

# Central Maine Family Residency Earns Key Accreditation



Central Maine Family Residency team members

**LEWISTON, ME (March 23, 2023)** -- Central Maine Medical Center's (CMMC) Family Medicine Residency recently made a major achievement. The group of dedicated residents, faculty and staff has received reaccreditation by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME).

This is no small feat: While taking care of more than 20,000 patients a year, the residency team is required to submit extensive data on patient encounters,

procedures, research and more. In order to pass the accreditation criteria, they have to follow very specific rules and regulations to remain in compliance.

"It shows the work the residents, faculty and staff have done to ensure the program provides safe, quality care to patients in our community, as well as our commitment to medical education excellence," said Bethany Picker, MD, program director.

"We work with patients in Rumford and a large, underserved popula-

tion in greater Lewiston/Auburn. Many of these people struggle with multiple medical issues and limited access to healthcare. This accreditation is evidence that these neighbors of ours are receiving a level of care they deserve and may not otherwise receive."

Twenty-two residents are currently in the three-year residency program. The training program is directed by Bethany Picker, MD. Annie Derthick, Ph.D. and Kara Callahan, MD, serve as the associate program directors.

# City of Lewiston Annual Permit Inspections Begin

**LEWISTON, ME (March 22, 2023)** – The City of Lewiston announced today that starting the week of March 27, an Assessing team will conduct door-to-door reviews of exterior and interior projects. This is done annually as part of the Maine State Assessment Program to confirm if permitted property updates have been completed and to assess any additional value.

"Our staff will be all over the City from Main Street to Ferry Road," says Chief Assessor William Healey. Healey notes that the pandemic rendered only drive-by reviews, so the return to physically being on site or inside a home if needed will be very helpful.

As a Lewiston resident, if you have obtained a municipal permit for either exterior or interior work at your home within the timeframe of April 2, 2022, to April 1, 2023, a member of the City's Assessing team will visit your property.

Interior new or renovated items reviewed will include a kitchen remodel, bathroom remodel, a finished basement, or a home addition. Outside items focused on during a view will include a new or renovated shed, deck, pool, or fence. If not complete, the project will require an additional visit.

Reviews will take about five minutes. Assessing team members will have official municipal identification with them, and vehicles used by the team will also be marked with municipal identification. The team will collaborate with the Lewiston Police Department about the ongoing inspections, especially in areas where a large number of reviews are scheduled.

Each year, the inspection reviews commence near the April 1 Maine State Assessment date in an effort to be as least disruptive as possible. "We don't want to return to the same property three or four times, so we visit when we anticipate a

*See Inspections, page 14*

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# Newsmakers, Names & Faces

## Republicans Review Educational Facilities, Mental Health Services

AUGUSTA, ME (March 22, 2023) – Senate Republicans unveiled legislation during a press briefing on Tuesday to help bolster student mental health and school safety. The bills, ranging from a call to conduct a statewide forensic audit of current school physical defenses to the implementation of school-based health centers, all aim to improve the safety of students while on campus, improve mental health and prevent substance abuse.

According to Senate Republican Leader Trey Stewart, R-Aroostook, the process has to start with a gap assessment of all school facilities in Maine to see what available technologies should be incorporated into existing schools and become part of new building codes for future construction.

“I think there’s a myriad of examples that we’ve seen recently in the last couple of years of times when that technology didn’t exist or it wasn’t utilized at all and led to unfortunate outcomes,” Stewart said. “We should get ahead of that in the State of Maine and we should be pushing for that.”

Using the example of interlocking door controller technology, otherwise known as deadman or mantrap doors consisting of a double set of doors that can be immediately locked simultaneously in an emergency, he said lawmakers should convene a task force or create a standing committee to rely on experts across a variety of fields to make recommendations to the Legislature.

“We need to be making sure that our rural districts in particular are not falling behind for a lack of resources,” he said. “It can’t be the case that



schools in, for instance, Aroostook or Washington County are not as secure as schools in Cumberland County simply because they don’t have the resources. Those kids matter just as much. Those teachers matter just as much.”

For Sen. Marianne Moore, R-Washington, the recently released results from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s “Youth Risk Behavior Survey” show that Maine students are having mental health issues that

students, especially young girls.”

According to Moore, schools should work with parents to increase the sense of family and community for students. The state should also increase health education and access to needed health services, including mental health and substance use prevention services.

“My goal is to move to school-based health centers as a centralized source for all things health that would work in conjunction with parents and families,” she said. “No matter what we do through our schools, though, it has to start with family.”

Sen. James Libby, R-Cumberland, took issue with the direction the Maine Department of Education (DOE) is headed, especially regarding student academic assessments that led the U.S. Department of Education to threaten to withhold funding from the Department.

However, it’s how the State approaches best student mental health practices that drew the most ire from Libby. He cited Maine’s “Whole Student Approach” framework, which is based on the Ohio State University model that stresses the importance of family and community partnerships. The problem, he said, is that Maine completely disregarded the family and left it out when Maine DOE developed its own student mental health model.

“The first thing that you’ll notice about it – and I think this is startling ... the family is not even mentioned,” he said of the State’s approach. “There is this belief by some that the family’s inclusion is apparently something less than the expertise that others can provide, in particular [the] DOE.”

## UMA Offers Grad Certificate in Substance Use Disorders

AUGUSTA, ME (March 24, 2023) -- The University of Maine at Augusta (UMA) has received certification as a NAADAC Approved Educational Provider for the Graduate Certificate in Substance Use Disorders program. Academic programs with this credential are assured that the credits provided will be accepted toward national credentialing by the NAADAC Certification Commission for Addiction Professionals (NCC AP), as well as by many of the individual state licensing/certification bodies in the addiction and other helping professions.

The NAADAC Approved Education Provider certification signifies that an organization has voluntarily opened its educational programs to examination by NCC AP for content applicability to state, national, and international certification standards. This rigorous review process ensures that learners receive a consistent, reliable, and quality learning experience that is applicable to their careers and advances their understanding of addiction and co-occurring disorders-related issues.

Maine ranks among the top states in the country for opioid-involved overdose death rates. According to a report released by the Maine Attorney General’s Office in February, an estimated 716 Mainers died from drug overdoses in 2022, and last year was the third consecutive year that Maine set another record of fatal overdoses. The 716 overdose deaths in Maine in 2022 were part of the more than 10,110 total overdoses

that were reported.

The skyrocketing rate of non-fatal overdoses helps to reveal the enormous and growing scale of this crisis that has been exacerbated by the flood of deadly fentanyl. In addition, treatment options have not been meeting the communities’ needs due to the sheer number of people impacted (directly and indirectly), and many healthcare providers are currently in preparation for retirement.

The Graduate Certificate in Substance Use Disorders program at UMA was launched in fall 2020 to address these challenges. It offers training and education for those who are seeking to become certified/licensed, for those who want to maintain their certification/license at the state or national level, for those who want to

add to their education, and for those from other disciplines who want to learn more about substance use and co-occurring disorders.

Students who successfully complete the UMA graduate certificate can sit for the national Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor (CADC) exam to pursue licensing as a substance use treatment professional and can apply for the Certified Clinical Supervisor (CCS) certification. The CCS is a national certification allowing individuals to seek employment in all 50 states and is required to supervise Registered Alcohol and Drug Counselors (RADCL), Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselors (CADC), and Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselors (LADC).

“We are very excited about this new certification from NAADAC,” stated Wendy St. Pierre, UMA Associate Professor of Mental Health & Human Services and Coordinator of the program. “As a completely online program, our graduate certificate will offer current human services professionals throughout the U.S. the flexibility to obtain a credential that can lead to career advancement and become a pathway to additional professional credentials or a master’s degree. It is also consistent with UMA’s long-standing mission and history as a leader in distance education.”

Since UMA’s program integrates course work with current academic programming available at its sister institutions within the University of Maine System, students could continue their graduate education at the University of Maine or the University of Southern Maine with some credits easily transferable.

Applications are now being accepted for UMA’s Graduate Certificate in Substance Use Disorders programs for a fall 2023 start. There will be two virtual information sessions to learn more about the program: April 13 and May 3. Visit <https://www.uma.edu/sud> for details.

UMA transforms the lives of students of every age and background across the State of Maine and beyond through access to high-quality distance and on-site education, excellence in student support, civic engagement, and professional and liberal arts programs. For more information, please visit <https://www.uma.edu/>.



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# Newsmakers, Names & Faces

## Franco Center Sports Fresh New Logo Approved by Board

LEWISTON, ME (March 24, 2023)—The board of directors unanimously voted to the use of “Franco Center” as the name of its building during its March 23 meeting. The tagline, “Performing Arts & Events” will be used to provide information about some of what goes on inside the building.

“Over the past three months, dozens of logos have been designed by staff with board input after the community’s outcry over the building’s name change,” said Penny Drumm, Franco Center administrator. The winning logo design was selected during Wednesday’s board meeting.

The Maine 501(c)3 nonprofit organization was established in 2000

with the legal name Franco-American Heritage Center at St. Mary’s. In its 23 years of operation, multiple logos and names on the building have been used, but the nonprofit’s name and mission, vision, and values have remained the same.

For those who were worried about a loss of their Franco American heritage due to the building’s name, staff and board members reassure the community that the exact opposite is occurring in its building. “All one has to do is attend an event or take a tour, scroll through its blog posts and website, and read its social media posts to realize that the staff and board take the Franco American heritage very seriously,” said Denise Scammon,



The logo for the Franco Center sports a new fresh look after the board unanimously approved its use at a meeting Wednesday night.

marketing/development director.

A bit of history that some may not remember is that Lewiston has been called River City. The city of Lewiston continues to discuss a long-time plan to call the Franco Center’s neighborhood which is bordered by the river and canals, “Riverfront Island.” But, perhaps more importantly, the former St.

Mary’s Church was dubbed the “church on the river” as noted in a 1982 Sun Journal article.

There is a definite link that cannot be denied between the French Canadian immigrants who came to Lewiston and the river that powered the mills they came to work in. That river and its power supported their families daily needs. When St. Mary’s parish

was established in 1905 and then again as other parishes were established and parish boundaries were declared, St. Mary’s was bordered by the riverfront. Its parishioners were referred to as the people living on the banks of the river.

Some have quipped that the building would still be St. Mary’s Church if the Franco Americans had attended church in large enough numbers to support the parish. The building was saved from destruction in 2000 by a group of Franco Americans who bought it from the dioceses after the last Catholic mass was held. “As the number of Franco Americans who live in the community and support the nonprofit’s mission has declined, staff and board were acting pro-

gressively to reach a wider audience that will attend its events and donate to the Center,” remarked Drumm.

Adding to a declining Franco American audience, the Franco Center feels the loss of thousands of Franco Americans over the last 23 years. Also, a common theme among arts and culture organizations across the nation, backed up by statistics, is the loss of in-person audiences which started with the pandemic and hasn’t returned to pre-COVID-19 numbers. “Staff and board members hope that the people who were so vocal about the name change on the building take a moment to make a donation and show their support for the nonprofit’s mission work,” commented Drumm.

## Dr. Chuck Radis Remembers L/A’s First Black Mayor

JOHN JENKINS

MAYOR OF MAINE

DR. CHUCK RADIS

LEWISTON, ME (March 24, 2023) — Dr. Chuck Radis, author of Go By Boat, returns with a moving new biography of his friend and former college classmate, John Jenkins.

Jenkins, Maine’s first Black state senator and mayor of both Lewiston and Auburn, led a remark-

able life and his influence extended far beyond his politics and his constituents. He was a four-time world champion in karate and through his business PEP Talk he gave individuals and organizations the tools for change based on stories and lessons fostering community and the interdependence of mind and

spirit. He was also a talented puppeteer who used puppets in presentations to schools throughout Maine. He loved stories, and used them to lower barriers between himself and the largely white audiences of his adopted state.

John Jenkins: Mayor of Maine is a moving tribute that only a close friend could write. In addition to covering Jenkins’ politics, this memoir offers insight into Jenkins’ generous spirit and of his contributions to the state of Maine.

Throughout his years as both a primary health care physician and as a specialist, Dr. Chuck Radis has published both in peer-reviewed journals and in the popular press. He has written on the narcotic epidemic, the logic of expanding Medicare for all Americans, and medical marijuana. As the medical director for the Maine-African Partnership for Social Justice, he travels regularly to the Kiryandongo UN Settlement in Uganda where he partners with refugee groups in innovative pub-

lic health programs. In recognition of his commitment to public health, Dr. Radis has been named both the Louis Hanson Maine Physician of the Year, and Teacher of the Year at the University of New England, College of Osteopathic Medicine--a rare achievement. He lives on Peaks Island, Maine.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND READINGS

TUESDAY, APRIL 25 at 7 PM Book launch at Portland’s PRINT book store with co-speaker James Reese, Bates College, Dean of International Studies.

THURSDAY, APRIL 27 at 12:15 PM Author

reading and talk at Marblehead, MA Rotary.

SATURDAY, MAY 27 Book signing at Sherman’s Books in Portland.

SATURDAY, JUNE 10 Author talk at the Peaks Island Library.

FRIDAY, JUNE 16 at 1 PM Book signing at Sherman’s Books in Bar Harbor.

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# Seniors Not Acting Their Age

## Challenging Conditions on Bald and Speckled Mountains



A hiker negotiates a steep pitch on Bald Mountain



Exceptional views are the reward at the top of Bald Mountain



A hiker emerges onto a spectacular open ledge on Speckled Mountain

By Ron Chase

Bald and Speckled Mountains are hidden gems. Situated in the heart of the Oxford Hills in the rural communities of Peru and Woodstock, just finding them is a chore. Once located, the two distinctive peaks offer a moderately demanding trek to open summits with spectacular views.

I think my retired friend, John Stokinger, would be disappointed if I didn't periodically dream up new outdoor adventures for the two of us. Several years had passed since I'd hiked Bald and Speckled Mountains so that suggestion was my latest attempt to keep him entertained. It's all about John.

In the Delorme Atlas, the trailhead for Bald and Speckled Mountains appears easy to locate. It's not. After leaving Route 4 in North Turner, the labyrinth of roads is confusing and some are in poor condition in winter. Fortunately, John is quite adept at operating his GPS. He downloaded the directions from the All Trails website and we followed them to the remote trailhead on Redding Road with only one insignificant malfunction.

The weather was partly sunny and seasonably warm when we arrived at the trailhead where there is parking for a few vehicles and a conspicuous kiosk. The trail surface

was hard-packed at the beginning but it was difficult to predict what conditions would be at higher elevations. We began wearing micro spikes but carried snowshoes. As we were leaving, another hiker arrived who also expressed uncertainty about trail conditions but planned to wear full crampons.

Initially, we enjoyed easy hiking progressing up a gradual incline with a couple of minor stream crossings. After about a half mile, we arrived at ice-covered Little Concord Pond. A trail circumnavigates the pond but the route to Bald Mountain angles hard right.

The ascent of Bald began with a steep icy

pitch. Beyond, the well-packed trail rose steadily in mixed hardwoods and softwoods to a trail junction that leads northeasterly to Speckled Mountain. We followed a short spur path on the right to open ledges at the summit of Bald Mountain. The overlook on the 1,692 foot peak provided excellent views of the surrounding ponds and mountains.

The trail in the saddle between Bald and Speckled was only partially broken. The hiker met at the trailhead had bypassed Bald Mountain summit and could be seen a short distance ahead of us as we traversed through a sparse hardwood forest. Despite some post holing, we elected to continue wearing spikes in anticipation of an imminent precipitous climb on Speckled.

Shortly before reaching the steep sector on Speckled, we met the other hiker who had experienced difficulties with her crampons and decided to return. She declined an offer to join us.

We entered a dense conifer forest and proceeded gradually onto a plateau with some open areas. Soon after, the challenging

ascent began. Icy sections required careful maneuvering to a snow-covered escarpment that offered spectacular views facing west. After our strenuous effort, emerging onto that splendid location was cause for celebration.

The prominent overlook initially appeared to be the highpoint but was in actuality a false summit. On the opposite side, the trail dropped into a stand of stunted spruce trees before rising relentlessly. We lost the trail on another expanse of snow-covered ledges. After some exploration, a partially buried cairn revealed the correct route that turned abruptly right. We finished our quest with a dramatic climb to the top of the 2,200 foot peak.

Light winds and glorious panoramic vistas provided the ideal opportunity for an extended respite. The distant peaks of Mount Washington and the Presidential Range were easily discernible from our vantage point.

Treacherous conditions required careful negotiation on our descent of Speckled. We took our time to avoid potentially hazardous falls. Once safely at the bottom, the

remainder of the trek to Bald was uneventful. We couldn't pass Bald without another short digression to enjoy the views.

We completed the journey without ever using our snowshoes. The total distance was slightly less than five miles with about 1,600 feet of elevation gain. John expressed satisfaction with the endeavor so I think he's up for more of my quixotic proposals in the future.

My book *Maine Al Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine* narrates nine more mountaineering adventures around the state. Many of them take place during winter.

Ron Chase resides in Topsham. His latest book, "Maine Al Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine" is available at [www.northcountrypress.com/maine-al-fresco](http://www.northcountrypress.com/maine-al-fresco) or in bookstores and through online retailers. His previous books are "The Great Mars Hill Bank Robbery" and "Mountains for Mortals – New England." Visit his website at [www.ronchase-outdoors.com](http://www.ronchase-outdoors.com) or he can be reached at [ronchaseoutdoors@comcast.net](mailto:ronchaseoutdoors@comcast.net)

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## UMaine Extension 4-H Offers Online Eco Studies Club

ORONO, ME (March 22, 2023) — University of Maine Cooperative Extension 4-H will offer a short-term online 4-H club about algae and its impact on surrounding ecosystems. Intended for youth ages 12–18, the special interest, or SPIN, club will meet from 4–5 p.m. on Wednesdays from April 12–May 17. Required registration closes March 31.

The 4-H Ecological Studies Club will introduce ecological knowledge and experiment skills by exploring Maine's environment in participants' own back yard.

This virtual 4-H citizen scientists club encour-

ages youth to practice community science in their own backyard and report their observations while making connections with fellow citizen scientists in their community and around the state. Club members will also learn about Maine ecology and how to participate in research simply by taking a picture.

The club is free; limited to 12 participants. Register by March 31 on the event webpage to receive the link and at-home materials. For more information or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact 207.581.8206 or [sarah.sparks@maine.edu](mailto:sarah.sparks@maine.edu). Additional information also

is available on the Extension 4-H Virtual Learning webpage. This workshop is supported by Maine EPSCoR at the University of Maine.

4-H is a community for all kids with programs that suit a variety of backgrounds, interests, budgets and schedules. Programs are grounded in the belief that kids learn best by doing. Participants complete hands-on projects in areas like health, science, agriculture and civic engagement in a positive environment where they receive guidance from adult mentors and are encouraged to take on proactive leadership roles.



# Sen. Collins Receives Award for Diabetes Advocacy

WASHINGTON, D.C. (March 24, 2023) – U.S. Senator Susan Collins received the Inaugural Mary Tyler Moore Award from JDRF for her long-standing support of the Type 1 diabetes community. Senator Collins also met with Maine members of JDRF, Bek and Barrett Hoskins.

“Mary Tyler Moore was a pioneer in the entertainment industry and an inspiration to millions of women. I was so fortunate to come to know Mary as a friend, and as someone who dedicated her life to helping others. As international chairman of JDRF, she worked to raise awareness and improve the lives of so many living with Type 1 diabetes,” said Senator Collins. “I am grateful to receive this recognition that honors Mary’s legacy, and I will continue to build on the progress we have made to better treat, prevent, and ultimately cure this disease. With the strong support and advocacy of JDRF chapters across the country, I am confident that we will conquer this terrible disease.”

As the founder and



co-chair of the Senate Diabetes Caucus, Senator Collins has led action in the U.S. Senate to advance priorities that will lower the cost of insulin, invest in research, and improve access to treatment op-

tions.

As the Vice Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Senator Collins has also championed increased funding for diabetes research. The 2023 government funding law included \$2.44 billion to support the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, the primary federal agency responsible for conducting research for the prevention and treatment of diabetes. This is an increase of \$88 million from the previous year’s appropriation. Senator Collins also advocates for the Special Diabetes Program, which has laid the groundwork for Artificial Pancreas systems and spurred the first-ever disease modifying therapy for Type 1 diabetes.

More than 37 million Americans are living with diabetes, and 96 million Americans have prediabetes. JDRF is the leading global organization funding Type 1 diabetes research. Their mission is to accelerate life-changing breakthroughs to cure, prevent, and treat Type 1 diabetes and its complications.

## “Maine Maple Sunday” Resolution Passes Senate Unanimously

WASHINGTON, D.C. (March 24, 2023) – U.S. Senators Susan Collins and Angus King celebrated the Senate’s unanimous passage of a resolution designating March 26, 2023 as “Maine Maple Sunday.” The resolution recognizes the 40th anniversary of the event and the importance of Maine maple syrup production to the state’s economy and culture.

“Maine is proud to be the one of the country’s largest maple syrup producers – and the home to the best tasting syrup in the world! For genera-

tions, Maine people have come together each spring to tap trees, boil sap, and make this delicious product,” said Senators Collins and King. “Maine Maple Sunday honors this long tradition, celebrates the excellence of the maple industry, and recognizes the contributions of the small-maple businesses across our state. We’re glad the Senate unanimously understood the importance of this uniquely-Maine day and has given it the national recognition it deserves.”

Maine is home to more than 520 maple syrup

producers and 800 full- and part-time syrup jobs that results in an annual syrup output of 575,000 gallons with a value of \$21.6 million and is estimated to generate \$55.6 million in economy activity. The state is the nation’s third-largest producer of maple syrup, and accounts for 17% of all U.S. produced maple syrup. Every March, sugarhouses across Maine host Maple Sunday events, an annual celebration showcasing maple syrup operations throughout Maine that serves as a catalyst for sales.

# MaineCF Scholarships For Business Students

PORTLAND & ELLSWORTH, ME (March 23, 2023)—Applications are currently being accepted for the Maine Community Foundation’s (MaineCF) Patriot Education Scholarship Fund.

This renewable scholarship supports graduates of Maine high schools who are enrolled part-time or full-time in pursuit of a business degree and entering their freshman, sophomore, junior, or senior year at a Maine college or university. Preference is given to applicants who have a demonstrated interest in personal and commercial insurance professions.

The deadline is June 1. For more information

or to apply, visit [www.mainecef.org](http://www.mainecef.org).

The Maine Community Foundation brings people and resources together to build a better Maine through strategic giving, community leadership, personalized service, local expertise and strong investments. To learn more about the foundation, visit [www.mainecef.org](http://www.mainecef.org).

## \$1.4M Goes to Historic Preservation, Tribal Communities

WASHINGTON, D.C. (March 22, 2023) – U.S. Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) and Angus King (I-ME) announced that the Maine State Historic Preservation Office and four tribal communities have received a total of \$1,309,044 from the National Park Service’s Historic Preservation Fund.

“Maine’s history began thousands of years ago as the homeland of the Wabanaki. Maine’s tribal communities have a rich culture and a proud heritage, and this funding will support their efforts to pass down their intricate artwork, unique languages, and other traditions to younger generations,” said Senators Collins and King in a joint statement. “In addition, this investment by the National Park Services will help the

State Historic Preservation Office continue its historical preservation and education. The office identifies, evaluates, and protects Maine’s significant cultural resources and is well deserving of this funding.”

The funding was allocated as follows:

The Maine State Historic Preservation Office received \$877,873.

The Passamaquoddy Tribe received \$117,521.

Penobscot Nation received \$113,769.

Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians received \$103,705.

Mi’kmaq Nation received \$96,176.

Since its establishment in 1977, the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) has provided more than \$2.7 billion in historic preservation

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# Arts & Entertainment

## ‘Another Spectacular Evening of Music, Magic, and Laughter’



The Cabaret Committee (L-R) Pam Vaillancourt, Diane Dennis, Carol DeRoy, Lorraine Cote and Bonnie Stone.

AUBURN, ME (March 24, 2023) -- Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish is pleased to announce their upcoming Cabaret Show to be held Saturday, April 15th at 7 p.m. in the Sacred Heart Church hall, corner of Minot and Western Avenue in Auburn. The cast and crew are gearing up for

what is sure to be another spectacular evening of music, magic, and laughter. This will mark its long awaited return as the last Cabaret was held in February of 2020. This Cabaret will have a Roaring 20's theme to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of Sacred Heart Church which was established in 1923.

Louis Philippe will return as MC as well as a number of performers from past shows. Tickets are \$12 for adults and \$6 for children and can be purchased at the church office, 30 Sacred Heart Place, Auburn. For more information, please call the office at 207-782-8096.

## Preschool Playdates at Lewiston Public Library

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schoolers and their families are invited to drop-in during our Preschool Playdates to engage in imaginative play and build friendships. A variety of toys, games, and crafts, including a play kitchen with felt food, will be available during all sessions. The programs will take place in the Children's Program Room on the 3rd floor.

The programs are free and there is no registration required. All families with children between the ages of 2-6 are welcome to attend. Siblings are also welcome.

The Lewiston Public Library is located downtown at 200 Lisbon Street at the corner of Pine Street. For more information on children's programming contact the Children's Department at 513-3133 or LPLKids@lewistonmaine.gov.

LEWISTON, ME (March 24, 2023) -- The Lewiston Public Library will be offering drop-in preschool playdates on Thursdays from 3-5pm and Saturdays from 1-3:30pm in the Children's Program Room. The first date for this program is Thursday, April 6th.

Drop-in and join us for Preschool Playdates! Preschool Playdates! Pre-

## Annual Card Party Coming Up in Lewiston



Left to Right Front: Rolande Breton, Jeanne Pacheco, Anita Grenier, Claudette Lussier, Florence Marquis. Standing: Rita Gagnon, Pauline Plourde, Anita Madore, and Rita Lajoie.

LEWISTON, ME (March 24, 2023) -- The Ladies of St Anne Sodality of Holy Family Prince of Peace Parish are planning their Annual Card Party to be held on April 19, beginning at 6 PM. Doors will be opened at 5:30 in the Parish Hall at 607 Sabattus St. Tickets are now on sale for \$5, and may be purchased by contacting any Board Members or Anita Grenier at 782-4516. Tickets may also be sold at the door.

There will be a 50/50, Door Prizes, and Ruffled Prizes. Light refreshments will be available.

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# Become a Stream Explorer, Join Audubon’s Science Project

**FALMOUTH, ME (March 24, 2023)** -- Spring is here! As the snow melts and Maine streams and rivers start to flow freely, that means it's officially time to check on these streams, explore water quality, and find some bugs!

Large aquatic insects (or macroinvertebrates) are excellent indicators of a changing environment. Some require cold, clean water and high-quality habitat. Others can tolerate warm, polluted water or poor habitat quality. So the presence or absence of different species can inform us about both water quality and the ecological health of a stream.

Maine Audubon partnered with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, Lakes Environmental Association, and the Portland Water District to create the Stream Explorers program, to recruit, train, and support volunteers interested in searching streams in the Sebago Lake Watershed for macroinvertebrates that are indicators of water quality.

Become a "Stream Explorer" and help survey Maine streams! There are two ways to join.

Attend a free in-person training on April 27 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm at Maine Audubon's Gilsland Farm Audubon Center,



20 Gilsland Farm Road in Falmouth. Register at [maineaudubon.org/events](https://maineaudubon.org/events).

If you can't make it to the in-person training, you can watch training videos online (the videos can be found at [maineaudubon.org/projects/stream-explorers](https://maineaudubon.org/projects/stream-explorers)).

Both options will teach you how to find and identify approximately 40 "Least and Most Wanted" aquatic insects that are indicators of stream

health. After the training, you'll be asked to visit one to three streams between May and October, searching for the Least and Most Wanted macroinvertebrates. You'll enter your data online, or mail it in, and have the opportunity to see how "your" streams measure up against others in Maine. We will provide training, equipment, maps of the survey streams, and data forms and instructions.

The data collected by community scientists will provide insight into water quality and the overall health of streams and rivers. Macroinvertebrates are also an important food

source for many other aquatic and semi-aquatic species; and they are often the basis for much of the stream food web. If there are very few insects in the stream, the rest of the aquatic food web will be affected.

This is a fun and family-friendly way to get involved in collecting valuable data. Please join this community science project to help Maine wildlife and habitat.

More information:  
Email: [conserve@maineaudubon.org](mailto:conserve@maineaudubon.org)  
Call: Hannah Young, Maine Audubon Conservation Program Associate, 207-781-2330 x219

## FEMA Awards Maine \$2.7M for Covid-19 Response Costs

## National Humanities Medal Goes to Maine Poet, Richard Blanco

**MAINE (March 20, 2023)** -- The Federal Emergency Management Agency will be sending nearly \$2.7 million to the State of Maine to reimburse the state for purchasing personal protective equipment for state employees during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The \$2,693,872 Public Assistance grant will reimburse the Maine Department of Administrative and Financial Services for the purchase and distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE) materials such as masks to

public-facing employees in other state agencies between October 2020 and July 2021.

The PPE was distributed to state agencies within the Department of Education, Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control.

"FEMA is pleased to be able to assist the State of Maine with these costs," said FEMA Region 1 Regional Administrator Lori Ehrlich. "Providing resources for our partners on the front lines of the pandemic fight is critical to their success, and to our

success as a nation."

So far, FEMA has provided more than \$232 million in Public Assistance grants to Maine to reimburse the state for pandemic-related expenses.

Additional information about FEMA's Public Assistance program is available at <https://www.fema.gov/public-assistance-local-state-tribal-and-non-profit>. To learn more about the COVID-19 response in Maine, please visit <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4522>.

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (March 21, 2023)**—U.S. Senator Susan Collins issued the following statement congratulating award-winning Maine poet, author, professor, and public speaker Richard Blanco on receiving a National Humanities Medal from President Biden on Tuesday during a ceremony at the White House:

"Congratulations to Maine poet and author Richard Blanco, who received the National Humanities Medal at the

White House today," said Senator Collins. "This prestigious award recognizes Richard's powerful, inspiring writings and the important contributions he has made to his community in Bethel, to our state, and to communities across our country."

Mr. Blanco, a son of Cuban immigrants, was born in Madrid and grew up in New York City and Miami. He moved to Bethel 15 years ago. In 2013, for President Obama's second inauguration, he read an original poem that he

wrote.

The National Humanities Medal, which was created in 1997, honors individuals or groups whose work has deepened the nation's understanding of the humanities and broadened Americans' engagement with history, literature, languages, philosophy, and other humanities.

Some of the other recipients of the National Humanities Medal today included Mindy Kaling, Bruce Springsteen, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Gladys Knight, and Vera Wang.

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# Fill the Plate Breakfast Presented to Benefit Meals on Wheels

LEWISTON, ME (Marc 15, 2023) – SeniorsPlus, the designated Agency on Aging for Western Maine, held its annual breakfast to benefit its Meals on Wheels nutrition program. The 2023 Fill the Plate Breakfast had a capacity audience on the morning of Friday, March 10 the Hilton Garden Inn Riverwatch in Auburn. The breakfast honored Auburn resident Eloise O’Neill with the 2023 Ikaria Award and featured a talk by former WGME-TV award-winning, longtime anchor Kim Block.

Kim Block, the five-time Emmy award winning journalist who was the anchor at CBS affiliate WGME-TV for 39 years, stepped down after suffering from a traumatic brain injury in 2019. Unexpected open heart surgery followed in 2020. At the breakfast, she shared how life can change in a

moment and how she has brought meaning to her new life in a talk titled, “Becoming the Story: A Maine Broadcast Journalist Shares How Surviving a Traumatic Brain Injury Changed Her Life.”

The event included the presentation of the 2023 Ikaria Award, which recognizes an individual or organization for singular and outstanding contributions toward improving the lives of older adults, to Eloise O’Neill, who was the Executive Director of SeniorsPlus from 1981-2003.

Ikaria is a Greek island in the Aegean Sea. It is considered one of the world’s five “Blue Zones” – places where an estimated one in three members of the population regularly lives an active life into their 90s.

The Fill the Plate Breakfast is presented in conjunction with March for Meals, a national campaign of the Meals on



Kim Block (left) was the keynote at the 2023 Fill the Plate Breakfast to benefit Meals on Wheels at SeniorsPlus, Western Maine’s designated Area Agency on Aging. Auburn resident Eloise O’Neill (right) received the 2023 Ikaria Award for her outstanding contributions toward improving the lives of older adults.

Wheels America.

Last year, SeniorsPlus delivered almost 175,000 meals to homebound older adults and adults with disabilities in Androscoggin, Franklin and Oxford coun-

ties through its Meals on Wheels program. Each meal provides one-third of the recommended daily allowance of nutrition, a safety check and a visit to these vulnerable adults. The majority of the clients

of Meals on Wheels are lower income or on fixed income.

The overall program goal of SeniorsPlus is to assist older adults and adults with disabilities in our tri-county area to remain at home safely for as long as possible. The overwhelming majority of older adults (greater than 95% in an AARP survey) wish to remain at home until they die. The Meals on Wheels program provides nourishment, socialization and regular safety checks.

Since 1972, SeniorsPlus has been improving the lives of older adults and adults with disabilities. As the designated Area Agency on Aging for Western Maine, SeniorsPlus provides statewide services with an emphasis on Androscoggin, Franklin and Oxford counties for core services (ie nutrition, information and assistance) that support independent living, healthy aging, and

fight isolation. The mission of SeniorsPlus is to enrich the lives of older people and adults with disabilities, their families and communities, and to support them to make informed choices. SeniorsPlus envisions a future where all older adults and individuals with disabilities are engaged and respected while living quality, independent lives in the communities of their choice. Annually, SeniorsPlus serves 10,000 individuals and fields 185,000 phone inquiries. SeniorsPlus offers a network of support, including information and assistance, short-term care management, Medicare counseling, caregiver support and respite, health and wellness education, benefits counseling, and Meals on Wheels and congregate dining. Most services are free. SeniorsPlus is grateful for the support of its many donors and volunteers.

# Revolutionary Power of Diverse Thought Comes to Senior College

AUBURN, ME (March 24, 2023) -- The Senior College in the Community program at The Auburn Public Library, will feature Bill Frayer’s discussion of Elif Shafak’s, Ted Talk, “The Revolutionary Power of Diverse Thought” on

April 13, 2023 at 2:00pm. This will be held at the Auburn Public Library, Androscoggin Room on the ground floor, 49 Spring St. Auburn, ME. The program is free and open to the public, if you have any questions please call the reference desk

207-333-6640 ext 4.

“From populist demagogues we learn the indispensability of democracy” says novelist Elif Shafak, “From isolationists we learn the need for global solidarity. And from tribalists we will learn the beauty of cos-

mopolitanism.” A native of Turkey, Shafak has experienced firsthand the devastation that a loss of diversity can bring-and she knows the revolutionary power of plurality in response to authoritarianism.

In this passionate

personal talk she reminds us that there are no binaries, in politics, emotions and our identities. “One should never, ever remain silent for fear of complexity,” Shafak says.

We will review and discuss this talk. Mr. Frayer is a long-time Senior

College instructor. He has a degree in English from Brown University and in Adult Ed. from USM. He taught at CMCC for 35 years and likes to encourage active participation in his classes. We hope you will join us for this interesting, topical program.



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# Hermon High Student Named Poetry Out Loud Champion



Abigail Case of Hermon High School is the Maine State Poetry Out Loud champion. She recited three poems: “Abecedarian Requiring Further Examination of Anglikan Seraphym Subjugation of a Wild Indian Rezervation” by Natalie Diaz. “Respectability” by Tina Boyer Brown, and “April Love” by Ernest Dowson.

LEWISTON, ME (March 24, 2023)—Poets, performers, educators, friends, and family gathered at the Olin Arts Center in Lewiston on March 13 to cheer on 10 finalists in the championship rounds of the Maine Poetry Out Loud State Finals. Following three rounds of poetry recitations, Abigail Case, Grade 11 of Hermon High School, was named the champion. She will advance to the national competition in Washington D.C. Jaime Bueya-Mbiyavanga of Portland High School was named the runner-up.

After two years of virtual competitions due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Poetry Out Loud returned as a live event. At the Maine State Finals, Portland Poet Laureate Maya Williams and former Poetry Out Loud state champion Allan Monga, co-hosted the event. Maine Poet Laureate Julia Bouwsma delivered a comedic and inspirational keynote speech and read one of her original poems. Any nervousness that remained among the participants was squashed by the entertainment of Janoah “The Jester” Bailin who entertained the crowd between the rounds of recitation.

Judges Professor Ian-Khara Ellasante, Jeri Theriault, Janet Mitcheiko, and Todd McKinley worked carefully to evaluate each performance. The recitations are scored based on the following criteria: voice and articulation,

dramatic appropriateness, evidence of understanding, accuracy, and overall performance. At the state and national finals, each participant memorizes and recites three poems. One poem must be 25 lines or fewer, and one must be written before the 20th century.

This year’s participants at the Maine State Finalists:

Jaime Bueya-Mbiyavanga - Portland High School

Abigail Case - Hermon High School

Mackenzie Chaput - Gardiner Area High School

Marcus Gallagher - Oak Hill High School

Willow Knowles - Kennebunk High School

Lyra Legawiec - Mt. Ararat High School

Innana Piccininni - Bangor High School

John Punnachalil - Oceanside High School

Charlotte Schatz - Maine Coast Waldorf School

Alice Willette - Waterville Senior High School

As the event concluded, Maine Teacher of the Year Matt Bernstein handed out the awards and announced the winners. Abigail Case’s three poem



Jaime Bueya-Mbiyavanga of Portland High School recites a poem at the Maine Poetry Out Loud State Finals at Bates College. Bueya-Mbiyavanga was named runner-up.

recitations cumulated the highest score among the participants. Abigail will now bring the power of her spoken word to our nation’s capital to compete for a total of \$50,000 in awards and school stipends, as well as a \$20,000 scholarship. The 2023 Poetry Out Loud National Finals are planned to be held May 8-10.

Poetry Out Loud is an arts education program funded by the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the Poetry Foundation, and state arts agencies. The program offers free educational materials and a dynamic recitation competition for high school students across the country. Students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, as well as learn about literary history and contemporary life. Twenty Maine schools and 2,440 students participated in this year’s Poetry Out Loud program.

For more information about Maine Poetry Out Loud, and how your school can participate next year, visit [www.mainearts.com](http://www.mainearts.com) or contact the Maine Arts Commission at [info.mainearts@maine.gov](mailto:info.mainearts@maine.gov).

The Maine Arts Commission fosters and encourages public interest and participation in the cultural heritage and artistic expression in our state. We pursue our mission through partnerships and collaborations, initiatives, advocacy, and grants for organizations, individual artists, communities, and schools throughout Maine.

## MaineCF Scholarships Available to Androscoggin County Students

PORTLAND & ELLSWORTH, ME (March 23, 2023) — The Maine Community Foundation (MaineCF) is accepting scholarship applications from Androscoggin County students pursuing two or four-year degrees for the Annette M. Brown Scholarship Fund.

Eligible applicants must demonstrate a level of academic achievement suitable for predicting success in college; strong character and family values; and financial need. Preference will be given to first-generation college students and those attending accredited colleges in Androscoggin County, with secondary preference to those attending schools elsewhere in Maine. Applications from students attending school outside Maine will be given the lowest priority.

Annette M. Brown taught in the Lewiston-Auburn area in the early 1900s. In her 1916 will, she left \$16,000 to establish a scholarship fund to benefit students. Since then, the fund has given thousands of dollars to Androscoggin County students pursuing higher education.

The application deadline is June 1. For more information or to apply, visit [www.maineCF.org/scholarships](http://www.maineCF.org/scholarships).

The Maine Community Foundation brings people and resources together to build a better Maine through strategic giving, community leadership, personalized service, local expertise and strong investments. To learn more about the foundation, visit [www.maineCF.org](http://www.maineCF.org).



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# Collins Leads Effort to Support Students in Rural Communities

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (March 24, 2023)**— In a bipartisan effort to help rural communities thrive, U.S. Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) and Maggie Hassan (D-NH) introduced The Success for Rural Students and Communities Act. Their bill would assist rural students in reaching their higher education goals and connect them with employment opportunities in their hometowns. The legislation is co-sponsored by Senators John Cornyn (R-TX) and Tina Smith (D-MN).

“Supporting the educational aspirations of rural students not only helps them to achieve their personal and career goals but also contributes to the success of our communities,” said Senator Collins. “Our bipartisan bill encourages schools and employers to forge partnerships that will put students on pathways to the high-need jobs available where they live. I encourage our colleagues to join us in supporting this legislation that will connect rural students with educational and economic opportunities across the country.”

“We must do more to ensure that rural students can access higher education opportunities that lead to good-paying jobs in their communities,” said Senator Hassan. “This bipartisan bill builds on our success last year to increase funding that supports rural students. Senator Collins and I will keep working together to strengthen rural education, which in turn supports rural communities, by boosting the local workforce and helping the economy thrive.”

The Success for Rural Students and Communities Act would improve college access for rural students by spurring innovation and investment in new strategies. Specifically, the bill would create a demonstration program to encourage rural community stakeholders to partner together to help their students matriculate, graduate, and enter the workforce. These partnerships would draw on the talents of local school districts, institutions of higher education, regional economic development entities, and rural community-serving organizations.

The bill takes a holistic approach that assists students from high school with obtaining their first job by:

- Encouraging rural students to pursue higher education
- The bill calls for partnerships to coalesce around approaches that boost the higher education enrollment rates of rural students, including by exposing students and their families to college campuses, courses, programs, and internships, and to the career pathways to jobs at home.
- Removing barriers to graduation from post-secondary education

Many rural students are the first in their families to attend college. The bill would give partnerships the authority and resources to help rural students navigate some of the common challenges of higher education, such as financial aid and selecting the educational programs that meet their needs.

Putting students on pathways into the high-need jobs available where they live

The bill would encourage partnerships to work with employers to determine what credentials are needed for rural students to be hired, whether that is a college degree, a skilled trade credential, or a professional certificate.

A number of strategies could be developed and tested, including work-based learning opportunities such as apprenticeships, internships, and stackable career credentials.

Due in part to Senators Collins and Hassan’s advocacy, the year-end government funding bill doubled funding for the Rural Postsecondary and Economic Development Program, which provides grants to improve enrollment, completion rates, and employment opportunities for post-secondary rural students. The bipartisan Success for Rural Students and Communities Act would further strengthen this grant program.

# Legislative Council Votes Not to Advance Appeal of REAL ID Act

**AUGUSTA, ME (March 24, 2023)** – The Legislative Council of the Maine Legislature today voted not to advance a Joint Resolution calling on the United States Congress to repeal the REAL ID Act of 2005, seeking to protect Mainers’ personal privacy and save taxpayer dollars. The vote fell along party lines, with four Republicans voting for the Resolution, and six Democrats voting against the Resolution. The Resolution, a collaboration between the sponsor, State Representative Laurel Libby (R-Auburn), and the ACLU, and presented to the Legislative Council by State Representative Maggie O’Neil (D-Saco), will not advance to the full legislature for consideration.

REAL ID presents a number of serious problems without addressing any. The law forces local governments to create a one-stop-shop for identity thieves seeking to harm Mainers. In order to obtain a REAL ID, residents must submit multiple sensitive and often difficult to obtain documents to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, potentially including social security cards, insurance policies, and birth certificates. The information collected is then required by federal law to be shared with every other state in the country.

“The Maine legislature has a long bipartisan history of protecting its citizens’ privacy, refusing to participate in Real ID from 2007 to 2017. Mainers value their privacy, as evidenced by the fact that only 15% of Maine residents have opted in to Real ID at this point. This Joint Resolution had the support of the ACLU, Secretary of State, and members of the legislature on both sides, including a verbal commitment from Speaker Talbot Ross, who then voted against the Resolution” said Rep. Libby. “I am disappointed that so many of my colleagues prioritized partisan politics over supporting the privacy rights of our fellow Mainers and voted against this resolution.”

# Cloutier Introduces Bill to Expand Healthcare Workforce

**AUGUSTA, ME (March 23, 2023)** – Rep. Kristen Cloutier, D-Lewiston, introduced legislation Tuesday that would expand Maine’s health care workforce by studying ways to integrate foreign-trained physicians into Maine’s health care system.

LD 937 would create the Commission Regarding Foreign-trained Physicians Living in Maine to examine the existing skills and training of physicians, with a focus on those with refugee or asylum seeker status, and determine how best to meet current gaps in the state’s health care workforce.

“There are many qualified physicians living in Maine who have been trained in other countries that are currently unable to practice medicine and support their families here,” said Cloutier. “This bill would be an important first step to explore how we can remove existing barriers and ensure that we are maximizing the skills, training and talents of foreign-trained physicians living in Maine. This will increase the cultural competency of our health care workforce and address the current shortage of medical professionals that we are facing, while also allowing those professionals to do the work they love.”

Many health care facilities across the state, including MaineHealth, have noted a workforce shortage and the need to increase the number of trained clinical professionals, including

physicians.

The Legislature’s Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services will hold a work session on the bill in the coming weeks.

Cloutier is the Assistant House Majority Leader and is currently serving her third consecutive term in the Maine House of Representatives. She represents House District 94, which includes part of Lewiston, her hometown.

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

# Maine Receives Nearly \$5M in Additional LIHEAP Funding

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (March 15, 2023)** – U.S. Senator Susan Collins, the Vice Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, and Congressman Jared Golden announced that Maine received an additional \$4,949,580 for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

The funding represents the remainder of the LIHEAP funding that was secured by Senator Collins, Senator Jack Reed (D-RI), and Congressman Golden in the 2023 government funding bill that was signed into law in December. Last month, Senators Collins and Reed led 32 Senators in sending a letter to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra to urge the immediate allocation of emergency LIHEAP funds.

The \$4,949,580 awarded to Maine today is in addition to both the \$42.5 million that was allocated to the state in November and the \$6,531,152 that was released in February. In total, Maine has received nearly \$54 million this winter season through LIHEAP to help eligible households facing significant increases in their utility bills this winter, with residential electricity prices in some states forecast to rise over 60 percent, propane up 40 percent, and natural gas prices up nearly 30 percent.

“As Mainers dig out from yet another significant snowstorm this week, the release of this heating assistance is well-timed to help low-income families and seniors who are facing enormous financial challenges to stay warm this winter,” said Senator Collins. “As the Vice Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, I will continue to advocate for this much-needed funding to help prevent vulnerable Mainers from having to make the impossible choice between paying for heat and paying for food or medicine.”

“Energy prices in Maine and across the country have remained far too high for far too long, and some of the heaviest burdens have fallen on our seniors, friends and neighbors on fixed incomes, and other Mainers in need,” said Congressman Golden. “As any Mainer knows, this winter is not over. This critical funding will provide relief to families in Maine struggling to heat their homes through this last cold stretch. I’m committed to continuing to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in the House and the Senate to secure the resources needed to keep every Maine home heated at a reasonable cost.”

LIHEAP is administered by states and accessed through local Community Action Agencies. Eligibility for LIHEAP is based on income, family size, and the availability of resources. Senior citizens and those receiving Social Security Disability or SSI benefits are encouraged to apply as early as possible, but applications will be open to everyone through spring of 2023 — or until available funding is exhausted.



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# Janelle LoSciuto Joins Rinck as Public Relations Manager

**LEWISTON, ME (March 5, 2023)** – Janelle LoSciuto was recently hired by Rinck Advertising as a public relations manager. LoSciuto brings a dozen years of professional experience in communications, community relations, development, and nonprofit leadership to Rinck, a full-service marketing and advertising agency.

LoSciuto most recently was founder and owner of VIBRANT Communication Strategies in Westbrook. She helped clients with integrated communications from branding to strategy and social and digital

communications. LoSciuto was previously executive director at the Arts & Cultural Alliance of Freeport. She led the board in the nonprofit’s capital campaign for a new arts facility in Freeport, attracted more than 200 new donors, and created a brand identity for the organization.

At Rinck, LoSciuto’s role will include managing public relations services such as brand strategy, media relations, thought leadership, content development and crisis communications for a wide range of clients in biotechnology, consumer packaged goods, healthcare



Janelle LoSciuto. Credit: Rinck Advertising

and other industries.

“We’re delighted to have Janelle as a member of our team,” said Katie Greenlaw, VP of Public Relations and Influencer Marketing. “As someone who has both owned her own business and worked in the nonprofit industry, Janelle is accustomed to being a ‘jack of all trades’, which is a critical skill in the agency world. She has leapt into learning about our clients and their industries, and we’re excited to see how she will help them build their brands.”

LoSciuto has also been director of develop-

ment for the Network for Regional Healthcare Improvement, and she held the roles of interim executive director, senior director of development, and community director at the Maine chapter of the March of Dimes during a seven-year tenure with the nonprofit.

LoSciuto earned a bachelor’s degree in Music Performance from the University of Southern Maine and has a master’s degree in Arts, Entertainment and Media Management from Full Sail University. She lives in Westbrook with her husband and their two children.

# Age-Friendly Community Committee Hosts Clothing Drive

**AUBURN, ME (March 21, 2023)** – Auburn’s Age-Friendly Community Committee is organizing a clothing donation drive for the unhoused com-

munity. New, unused clothing and cash donations can be dropped off at the Hasty Community Center at Auburn Recreation (Pettengill Park) during business

hours, 8:00AM-4:30PM. Alternatively, residents can contact Ward 5 City Councilor, Leroy Walker, at [lwalker@auburnmaine.gov](mailto:lwalker@auburnmaine.gov) to schedule drop-offs

directly. Warm outerwear, rain gear, and other protective items of clothing are needed. The Committee will hold two events for those in need to collect

new clothes. On March 25 from 1:00-3:00PM, and April 8 from 2:00-4:00PM, unhoused individuals and families can visit the Auburn Senior Community

Center in Pettengill Park to pick up clothes and dispose of any unwanted clothing. Public transportation to the Senior Center is available via citylink bus.

# City of Lewiston Announces April 15 as Citywide Litter Pick Up Day

**LEWISTON, ME (March 24, 2023)** -- Lewiston’s spring 2023 Citywide Litter Pick Up Day will occur on Sat., April 15, and individuals and teams are being sought to participate. An event overview is available at [www.lewistonmaine.gov/litter-pickup](http://www.lewistonmaine.gov/litter-pickup).

“Public Works truly appreciates all the helpers who can join us on this Saturday or any day that works for you and your family,” said Mary Ann Brenchick, Public Works Director.

The 8 AM – noon event will commence at Kennedy Park, 120

Park Street, Lewiston, where Lewiston Public Works personnel will provide complimentary bags, gloves, pickers, and buckets. Online registration is available at [www.lewistonmaine.gov/litter-april15](http://www.lewistonmaine.gov/litter-april15), and participants may register individually or as a team member. Par-

ticipation is free.

“Keeping our city beautiful is everyone’s job. I hope residents will join me this April 15 for our spring litter pick up,” said Mayor Carl L. Sheline.

When registering, options are provided for litter disposal:

- return litter to Kennedy Park; Public Works collection vehicles will be on site;
- request Public Works to pick up litter at a specified site noted on registration form;
- call Public Works Dispatch the morning of the event stating

- a pick up location (513-3000, X3450)
- dispose of litter through a participant’s weekly trash pick-up.

Safety guidelines are accessible at [www.lewistonmaine.gov/safety-april15](http://www.lewistonmaine.gov/safety-april15) and will also be distributed at Kennedy Park the day of the event.

# Tri-Town Optimist Club Student of the Month



Hunter Oehme (L) with Principal Erik Anderson (R)

**(March 24, 2023)** -- The Tri-Town Optimist Club of Mechanic Falls, Minot and Poland is proud to announce its RSU 16 Student of the Month recipient for March, Hunter Oehme. Hunter, a senior

at Poland Regional High School, was selected by staff for his outstanding leadership qualities and his overall positive outlook on life. He is described as a mature, delightful and witty conversationalist who

has a genuine compassion for those around him. He approaches each day with an appreciation for the ‘absurdities of life’ as well as an inner determination and pride that consistently have a positive impact on others.

# Central Maine ACO Makes National Honor Roll

**LEWISTON, ME (March 21, 2023)** -- Central Maine ACO (Accountable Care Organization) has been named to the Harvard Pilgrim Healthcare Physician Group Honor Roll. Central Maine ACO includes Central Maine Healthcare providers and facilities and a number of external physician groups.

The honor roll highlights physician groups that have achieved exceptional results in their approach to disease prevention and the treatment of acute and chronic illness for both adult and pediatric patients. Central Maine ACO is among only four groups in Maine, and 58 groups, nationwide, to receive the distinction.

Harvard Pilgrim, a Point32Health company, selected the Honor Roll physician groups based on 2021 clinical performance measured against national standards set by HEDIS® (Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set), a tool developed for the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) to assess the clinical performance of doctors and other medical professionals.

In its evaluation of physician groups, Harvard Pilgrim reviewed performance in three domains of clinical care affecting both adult and pediatric patients: acute, chronic and preventive care. Physician groups were identified

as Honor Roll practices based on points earned for performance on 15 measures such as appropriate treatment for children with upper respiratory infection, comprehensive diabetes care and breast cancer screenings.

“It is great to see our hardworking ACO providers and care teams get the recognition they deserve,” said John Alexander, MD, MHCM, FACEP president, Central Maine Accountable Care, Central Maine Healthcare. “Providing high quality care to the communities we serve is our priority and we appreciate the commitment of our providers and the recognition of Harvard Pilgrim for our efforts.”

Send all items for  
Names & Faces to the editor.  
Deadline is  
Friday by five pm.



# Sen. King Discusses Challenges Facing Maine’s Veterans

**WASHINGTON D.C. (March 1, 2023)** – The Office of U.S. Senator Angus King (I-Maine) today released the February episode of the Senator’s “Inside Maine” podcast. Senator King, who was recently appointed to the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee (SVAC), was joined by committee Chairman Jon Tester (D-Montana), and David Richmond, Director of the Maine Bureau of Veterans’ Services. Together, Senator King and his guests discussed the challenges facing our veterans, oversight of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and the Committee’s legislative priorities for the 118th Congress.

“America’s veterans made selfless sacrifices to protect our country, our freedoms, and our values,” said Senator King. “Now, we have an obligation to make sure the men and women who served receive the quality care and support that they deserve. We’ve made a lot of progress over the last few years, like passing the PACT Act to support veterans exposed to burn pits, but I’ve been hearing directly from Maine veterans that there’s still a whole lot of work to be done. I’m looking forward to working with my dear friend, Chairman Jon Tester, on the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee to make sure that our military community can to live healthy, happy lives both in the service and in

the years that follow.”

Jon Tester, the senior U.S. Senator from Montana has been on SVAC since 2007 and Chairman/Ranking Member since 2017. He has authored and passed laws increasing veterans’ access to health care, reducing red tape in the benefits process, and creating more job opportunities for veterans.

David Richmond is the Director of the Maine Bureau of Veterans’ Services. An Army veteran, David served as an Armor Officer on active duty at Ft. Riley in Kansas as a Tank Platoon Leader, a Heavy Mortar Platoon Leader, and a Battalion Adjutant. After leaving active service in 1997, David served in the Maine Army National

Guard as an Infantry Officer until 2004. David began working for the Maine Bureau of Veterans’ Services in 1998, and he was appointed as Bureau Director in 2019.

Senator King is also a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) and has repeatedly pressed for action from top DoD officials on the issue of servicemember suicide. Additionally, he recently spearheaded the passage of legislation to better track and study servicemember suicides by job assignment. Senator King has also worked to properly honor and recognize the sacrifices of Purple Heart medal recipients, protect veterans from fraud, and expand veteran assisted

living services.

As a member of the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee, Senator King looks forward to overseeing the VA and ensuring the proper implementation of various programs, such as the PACT Act and the John Scott Hannon Act. Senator King hopes to help improve the bureau’s capacity by investing in its workforce, facilities, and other modernization efforts.

Last year, Senator King conducted nine interviews with Maine veterans as part of the Library of Congress’ Veterans History Project, an effort by the Library to collect, preserve and distribute the personal accounts of American war veterans so that future generations may hear directly

from veterans and better understand the realities of war.

The “Inside Maine Podcast with Senator Angus King” is a 30-minute program that aims to help keep Maine people informed about issues of the day, how they affect life in the state, and how they factor into Senator King’s work as one of two independents in the U.S. Senate. Senator King’s podcast builds on his existing radio show that airs on Newsradio WGAN in Portland, Maine between 10 and 11 a.m. typically on the last Saturday of the month.

To listen to the February edition of Senator King’s podcast, visit [www.king.senate.gov](http://www.king.senate.gov) or find it on Apple Podcasts.

# U.S. Small Business Admin, ME Announces Award Winners

**AUGUSTA, ME (March 15, 2023)** – The U.S. Small Business Administration is pleased to announce that Carolyn Delaney, Owner of Journey Magazine in Portland has been selected to receive the U.S. Small Business Administration’s 2023 Small Business Person of the Year Award for Maine.

“Over the past two years, America has had a record-breaking 10.5 million people apply to start businesses nationally and 332,000 across New England. I’m thrilled to recognize the strong, resilient, and innovative small business award winners leading the way from across Maine,” said Mike Vlacich, SBA New En-

gland Regional Administrator. “Small businesses like these are the reason we are emerging from the pandemic stronger. I congratulate them on their achievements and their role in creating jobs and powering our nation’s historic economic comeback.”

“Every year when we take this opportunity to recognize the amazing work being done by small businesses in Maine, it’s a challenge to choose only a few. We’re thrilled to recognize Carolyn Delaney of Journey Magazine for the critical work she does in communities across Maine and the nation as our Small Business Person of the Year, and we can’t wait to recognize all of our fantas-



**U.S. Small Business Administration**

tic award winners at our awards ceremony in May,” said Diane Sturgeon, SBA Maine District Director.

Journey Magazine is a print and online media company designed to provide resources to individuals going through recovery, and also holds panel conversations focused on reducing the stigma associated with addiction and recovery. The business was established by Ms. Delaney in 2019, and in the years since has grown to a distribution of over 15,000 print copies of the magazine every two

months. Journey Magazine has used the services of the SBA’s Women’s Business Center at CEI, and SBA guaranteed loan programs since starting four years ago. Ms. Delaney was selected for this award for the growth of her business, the innovative nature of the business, and especially for the impact that Journey Magazine’s services have provided to service providers and individuals across the country.

Ms. Delaney was nominated for this award by Sarah Guerette, Director of the CEI Women’s Business Centers. Ms. Delaney and the other Small Business Award winners will be recognized at a ceremony to be held at Hilton Garden Inn in Freeport on May 24th.

Nominated businesses selected as winners for the other categories are:

Maine and New England Jeffrey Butland Family Owned Business of the Year: Brodis Blueberries of Hope Gwen Brodis

Maine and New England Veteran Owned Small Business of the Year: Michelle Goulet, Kidz Go Eco Nature School of Saco

Maine Home Based Business of the Year: Kim Napolitano-Perry, Perry Home Naturals of Oxford

Maine Woman Owned Small Business of the Year: Laura Marston, GoGo Refill of South Portland

Maine Young Entrepreneur of the Year: Elissa Nally, Something to Wag About of Ellsworth

Maine Minority Owned Small Business of the Year: Selina Chan, Tealight Studio of Portland

Maine Micro-Enterprise of the Year: Holly Arbuckle, Singing Pastures LLC of Newcastle

Maine Small Business Manufacturer of the Year: Betty Crush, Mom’s Organic Munchies of Freeport

Maine Financial Services Champion of the Year: Daniel Wallace, CEI

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# Turner’s Pastor Christner Opens Senate Session with Prayer



Senator Jeff Timberlake, Pastor Steve Christner and President Troy Jackson

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**AUGUSTA, ME (March 22, 2023)** – On Tuesday, March 21st Senator Jeff Timberlake (R-Androscoggin) was pleased to welcome Pastor Steve Christner of the Calvary Baptist Church in Turner to the Senate Chamber. Pastor Christner opened the Senate session in prayer.



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**Fridays March 24 through April 28**  
WILTON -- Opening Minds through Art, Education Center of SeniorsPlus at 284 Main St., Wilton

Through a series of classes, OMA engages students with dementia in creating free-wheeling art. Contact SeniorsPlus, at 207-795-4010, edcenter@seniorsplus.org.

**April 1, May 6**  
WESTBROOK -- Prides Corner Community Church, 235 Pride St. Bean Supper \$10 per person: Two kinds of baked beans, mac and cheese, ham, coleslaw, bread and brownie. Eat in at 5:00PM or Take Out from 4:30-5:30PM. Call 207-415-9260 to reserve your individual meal today.

**April 1**  
GORHAM -- Public Bean Supper, White Rock Community Clubhouse, 34 Wilson Road, Gorham. Saturday, April 1, 4:30-6:00pm

Eat in or take out, no pre-orders. Meal includes baked kidney & pea beans, coleslaw, potato salad, macaroni & cheese, biscuits, hot dogs and dessert. Wearing of masks for those who are not vaccinated is suggested.

\$10 adults, \$5 under 12 Follow us on Facebook for updates: facebook.com/whiterockcommunityclub

**April 4, April 25**  
LEWISTON -- Tuesday, March 14 at 5:30 PM at the Lewiston Public Library: "WHAT IF COM-

# Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

MUNITY IS THE KEY TO OUR RESILIENCE?" DISCUSSION PROJECT

The Lewiston Public Library will host a three-session Discussion Project on March 14, April 4, and April 25. The program, entitled "What if community is the key to our resilience?" will focus on The Water Knife by Paolo Bacigalupi, Vigil Harbor by Julia Glass,, and Parable of the Sower by Octavia Butler.

Free. Books provided. Space is limited and registration is required. Contact info. 513-3135, lpreference@lewistonmaine.gov; www.LPLonline.org

**April 6**  
LEWISTON -- Thursdays 3-5pm and Saturdays 1-3:30pm, starting Thursday, April 6th at 3-5pm at the Lewiston Public Library: PRESCHOOL PLAYDATES

Get ready to PLAY! The Lewiston Public Library will be offering Preschool Playdates for children between the ages of 2-6 and their families in the Children's Department starting April 6th. The playdates will take place from 3-5pm on Thursdays and 1-3:30pm on Saturdays. Participants are invited to drop-in, socialize, and play

with an assortment of toys and activities.

The programs are free and all families with children between the ages of 2-6 are welcome to participate. Siblings are also welcome to attend. There is no registration. 513-3133, LPLKids@lewistonmaine.gov

**Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays**  
LEWISTON -- Total Strength and Balance, Day/time: Mondays, 11-11:45 a.m.; Day/time: Wednesdays, 11-11:45 a.m.; Day/time: Fridays, 10:15-11 a.m. Instructor: Linn Morin, Certified Trainer. Cost: See below. Location: Education Center, 8 Falcon Road, Lewiston

Participants will gain physical and neuro-muscular strength, as well as balance to improve activities of daily living. Lighter weights or soup cans, a basic bouncing ball, and some tubes are used in this seated exercise class. Water is recommended during the class. Check with your physician prior to any exercise class. These classes are in person and masks are required. To register or for more info, call Linn at 523-9055. Cost is covered by most supplemental Medicare insurances, call Linn for more de-

tails.  
**Every 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday**  
LEWISTON -- PROGRAMS FOR HOMESCHOOL FAMILIES, held the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Monday 11:15am-12:30pm starting March 6th, 2023 at the Lewiston Public Library Children's Department

Homeschool families, are you looking for opportunities to have fun and socialize with other homeschool families? LPL will be offering activities for homeschool families in the Children's Department the first three Mondays of each month from 11:15am-12:30pm. The activities will be a Homeschool Video Game Social on March 6th, a Homeschool Lego Club and Curriculum Swap on March 13th, and a Homeschool Storytime and Craft on March 20th.

This program is free and recommended for homeschool families with children of all ages. No registration is required. Contact info. 513-3133, LPLKids@lewistonmaine.gov

**Second and fourth Thursdays**  
LEWISTON -- YOUTH TRADING CARD GAME CLUB held from 4 PM to 5 PM at the Lewiston Public Library. Join the Youth Trading Card Game Club to play, learn, trade, and compete with your peers! Games include Pokémon, Magic: the Gathering, and more. All skill

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levels are welcome. Library staff and volunteers will be available to teach new players and coach developing ones. Free. For kids & teens ages 8-18. 513-3135; www.LPLonline.org

**Wednesdays**  
LEWISTON -- Knitting Group, Dates: Wednesdays, Time: 4:30-7:30 p.m., Facilitator: SeniorsPlus Staff, Location: Education Center, 8 Falcon Road, Lewiston

Join our knitting group to work on your own project, learn from others, and socialize. Classes are free, unless noted. SeniorsPlus is fully accessible. Hearing assistive equipment is available upon request. For more information or to register, call us at 207-795-4010 or visit seniorsplus.org.

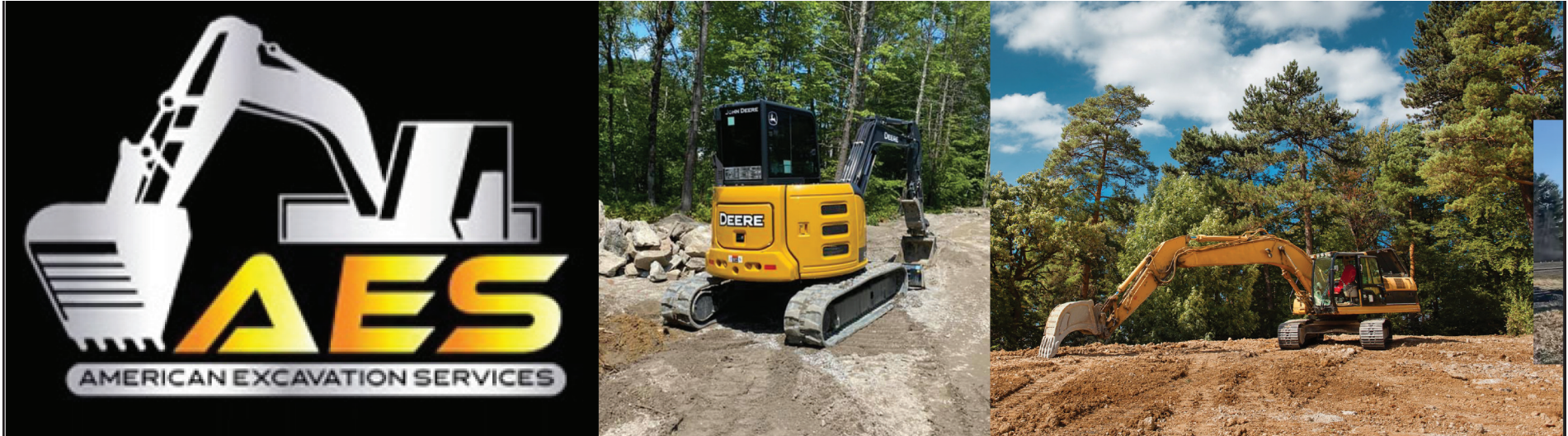
**Inspections**  
*Continued from page 1*

permitted project will most likely be finished," said Healey.

Healey also encourages residents to allow an identified Assessing team member to enter their home if interior work has been done. Some residents will refuse entry, but in that case, the value of the work done will be estimated, which might not be accurate without actual sight review. "New assessed value is far more accurate if we can actually see the completed work before deciding its impact on property value," added Healey.

With inspections commencing near April 1, Chief Assessor Healey also wants to remind eligible residents that April 1 is the deadline to complete a Homestead Exemption application and a Veterans Exemption application. FMI: www.lewistonmaine.gov/exemptions

Questions may be directed to either (207) 513-3122 or assessors@lewistonmaine.gov



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# Finding Tax Help this Year

**Guest Column by  
Sen. Rotundo  
(March 24, 2023)** -- I

was so pleased to learn that the recent state-issued \$850 and \$450 relief checks will not be considered taxable income by the state or federal government. While this is great news, I know that tax season can still be a stressful and frustrating time for many of us. Fortunately, there are programs that offer free assistance with tax preparation to help you complete your return on time and receive all the credits you deserve. If you are in the market for free help with this year's taxes, CASH Maine ([www.cashmaine.org](http://www.cashmaine.org)) is an excellent option. They offer a range of financial planning resources, education and free tax preparation services. CASH Maine's staff is trained to meet rigorous standards of conduct set by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and they use secure software to prepare and file your taxes. To contact CASH Maine in Lewiston, please email [laca\\$h@community-concepts.org](mailto:laca$h@community-concepts.org).

You must meet certain criteria in order to qualify for CASH Maine's free tax preparation services. For instance, your household's combined annual income

must be \$60,000 or less. If you don't qualify for CASH Maine's services, there are other options available to you. AARP ([taxaide.aarpfoundation.org](http://taxaide.aarpfoundation.org)) and MyFreeTaxes ([www.myfreetaxes.com](http://www.myfreetaxes.com)) are both organizations that offer free tax preparation services for those who meet certain qualifications.

In addition to helping with tax preparation, these organizations can also determine if you're eligible for tax credits and exemptions like the Earned Income Tax Credit, the Child Tax Credit, the Maine Sales Tax Fairness Credit and the Veteran Exemption, among many others. For a comprehensive list of credits and exemptions that could save you money, go to [Maine.gov/revenue/taxes/tax-relief-credits-programs](http://Maine.gov/revenue/taxes/tax-relief-credits-programs). One of the most popular of these credits is the refundable Property Tax Fairness Credit (PTFC), to help reduce your tax burden based on the amount of property tax you pay. The Legislature has heard your concerns about high property taxes and has done excellent work in recent years to bring them down. We expanded the PTFC so that thousands more Mainers qualify and increased the Homestead Exemption,

allowing homeowners to subtract \$25,000 from the value of their homes for property tax purposes. The amount of money that towns get back from the state as reimbursement for this program, formerly 70%, is now on a steady, three-percent-per-year trajectory until it reaches 100%.

We have restored the rate of municipal revenue sharing — or the percentage of state revenues that is returned to towns — to the original level of 5%, up from 2% just a couple of years ago. And don't forget: the state is now meeting its obligation to fund education at 55%, easing the burden on property taxpayers to fund their town's schools.

If you would like to discuss this column or any other legislative matter, the entire Lewiston delegation — Representatives Kristen Cloutier, Mana Abdi, Michael Lajoie, Margaret Craven and myself — hold office hours on the fourth Saturday of every month in the Couture Room at the Lewiston Public Library from 10:30 to noon. Additionally, please don't hesitate to email me at [Peggy.Rotundo@legislature.maine.gov](mailto:Peggy.Rotundo@legislature.maine.gov) or call my office at 207-287-1515.



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