

'We've seen over 16,000 patients this year, navigating about 3,800 patients a day that we're helping through healthcare across this state. 260,000 times, one of our clinicians has walked into

somebody's home here in Maine, 28% growth since 2019" said Ken Albert, President, and CEO of Androscoggin. "There is a need for sure. You are investing in a need, and we appreciate that we do our work with volunteers. We cannot do that without the support of the community."

Similar to Androscoggin's Annual Meeting, guests listened to stories and witnessed instances of their gifts in action, while enjoying refreshments Androscoggin's among greatest supporters.

Albert remarked, "I



want to thank you very much for supporting our mission. We cannot fulfill our mission without the support of the community, and our donors are just essential to that. When I say donors, I mean people

who donate their time and talents. Regardless of how you support us, you are ambassadors in the community, and we highly appreciate that," highlighting the value of the contributions to the organization.

Auburn Rings In The Holiday Season

cember 2, 2022) -- The City of Auburn invites residents and visitors to spend this holiday season in the heart of downtown Auburn. This year's exquisite 40' city Christmas tree – a blue spruce that was generously donated by the **Auburn Housing Authority** - has been decorated with care by the team at Auburn Public Works. It will be illuminated on Thursday, December 8 at 6:00PM to the delight of spectators at the city's annual tree lighting event, officially kicking off the holiday season in beautiful downtown Au-

The Auburn Business Association will be on hand at the tree lighting, offering free cocoa and donuts, as well as free mittens and gloves. The tree lighting event will feature our very special guest, Santa Claus, who will arrive at Festival Plaza escorted by the Auburn Police, Fire, Public Works, and Recreation Departments.

It will also mark the grand opening of the city's inaugural Christmas Shopping Village. This very special shopping experience is Auburn's version of a European Christmas market, with tiny shops nestled around the Christmas tree. There will be six new vendors each week, offering unique, local gifts & products. The Village shops will be open from 4:00 - 8:00PM on the evening of the tree lighting.

ficially" open on Saturday, December 3 at 3:00PM. Following the tree lighting on December 8, the Village will be open each Thursday and Friday from 4:00 to 8:00PM and on Saturdays from 10:00AM to 3:00PM, with several more appearances by San-

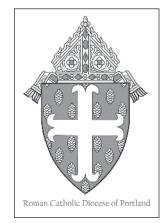
For a complete The Village will "of- schedule and a list of vendors, visit www.goauburn. me/christmas-village.

The Edward Little High School Grandstand Club will be among the Shopping Village vendors. This non-profit organization will be set up at the Village all month, selling hot cocoa, coffee, and delicious snacks to help support student athletes in

"Blessing of the Bambinelli" Set for Lewiston

MACHIAS, (December 1, 2022)---A wonderful tradition, originating during the papacy of Pope St. John Paul II, will be renewed at several Maine churches on December 11, the third Sunday of Advent. All children and families are encouraged to bring the Baby Jesus from their nativity sets at home for a "Blessing of the Bambinelli" to remind all of the joyous event of Jesus' arrival in the manger.

In Rome, families fill St. Peter's Square on Gaudete Sunday (the third Sunday of Advent) for the blessing of the Gesù Bambino, the 'little baby Jesus.' On this day, the children bring from home their Christ-child figures, their bambinelli, in hands, in pockets, in backpacks,



from their own family nativity scenes. Then, during the noontime Angelus address, the Holy Father invites all to hold up their bambinelli for a special blessing of the Christchild figures, the children, and their families. Upon returning home, the figure is set safely out of sight for the remainder of Advent until happily placed

rival of Christmas.

The blessings in Maine will be offered at:

Lewiston, Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul, 122 Ash Street; Sunday at 7 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

Lewiston, Holy Family Church, 607 Sabattus Street; Sunday at 11 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Lewiston, Holy Cross Church, 1080 Lisin the crèche with the ar- bon Street; Sunday at

"We invite young and old, children and adults, to participate in this powerful witness to our celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. The nativity scene is a school of life where we can learn the secret of pure love and joy," said Fr. Daniel Greenleaf, pastor of Prince of Peace Parish in

Skelton Taintor & Abbott, Androscoggin Title Company Donate

(November 28, 2022) Staff members and Attorneys at Skelton Taintor & Abbott and Androscoggin Title raised Company \$2,372.00 in 2022 by donating money to wear jeans on Fridays. That

LEWISTON, ME money was dispersed to support charities that the dren's Hospital team chose.

- 1. Hope Haven
- 2. Root Cellar
- SPCA/Greater Androscoggin Humane Society
- 4. Local food pantry Good Shepherd

5. St. Jude Chil-

- 6. Center for Wisdom's Women
 - 7. Safe Voices
 - 8. March of Dimes

The team will continue to raise money through this donation program in 2023.



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Apply for Market Garden Training with UMaine Extension

ORONO, (November 28, 2022) University of Maine Cooperative Extension is offering a comprehensive nine-month hybrid (online and in-person) training program for all beginning farmers. Participants will acquire the knowledge, skills and abilities required to successfully grow produce for smallscale private or commercial fruit and vegetable operations. Online training begins Jan. 17, 2023. The program continues twice-monthly through

the end of September and includes farm field days throughout the growing season.

Boots-2-Bushels: Boot Camp for Market Gardeners will cover topics that include soil health and crop planning; notill production; vegetable and fruit production: food safety; integrated pest management; tools and equipment; marketing and farm economics; and more. Subject matter experts from UMaine Extension, Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association and local farms will serve as instructors. Participants will earn a certificate of com-

Registration is open to all beginning farmers; priority will be given to veterans, their family members and farmers with a disability. The \$150 fee includes course materials and in-person farm visits. For out-of-state veterans who cannot attend the farm visits, the registration fee is reduced. For more information and registration instructions see the program webpage. Space is limited and registration closes on Dec. 14. To request a reasonable accommodation, contact Anne Martin, 207.944.1533; anne.martin1@maine.edu.

Boots-2-Bushels is a project of Maine AgrAbility, a federally funded program that addresses health, safety and injury prevention on the farm, on the water and in the forest.



Thursday, December 8, 2022

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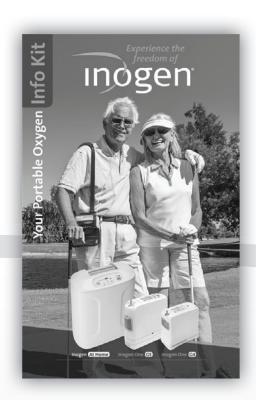
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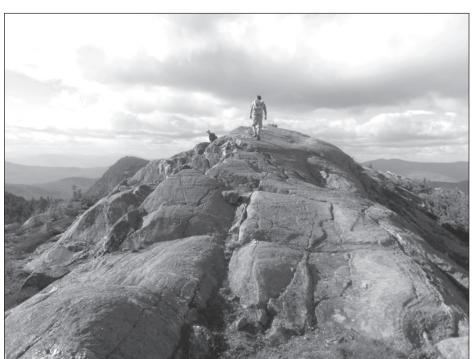
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Seniors Not Acting Their Age

Hiking Little Jackson and Tumbledown Mountains



Climbers ascend a ridge on Little Jackson Mountain



Huge boulders are negotiated on Tumbledown Mountain's North Peak

By Ron Chase

A trek on Little Jackand Tumbledown Mountains is the second-best mountain hike in Maine. How do I know its second best? I read it in my book, Maine Al Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine.

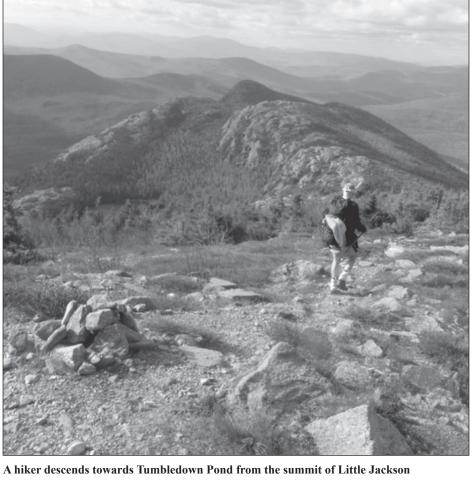
Seriously, with the exception of Mount Katahdin, I can't think of any mountain hike in Maine

that exceeds Little Jackson and Tumbledown for majestic beauty. Several of the peaks in Acadia National Park certainly rival it. Bigelow and Saddleback Mountains are wonderful hikes. The Traveler Loop in Baxter State Park is truly exceptional. However, when I weigh the benefits of each, Little Jackson and Tumbledown is my choice.

Given my fondness

snow during previous ex-

for the dynamic mountain duo, I try to hike them each fall when the breathtaking autumn colors can be appreciated in a bug-free environment. Located in the mountains of western Maine, the mercurial pair is notorious for stormy fall weather. I've experienced gusty winds, frigid temperatures, ice pellets, and



Given my history with tumultuous weather on Little Jackson and Tumbledown, I watch for an outstanding forecast before planning a hike. I recently identified the perfect day with light winds and warm temperatures predicted, and absolutely no chance of frozen precipitation. When I announced a Penobscot Paddle & Chowder Society trip, my son Adam and longtime mountaineering friend Brent Elwell agreed to join me.

Accessing tle Jackson Trailhead is a chore. From the Byron Notch Road in Weld, would be hikers need to drive the rough Morgan Road for about a mile to an area where there is limited parking. Shortly after leaving the trailhead, Tumbledown Mountain's Parker Ridge Trail departs on the left.

The weather was exceptionally warm, sunny, Maine's most extraordiand calm when the three of us met at the trailhead early in the morning. Since my companions were much younger than me, I asserted my senior citizen prerogative and set the hiking pace.

We began in a predominantly hardwood forest and immediately encountered a minor disappointment; most of the leaves had fallen and cluttered the trail. Fortunately, some colorful foliage remained. Crunching through leaves, we soon passed the junction for Parker Ridge Trail, our anticipated return route.

After hiking steadily

up for a couple of miles, we entered a conifer forest shortly after passing Pond Link Trail, which connects with Tumbledown Pond. The path steepened before we emerged above tree line at a junction between Jackson and Little Jackson Mountains. Little Jackson and Tumbledown on our minds, we decided to forego the less scenic but taller Jackson Mountain. From there, we enjoyed glorious views for much of the remainder of the day.

After proceeding over two steep exposed escarpments, we climbed steadily up an elongated sloping ridge towards the top of Little Jackson while savoring a panoramic vista of Webb Lake and Mount Blue in the east. A refreshing southwest breeze greeted us at the barren summit.

A short distance beyond the summit cairn, we encountered one of nary views. Appearing directly below us was picturesque Tumbledown Pond surrounded by the three alpine peaks of Tumbledown Mountain

We descended on an unmarked path that weaves precipitously down towards the mountain tarn. Nearing the pond, we turned right and soon began climbing steeply up huge rounded boulders to the summit of North Peak, at 3090 feet the highpoint on Tumbledown. From the top, several trekkers were spotted on East Peak; the first hikers we'd seen.

Our intent was to traverse a densely wooded col to West Peak. Lacking an obvious route, we accidentally bushwhacked to East Peak. Next time, we'll substitute a compass bearing for overconfidence.

Distinctive East Peak is similar to North in character. After scrambling up several steep ledges to the impressive summit, we descended gigantic granite slabs towards Tumbledown Pond, another marvelous Maine view.

Unlike most of our trek, the shore of the pond was bustling with activity. After exchanging trail information with other hikers, we ascended prominent Parker Ridge, where the last of the magnificent views were embraced.

Dropping ly down, sore knees announced the consequence of the fourth significant descent of the day. The gentler gradient on lower Parker Ridge Trail was a welcome relief for tired muscles and aching joints while luxuriating in the satisfaction of having completed the second best mountain hike in Maine.

Ron Chase resides in Topsham. His latest book, "Maine Al Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine" is available at www.northcountrypress.com/maineal-fresco or in bookstores and through online retail-His previous books "The Great Mars Hill Bank Robbery" and "Mountain for Mortals -New England." Visit his website at www.ronchaseoutdoors.com or he can be reached at ronchaseoutdoors@comcast.net



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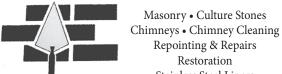
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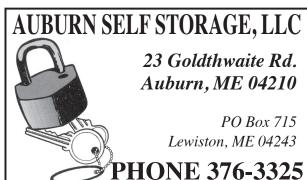
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December 10

RAYMOND -- The beloved annual "Hawthorne House Christmas Party" will be held on Saturday, December 10, at 6 p.m. at Nathaniel Hawthorne's Boyhood Home, located at 40 Hawthorne Road in Raymond. A donation of \$5.00 per adult is requested. Although walkins are welcome, reservations are encouraged for planning. You may make a reservation by emailhawthorne@maine. rr.com or calling or texting Becky Tracy at (207) 329-

The festivities will begin with cocktails at 6:00 p.m., followed by dinner at 7:00 p.m. Attendees are asked to please bring a favorite culinary creation: an appetizer, main dish, bread, rolls, or dessert, along with serving spoons. They are also asked to please put their name on dishes and utensils. The cocktail hour and dinner

Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

will be BYOB, with guests asked to bring any alcoholic beverages or special mixers they might like. The Hawthorne House will provide setups of ice and standard mixers. The festive evening will conclude with the singing of all-time favorite Christmas carols.

December 13

AUBURN -- At 2pm Alan Elze will present "Executive Order 9066," the last program in this year's collaboration between LA Senior College and the Auburn Public Library. Auburn Public Library, 49 Spring St. Auburn, ME in the Androscoggin Room on the ground floor.

In 1942, 127,000 Japanese Americans, many of whom were American citizens were incarcerated. Their crime? Living on Public Library: MAINE-

the West Coast. They were incarcerated in internment camps (read concentration camps) in desolate areas of the US. They were held because they looked different from the majority of Americans. Very few German-Americans Italian-Americans held, as they didn't stand out. How it happened and what were the results? That's what we will look at. Alan Elze has taught extensively at Senior College, since 2005, teaching over 75 classes on a wide variety of subjects. Please join us at the Auburn Public Library!

December 15

LEWISTON -- 3rd Tuesdays from September-December 2022, 3-5pm at the Lewiston

TRANSNET TEEN TA-**BLETOP TUESDAYS**

This fall, LPL Teen and MaineTransNet Youth are joining up to host monthly tabletop roleplaying sessions, on the 3rd Tuesday from 3-5pm in person in the LPL teen space. All supplies will be provided and no previous RPG experience is required – just bring yourself and your creative mind!

This program is open to teens ages 13-19.

For more information, contact the Lewiston Public Library Adult & Teen Services Department at 513-3135 or LPLReference@lewistonmaine.gov. www.LPLonline.org

December 17

BUXTON -- Free Christmas Concert with the Westbrook City Band

Family friendly event featuring seasonal favorites and a sing-along, held Saturday, December 17, 2022 at 2:00 PM. North Congregational Church,

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December 22 LEWISTON

Throwback Thursday Movie Matinee will be happening at The Lewiston Public Library in Callahan Hall on 12/22/22 from 4-6PM. The event listing can also be found on our website at https:// lplonline.org/events/ throwback-thursday-movie-matinee-home-alone/

> December 24 BUXTON -- Free to

the public! Turkey Dinner - Saturday, December 24 2022 - 5:00 pm at Living Waters Church, Parker Farm Road, Buxton. Christmas Service immediately following dinner.

Please note: We will offer the option of takeout containers for those who do not want to come inside for seating. Wearing of face masks for those who are not vaccinated is suggested. Hand sanitizer is available for those who wish to use it.

Maine DHHS Awarded \$13.8M Grant to Protect Public Health

AUGUSTA, ME (December 2, 2022) — The Maine Department of Health and Human Services announced today the award of \$13.8 million by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (U.S. CDC) to invest in Maine's critical public health infrastructure and public health workforce over the next five years. The award is part of \$3.14 billion the U.S. CDC is distributing

to bolster public health departments across the country.

The additional federal funds provide an opportunity to build on Governor Mills' ongoing investments in Maine's public health workforce and services to promote and protect the health of Maine people and commu-

"This award allows the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) to sustain and add positions that will continue to be critical in the years to come and invest in the longterm health and safety of Maine people," said DHHS Commissioner Jeanne Lambrew and Maine CDC Director Nirav D. Shah. "We thank the congressional delegation for supporting this federal funding that builds on Governor Mills' revitalization of Maine's public health infrastructure?

"The last several years have shown the need for a robust and resilient public health infrastructure system to support Maine people and our communities," said U.S. Senator Angus King and U.S. Representative Chellie Pingree. "This grant will help the Maine Department of Health and Human Services recruit and retain additional public health staff and strengthen or-

ganizational systems. Thanks to this investment from the American Rescue Plan, the state can take steps to minimize the gaps in health care access between rural and urban communities as well as prepare for and respond to any future public health emergencies."

This five-year grant will support existing and expanded public health positions in key areas, including

infectious disease, maternal and child health, chronic disease and injury prevention, environmental health, local public health, and access to health care services. The funding will also support Maine CDC's planning and reaccreditation efforts, allowing the agency to dedicate resources toward developing infrastructure and communications systems to better serve Maine people.





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LEWISTON SENIOR CITIZENS TRIPS FOR 2022

White Mountain Hotel & Resort - December 4 - 5, 2022

Trip includes 1 night lodging and 3 meals, including the Grand Sunday Brunch, 2 different entertainment shows, Austrian Sleigh ride through Jackson Village with a Jingle Bell Chocolate Tour. Stop at the Christmas Tree Shop and Lunch on Sunday at Polly's Pancake Parlor. A \$100 deposit per person is due upon signing. Price is \$369 pp double occupancy.

Spotlight on San Antonio, Texas - April 2-6, 2023

Trip includes 5 days, 4 nights lodging, 3 breakfasts and 2 dinners, visit to two UNESCO world heritage sites, visit to the Mission San Jose, visit to the ALAMO, boat ride along the Paseo del Rio known as the River Walk, National

Museum of the Pacific War and so much more.

Reflections of Italy - October 9 - 18, 2023

Trip includes 10 days, 9 nights lodging, and 12 meals, including Rome, Vatican Museums, Sistine Chapel, St. Peter's Basilica, Assisi, Perugia, Cortona, Florence, Michelangelo's DAVID, Chianti Winery & Cooking Class, Venice, St. Mark's square, boat ride to Murano Island, Milan and much more.

Virginia Beach, Colonial Williamsburg & Historic Norfolk - May 22 - 27, 2023

Trip includes 5 nights lodging and 8 meals, guided tour of Colonial Williamsburg, narrated Norfolk Naval Base Harbor Cruise, admission to the Nauticus & Battleship Wisconsin, visit to Mariner's Museum and Park, admission to Virginia Beach Aquarium & Marine Science Center and free time on Virginia Beach and the Virginia Beach Boardwalk. A \$75 deposit pp is due

when signing up. Price is \$809 pp double occupancy and includes bus driver's tip.

For more information on any of our trips, please contact Claire Bilodeau (207)784-0302 or Cindy Boyd (207)345-9569.

TRAVEL TRAILER

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I am using a 40-yearold computer and my wife and I would like to buy a "wow" computer to communicate with our grandchildren and our children. Please call (207) 650-7224.

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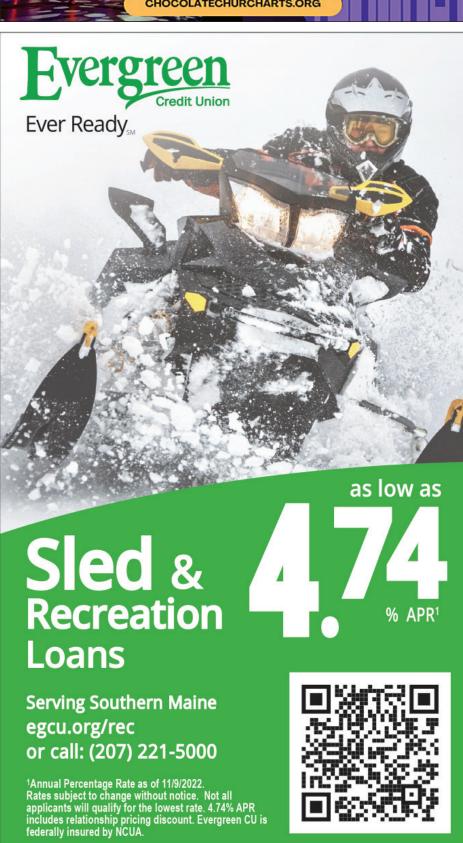
Stock Up on Great Reads, Gifts, Ornaments at APL's Bookstore

AUBURN, ME (December 1, 2022) -- The APL Bookstore located on the ground floor of the Auburn Library (49 Spring Street) is open 9:30 am to 1:00 pm Saturdays. Children books are only .25 cents and all other books are \$2 or less. Holi-

day-themed books, ornaments and small gift items are currently available. If you have any questions, please call 333-6640

We have popular fiction by authors such as Steven King, James Patterson, Nora Roberts, etc., as well as sci-fi, mystery, manga and young adult. Browse nonfiction books on art, biography, business, cooking, crafts, history, Maine, self-help, travel, etc. There are children chapter and picture books along with puzzles, games, DVDs and audio books.





Medicare Scams: Tips from the FTC, Maine SMP

MAINE, STATE-WIDE (December 1, 2022) -- SeniorsPlus, Western Maine's designated Area Agency on Aging, has been asked to pass along information about Medicare scam alerts.

The Maine Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP), a national program fighting fraud and abuse in the Medicare system, would like to pass on a few tips from the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) on how to avoid becoming a victim of a scam.

People on Medicare — and those who aren't - are regularly targeted for scams. You might have gotten a call saying something like "Hello, this is Medicare calling. Your coverage is about to be canceled." Every year during open enrollment season (and plenty of other times too), scammers pretending to be from the government call trying to steal your money and your personal information. Here's what to do:

Hang up. If someone calls claiming to be affiliated with Medicare, asking for your Social Security number or bank account information to get a new card or new benefits, that's a scam. Period.

Never give personal information to a caller claiming to be affiliated with Medicare. You can't trust your caller ID. Scammers can make these calls

stateember 1, from the government even when they're not. Before you give out any personal information, make your own call to 1-800-MEDI-CARE to check it out.

Report the call. Report these impersonators at 1-800-MEDICARE and ReportFraud.ftc.gov. The more we hear from you, the more we can help fight scams.

Another scam is related to Medicare Part D, which is an optional prescription drug insurance program for people on Medicare. You pay a monthly premium to an insurance carrier for your Part D plan. In return, you use the insurance carrier's network of pharmacies to buy your prescription medications. To protect people, the law is very specific about how Medicare prescription drug plan providers conduct themselves.

Medicare Part D plan representatives may enroll you on the phone only if YOU call them. To be on the safe side, call Medicare first to check out any provider you may be tempted to contact. The number to is 1-800-MEDIcall CARE (1-800-633-4227) and the TTY number is 1-877-486-2048. Medicare phone line is open 24 hours a day. The government does not recommend any particular prescription drug plan — it simply verifies that a provider is legitimate.

Anyone who contacts you about Medicare Part D without you seeking them out first is likely a scammer. Don't share your information, and don't pay them.

Medicare Part D providers may come to your home only if you've invited them. Don't talk to anyone who comes to your door with unsolicited offers of drug coverage. The law says prescription drug benefit companies can't visit your home unless you've given them permission.

To report suspected Medicare fraud, contact your local Senior Medicare Patrol Program at 1-877-353-3771. To learn more about Medicare Part D and the plans available in your area:

Call 1-800-MEDI-CARE (1-800-633-4227) or visit Medicare.gov.

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