



# TWIN CITY TIMES

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FREE • Vol. XXV, No. 17

Your Hometown Newspaper Since 1999

Thursday, August 31, 2023 • FREE

## Former Patriots Super Bowl champ visits CMMC



Andruzzi with Jayne Witas

LEWISTON, ME (August 18, 2023) -- It's not every day a three-time

New England Patriots Super Bowl champion stops by to say hello.

But that's exactly what happened earlier this week at Central Maine Medical Center in Lewiston.

Former Patriots offensive lineman Joe Andruzzi paid a visit to the Cancer Care Center at CMMC where he met with patients and staff, allowing them to wear his many championship rings and pose for photos.

Andruzzi, a cancer survivor himself, is the leader of the Joe Andruzzi Foundation which is dedicated to helping cancer patients and their families, as well as funding pediatric brain cancer research.

"What a thrill it was to have Joe here at the Cancer Care Center," said Hector Tarraza, chief of Central Maine Healthcare's Oncology Institute. "He was a hero on the field for Patriots fans during his playing days, and his heroics continue off the field in his work on behalf of cancer patients. We are all so grateful he took the time to pay us a visit and spend time with our patients."



Joe Andruzzi poses with Hector Tarraza, MD, chief of the CMH Oncology Institute and Jayne Witas who was undergoing her first infusion at the Cancer Care Center at CMMC

## Medicare seminar presented by Renata Lahner

AUBURN, ME (August 24, 2023)

-- As you approach age 65 and eligibility for Medicare, do you know all you need to know to select the right insurance plan for you? If not, you are invited to this no-cost virtual seminar on Tuesday, September 5, 2023, starting at 6:00 p.m. At that time, you will hear from an experienced insurance broker who specializes in helping clients with Medicare planning needs. This seminar is meant to help people navigate the options with Medicare and will include information on signing up for social security. This presentation will help you have a better understanding of your Medicare options, deadlines, and fines that may be imposed if you do not sign up on time. There will also be some helpful information on how to save on prescriptions.

This program is offered by Renata Lahner of The Lahner Group, whose mission is to provide unbiased Medicare and insurance advice for individuals from all walks of life while simplifying the complexities of the various healthcare options. Renata specializes in helping clients with Medicare, social security, and life insurance needs.

The program will take place via Zoom. Registration is required; to do so, visit the Events page of our website -- [www.auburnpubliclibrary.org](http://www.auburnpubliclibrary.org) -- or call the Reference Desk at 207-333-6640, ext. 4. The Zoom link will be emailed to you on September 5.

## Siberian Iris and Daylily Auction this weekend

AUBURN, ME (August 25, 2023) --

The Maine Iris Society will hold its Annual Siberian Iris & Daylily Auction on Saturday, September 2nd at the United Methodist Church located at 439 Park Avenue in Auburn. The auction begins at 1:00 pm and admission to this event is free and open to the public. The auction will be held outside, weather permitting. Attendees may wish to bring their own lawn chairs for more comfortable seating.

The mission of the Maine Iris Society is to develop the science of horticulture, specifically through the propagation and culture of the genus Iris and to stimulate and foster interest in irises through education of the public and its members. Each year we sponsor an iris show that is free and open to the public. Our activities include meetings, garden visits, and plant sales and auctions, with guest speakers from the area and around the country speaking at some of our meetings.

The cost of membership is \$8.00 (or \$10.00 for two people in the same house-



hold) and entitles members to receive the informative MIS Newsletters and opens the opportunity for new friendships with others who also love gardening.

Officers of the Maine Iris Society are president, Pauline Grenier of Minot; vice president, Harriet Robinson of Otisfield, secretary, Peter Young of Buckfield and treasurer and membership chairpersons, Ted White of Minot and Edith Ellis of Turner.

Together, we can make the world a more beautiful place, one flower and one new friend at a time.

## Auburn to unveil new high school

AUBURN, ME (August 25, 2023)

-- Following more than a year of construction, and in preparation for school to start, the City of Auburn opened the incredible new Edward Little High School Sunday, August 27.

The Auburn School Department, elected officials, special guests, students, staff, and community members gathered just outside the new school for a grand opening ceremony and ribbon cutting.

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# Newsmakers, Names & Faces

## Masses in Spanish now offered in eight Maine communities

**PORTLAND, ME (August 16, 2023)**—Regular Masses in Spanish are now being offered in eight Maine communities, and the Diocese of Portland's Office of Hispanic Ministry has also announced a special healing service in Lewiston on August 25. Currently, Masses in Spanish are celebrated in:

Augusta, St. Monica Chapel, 5 Kendall Street, Every Saturday at 5:30 p.m.

Brewer, St. Teresa Church, 425 S. Main Street, Every Sunday at 1 p.m.

Cherryfield, St. Mi-

chael Church, 51 Elm Street, First Sunday of the month at 1 p.m.

Lewiston, Holy Cross Church (Rivier Adoration Chapel), 1080 Lisbon Street, Every Saturday at 6 p.m. (livestreamed at [www.princeofpeace.me](http://www.princeofpeace.me))

Pittsfield, St. Agnes Church, 238 Detroit Street, First and Third Friday of the month at noon.

Portland, Sacred Heart Church, 65 Mellen Street, Every Sunday at 1 p.m.

Sanford, Holy Family Church, 66 North Street, Second and Fourth Sunday of the month at 5 p.m.



Skowhegan, Conference Room at Kyes Motel, 137 W. Front Street, Every Saturday at noon.

A healing service in Spanish will be held on Friday, August 25, at

6 p.m. at Holy Family Church on 607 Sabattus Street in Lewiston. The theme of the entire gathering is healing, from the celebrant to the music to the participants to prayer

teams. Every situation is different but most involved say they receive an increase in awareness of Jesus being present and bringing peace and renewed strength.

Funded largely by the annual Catholic Appeal, the Office of Hispanic Ministry assists the Hispanic community living and working in Maine by offering Masses in Spanish and sacramental preparation, including marriage and baptismal preparation; faith formation for adults and children; education on social service support in the state; and help to

individuals and families in becoming more involved in parish life. With the Latino community in Maine estimated at more than 20,000, the need for outreach has never been greater.

If you or someone you know might benefit from the services of the Office of Hispanic Ministry, please contact Fr. Michael Seigny, OFM Cap., at 207-705-3752; Sister Elsa Telón, RSR, at 207-618-2156; Rosario Starratt at 207-312-4716; Sister Miriam Maradiaga, RSR, at 207-838-1584, or José Pérez at 207-653-5609.

## Win a dream vacation in Paris, help end hunger in Maine



**NEWCASTLE, ME (August 18, 2023)** -- Veggie to Table is hosting its 2nd annual French Sweepstakes with a grand prize of a week's stay in a gorgeous Paris apartment. All donations will help ensure that no one in our community will go to bed hungry or have to choose between buying food or paying rent. The farm grows top-quality organic produce and flowers to donate to local people experiencing hunger and needing joy.

As 43% of Maine students rely on school meals each day—helping to end hunger is vital. In its first four seasons, Veggie to Table has grown and donated 44,500+ pounds of farm-fresh organic produce and gifted over 45,000 joyful flowers.

Founders, Erica Berman and French husband Alain Ollier, moved to Maine in 2012, after many years in Paris. They have hand-selected these French-inspired prizes:

Grand Prize: A week-long stay for two in a gorgeous Paris apartment with balcony and panoramic views, restaurants, exclusive guided tours, and more

Runner-up prizes include:

- A weekend in Montreal
- A year-long online French pastry course & Copy of the book French Pastry Made Simple
- A Le Creuset Signature Flame Orange 3.5 Quart Sauteuse

A signed, limited edition print of Benoit Paris (or any of the Paris Collection) by former New Yorker editor and cartoonist John Donohue & so much more

Help end hunger in Maine: Enter the Sweepstakes; Donate to Veggie to Table; Connect with us to learn more

The Sweepstakes runs until Sept 18. Winners selected on Sept 22.

Enter here: <https://veggietotable.rallyup.com/paris-sweepstake>



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# Newsmakers, Names & Faces

## Franco Center announces 2023-24 season

**LEWISTON, ME (August 18, 2023)**—The Franco Center has announced its 2023-24 calendar of events which include tribute bands, La Rencontre cultural luncheons with entertainment, orchestra, choir, and piano concerts, book talks by authors, the return of its Fright Night scary walks, multiple Christmas shows, comedy shows, and a bellydancing performance.

One of those comedy shows is the return of the Bricks and Bridges Comedy Fest at the Franco Center in November. Bricks & Bridges Comedy Fest presents The Tightest Five on Thursday, Nov. 9; Rodney Norman on Friday, Nov. 10, and Kelly MacFarland on Saturday, Nov. 11.

“We are happy to announce that we have had several organizations come forward to offer fundraising events for the Franco Center including members of the Midcoast Symphony Orchestra; Imari and the Sahara Desert Dancers; and the Windham Chamber Singers,” said Penny Drumm, Franco Center administrator. “Since ticket sales often don’t cover the

costs of an event, one of those costs being the artist’s fees, these fundraising events are very important to the Franco Center, as are our business sponsors.”

Jake Hodgkin, production manager at the Franco Center, said, “Our tribute bands will cover music by Johnny Cash, Tom Petty, James Taylor, Elvis, Billy Joel, Elton John, The Who, and The Beatles.” He added, “Our Fright Night walks in October will be scarier than last year.”

The Sights and Sounds of Christmas variety and light show will have a matinee show in addition to two evening shows. Hodgkin said, “The matinee show will not have a light show or projection since the Franco Center’s Performance Hall cannot be darkened during the day. The overall emphasis is to give the feeling of an old-fashioned homestyle Christmas. If you are looking to get in the holiday spirit, don’t miss this show.”

The “Just Us” Entertainers will reunite to perform in a special Christmas show at the Franco Center Sunday, Dec. 17. “It’s been a



The former St. Mary’s Church in the Little Canada section of Lewiston is sporting a new logo. The Franco Center has released its calendar of events for the 2023-24 season at the 46 Cedar Street, Lewiston, venue. Tickets are on sale at [www.francocenter.org/shows](http://www.francocenter.org/shows) or by phone at 207-689-2000. Patrons can also visit the box office between 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays to purchase tickets. Franco Center photo.

while,” said Nel Meservier, long-time Just Us member. Eight members of the group will perform in the holiday show.

Grant money from the Maine Humanities Council and the Maine Arts Commission will fund the Franco Center’s new Books & Stories program at noon on Wednesdays: Sept. 13, Sept. 27, and

Oct. 4. Three authors, Suzanne Roy, David Vermette, and Paul Dionne will discuss their books which feature French or Franco American characters. “The authors will have books for sale and signing, but patrons are encouraged to purchase and read the books ahead of the visit and bring their copy to be signed,” said De-

nise Scammon, marketing and development director at the Franco Center. There is no admission fee for these three Books & Stories events.

One of the events with no admission fee will happen at 5 p.m. Friday, Nov. 3, when the doors open for the 6 p.m. concert program, “The Women Who Risked Everything for Freedom,” featuring soprano Malinda Haslett and Scott Wheatley on piano. The program is about Jewish women in 1941 Paris who risked their lives to save the music of French women composers.

Although the Franco Center’s calendar appears to be full of their own events, just as many renters will host performances and events at the former church. Patrons will be able to attend performances by Midcoast Symphony Orchestra, Maine Music Society, The Dance Center, Inspired Voices by Tri-County Mental Health Services, Auburn Community Band, Lewiston High School Choir, SPRQ Burlesque, Sandcastle’s Maine’s Got Talent showcase, and comedian Bob Marley.

For those interest-

ed in renting the Franco Center for a wedding, reception or celebration, call Caitlyn Burnham, events manager, at 207-333-3251.

Bands interested in renting the venue for a concert should contact Jake Hodgkin, production manager, at 207-514-7753.

Susan Spellman, box office manager at the Franco Center, is available to answer questions about events on our calendar. Renters often sell tickets to their own events, but that is not always the case. Tickets sold by the Franco Center can be purchased through its box office in person from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays or call 207-689-2000. Ticket purchases can be made online at [www.franco-center.org/shows](http://www.franco-center.org/shows).

Doors and cash bar (if it is available) open one hour before an event. Seating is available half an hour before an event.

The Franco Center is at 46 Cedar Street, Lewiston. Parking is in the mill lot across the street. Handicap access is on the Lincoln Street Alley side of the building.

## Safe Voices celebrates selection as a Hannaford beneficiary

**LEWISTON, Maine (August 18, 2023)**— Safe Voices has been selected as a beneficiary of the Hannaford Bloomin’ 4 Good Program for the month of September.

The Hannaford Bloomin’ 4 Good Program, which launched in August 2021, is an easy way for shoppers to give back. Every Bloomin’ 4 Good Bouquet with the red circle sticker sold supports a nonprofit organization local to the Hannaford in which it was purchased.

Safe Voices was selected as the September beneficiary by local store leadership at the Hannaford located in Auburn. Safe Voices will receive a \$1 do-

nation for every Bloomin’ 4 Good Bouquet with the red circle sticker purchased at the Auburn Hannaford located at 95 Spring Street.

“Flowers seem like a small thing,” said Grace Kendall, Director of Development and Engagement at Safe Voices. “But they can make someone’s day. And if I know a bouquet also supports a cause I really cared about, it’s doubly appreciated. I hope folks will brighten their day (and ours) with this program in September.”

Safe Voices is a domestic abuse and sex trafficking resource center serving survivors in Androscoggin, Franklin, and

Oxford Counties. Last year, the agency worked with over 2,200 survivors in these counties to help them safety plan, access shelter, work with legal and civil advocates, and work through emergent crises as well as the ongoing, long-term effects of domestic abuse and sex trafficking. The agency has been doing this work in Maine since 1977. You can learn more, and access help, at [safevoices.org](http://safevoices.org).

For more information about the Hannaford Bloomin’ 4 Good Program, please visit [hannaford.2givelocal.com](http://hannaford.2givelocal.com).

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## TWIN CITY TIMES

**TWIN CITY PUBLISHING, INC**

Twin City Times • 89 Union Street, Suite 1014 • Auburn, ME 04210  
Gorham Weekly • 28 State Street • Gorham, ME 04038

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Published every Thursday’s publication.

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# Seniors Not Acting Their Age

## A Traverse of Megunticook Lake



A kayaker paddles across Norton Pond

By Ron Chase  
 In my opinion, Megunticook Lake is one of the most picturesque lakes or ponds in Maine. The lofty cliffs of Mount Megunticook rise abruptly from the eastern shore. A multitude of islands and small peninsulas populate the 1,300 acre lake providing a myriad of opportunities for exploration by kayak or canoe.

The largest body of water in Knox County, Megunticook Lake is surrounded by Lincolnville, Hope, and Camden. The lake is a very popular venue for boaters and fishermen. Norton Pond in Lincolnville connects with Megunticook from the north.  
 In mid-July, my wife, Nancy, and I decided to organize a traverse

of Norton Pond and Megunticook Lake. An email to several boating friends resulted in three of them electing to join us. They would be paddling canoes while Nancy and I chose to navigate solo lake kayaks.  
 The five of us met at Norton Pond Boating Landing in Lincolnville on a hot steamy sunny day with light winds. After

unloading our boats and gear, we drove two shuttle vehicles to a boat landing on the southeastern shore of Megunticook Lake in Camden. Our paddling journey would approximate five miles in distance.

The Norton Pond landing was a bustling place; two children's groups were returning to the ramp in canoes and kayaks when we launched. Others were swimming and sun bathing. Several fishermen were active in the area.

Paddling two solo kayaks, a solo canoe, and a tandem canoe, the five of us passed several camps as we navigated west across the pond. At the terminus, we negotiated under a bridge and through a narrow passageway that connects with Megunticook Lake.

Emerging into expansive open water on Megunticook, we were immediately impressed with the remarkable view of Mount Megunticook that dominates the landscape in the southeast. A maze of islands and peninsulas cluttered the northern sector of the lake as we progressed. The proper route was unclear. After consulting with maps and a GPS, we elected to travel towards the western shore.

During our attempt to find the correct passage through the bewildering assortment of islands, we temporarily lost our way. Following an accidental circumnavigation of a tiny island, we located the proper channel that led down the far western side.

A rugged shoreline with intermittent cliffs was on our left as we progressed south. I was searching for a favorite picnic spot I had visited during a previous outing. Alas, it was occupied. Just beyond, a group of exuberant youngsters were jumping from cliffs and swimming along the shore. We found a quiet alternative rest spot in a shaded cove on Fernald Neck.

Fernald Neck is a large peninsula that extends out into much of the central part of the lake. Undeveloped and home to a significant forest of mature hardwoods, hemlocks, and pines, the 285-acre preserve offers several picnic areas and three hiking trails. Access is possible by either boat or land.

Turning east at the southern end of Fernald, we were greeted with a truly exceptional view



Boaters leave a narrow passage between Norton Pond and Megunticook Lake



After turning Fernald Neck paddlers head east towards Maiden Cliff



Paddlers search for a route in the islands of Megunticook Lake

of spectacular Maiden Cliff and the Mount Megunticook massif. When hiking Ridge Trail high on the mountain, one can enjoy wonderful panoramic vistas of the lake below. Our markedly different perspective from the water offered a captivating contrast.

Advancing closer to Maiden Cliff, we observed technical climbers nearing the distinctive white cross at the top of the escarpment. The imposing vertical cliffs towered over us for the remainder of our voyage.

We completed the thoroughly enjoyable excursion cruising south along the eastern shore of the lake to the busy Route 52 Landing. Only a handful of Maine paddling adventures can compare with

the breathtaking beauty we experienced during our traverse of Norton Pond and Megunticook Lake.

My book, *Maine Al Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine* includes three more stimulating lake or pond trips.

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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# Emergency law aims to halt spread of aquatic invasive species

**AUGUSTA, ME (August 11, 2023)** -- To reduce the spread of aquatic invasive species in Maine, a law was passed by the Maine Legislature that requires boaters to take specific actions to encourage water to drain from their watercraft prior to entering a water body or leaving a launch site (PUBLIC LAW 2023 CHAPTER 190). Aquatic invasive species are any fish, wildlife, or plant species that spreads to a water body where they do not naturally occur. These species are often transferred to new locations on watercraft, watercraft trailers, and other equipment associated with water recreation, and they impact the health of our waters, fish, and wildlife.

Effective June 16th, 2023, boaters are now required to do the following:

Prior to entering a water body and when preparing to leave launch sites, boaters are required to remove or open any devices designed for routine removal/opening (for example, hull drain plugs, bailers, live wells, ballast tanks) to encourage draining of areas containing water (excluding live bait containers). This must be done in a way that does not allow drained water to enter any inland water of the state.

This puts into law what the Clean, Drain, Dry educational and outreach campaign has already been



encouraging boaters to do. By ensuring that all boaters are draining water when it is from a different source than the inland water body they are about to enter, the risk of spreading aquatic invasive species including some that are not always visible by eye, to new areas is drastically reduced. Similar laws are already in effect in more than 20 other states, including neighboring New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York. This law will limit the spread of aquatic invasive species we already have in Maine while proactively limiting potential for the introduction of aquatic invasive species that would be new to the state such as quagga mussels and the spiny water flea.

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What aquatic invasive species should I be worried about in Maine?

An aquatic invasive species is any fish, wildlife, or plant that is known to spread to water bodies they are not native to. To name just a few already in Maine, this includes species like northern pike,



black crappie, rusty crayfish, variable-leaf milfoil, brittle naiad, and banded mystery snails.

Why do we care about the spread of aquatic invasive species?

Aquatic invasive species can often have irreversible negative impacts on our water bodies, the outdoor recreation they support, and native fish and wildlife species. The modifications that occur in our natural systems when new aquatic invasive species are introduced disrupt natural ecological processes, can threaten human health & safety, and result in costly, not always successful mitigation efforts.

Where should I drain my watercraft?

Away from any inland water body to prevent direct draining into a water body. Watercrafts should NOT be drained on the boat launch ramp. Since the transfer of aquatic invasive species to new areas within a water body can worsen the infestation, especially in high traffic

launch areas, the preferred practice is to prevent direct draining back into the water body even when leaving the water body.

What does encouraging draining of a watercraft entail?

Boaters shall remove or open any hull drain plugs, bailers, valves, live wells, ballast tanks and

other devices designed for routine removal or opening and closing to encourage water to drain from areas containing water. Containers holding live baitfish for personal or commercial use are exempted from these requirements.

What is considered a watercraft?

“Watercraft” means any type of vessel, boat, canoe, or craft capable of being used as a means of transportation on water, other than a seaplane. This includes motorboats, sailboats, paddle craft (canoes, kayaks, standup paddleboards, etc.)

How else can I help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species?

In addition to drain-

ing water, boaters should clean off visible aquatic plants, animals, and mud from watercraft, motor, trailer, and equipment before leaving water access. Fines can be up to \$2,500 for transporting any aquatic plant. All equipment should also dry before entering another water body.

What if I keep my watercraft on one water body and don't visit other waters?

The new law was written in a way that allows watercraft to still operate bilge pumps to remove rain and lake water that may have entered their watercraft while on that water body, providing the watercraft met the requirement of the new law prior to launching.

**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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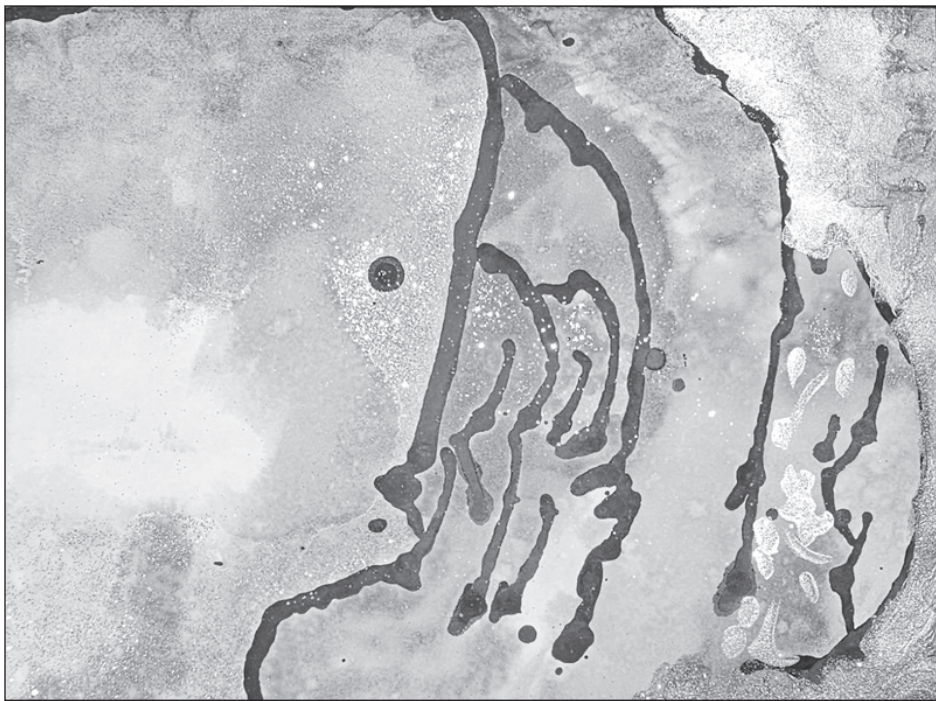
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# Arts & Entertainment

## SeniorsPlus to present OMA art show in Lewiston



*Me and Three, Watercolor and India ink by Lewiston OMA artist Linda, 2023.*

**LEWISTON, ME (August 25, 2023)** -- SeniorsPlus, Western Maine's designated Area Agency on Aging, will present an Opening Minds through Art (OMA) art show at the agency's Lewiston headquarters at 8 Falcon Road on Friday, September 8, from 1 to 3 p.m. The event is free and refreshments will be provided. Meet the artists, see their work, and

learn more about OMA, an award-winning, evidence-based, art-making program that aims to provide social engagement and create expression for persons living with dementia. Funded by a grant from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, DHHS, Washington, DC, OMA strives to bring joy, art, and pride to people living with dementia and Alz-

heimer's in our community. Contact SeniorsPlus at 207-795-4010 for more information.

Through a series of classes, OMA engages people with dementia in creating art based on imagination, not memory. During the six-week program, people with dementia (the "artists") are paired one-on-one with volunteers who help them create art.

## Androscoggin Retired Educators to meet

**AUBURN, ME (August 25, 2023)** -- The Androscoggin Retired Educators will meet at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, September 13 at Sixth Street Congregational Church, 109 Sixth Street in Auburn. The speaker for this meeting is humorous Mark Turcotte. Lunch will be served by the church. The

cost of lunch is \$12.

AREA invites all educators: teachers, teacher assistants, secretaries, guidance counselors, anyone who has worked with children. All are welcome. You need not have worked in Androscoggin County or even in the State of Maine.

AREA meets five

times per year, September, October, November, March and April. Dues are \$10 per year for educators, \$6 for non-educator spouse or partner.

Reservations can be made by mailing checks made out to AREA to Gina Fuller, 36 Elliott, Lewiston, Maine, 04240

## Cat's Meow Comedy presents standup comedy

### Comedy Nite

featuring

**Brett Groh · Mike Levinsky**

**Johnny Ater · Mike Gray**

hosted by **Ann-Marie Keene**

**120 Lisbon St.  
Lewiston, ME**

**September 1st · 7:00pm · 21+ · Pay-What-You-Can**

**LEWISTON, ME (August 25, 2023)** -- Cat's Meow Comedy presents another First Friday standup comedy show at Rusty Bus Brewing on September 1st.

Featured comedians include Johnny Ater, Mike Gray, Mike Levinsky, Brett Groh, and host Ann-Marie Keene.

Johnny Ater is the winner of the 2022 Maine's Wicked Funny Laugh-Off competition. He's appeared on The Nite Show with Danny Cashman, at The Punchline comedy club in San Francisco, Bricks and Bridges Comedy Fest, and

has headlined at the Maine Comedy Festival in Bethel Maine. Life-long local and arguably Maine's funniest down-home comedian, Ater offers up hilarious and honest stories about life, family, relationships, work, and his colorful local friends, which he brings to life on stage for all to meet BUT it's his rubber face that you'll be talking about for days after seeing his performance because he has the ability to contort his face in ways that will make you hysterical.

Mike Gray is living proof that a horrible childhood can be turned around into an equally horrible

adulthood. He's been performing throughout New England for about 6 years, although he'd rather not count 2020. It has been said that "he has a clear character" and "...a distinct voice for dark humor." He was a finalist in New England's Best Bar Comic competition in 2017, performed at the Portland Maine Comedy Fest, Bricks and Bridges Comedy Fest, and has competed in Last Comix Standing.

This Pay-What-You-Can show starts at 7pm and is for ages 21 and up. Rusty Bus Brewing is located at 120 Lisbon St. in Lewiston.

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# Computer Science Showcase features local student projects

**AUGUSTA, ME (August 18, 2023)**—Students and educators from 40 districts across Maine will participate in the Maine Department of Education’s (DOE) Second Annual Computer Science Education Showcase at the Collins Center at the University of Maine on Thursday. The showcase will highlight innovative computer science education programs and projects in schools across Maine, with hands on, interactive exhibits. The exhibits will feature a variety of computer science education projects, including robotics, artificial

intelligence (AI), 3D design, coding, augmented reality/virtual reality (AR/VR), data science, cybersecurity, and more.

Maine continues to lead on computer science education and is the only state to provide interdisciplinary computer science education to all pre-K through grade 12 students in the state. This summer, more than a thousand students from across the state will participate in the Maine DOE’s Maine Learning Technology Initiative (MLTI) Student Conference. Students had access to more than 40 sessions that engaged

them in essential computer science skills and knowledge, including animation, AI/machine learning, AR/VR, audio editing, CAD/3D Design, robotics, coding, and video game design. More than a dozen of the sessions were led or co-led by students. And Nearly 100 educators from across the state attended a multi-day institute in July, focused around computer science education. Educators spent two and a half days engaging in sessions and collaborating to integrate computer science into their classrooms and upcoming school year ac-

tivities. Topics included Robotics & Programming, Coding & Hardware, Augmented & Virtual Reality, and much more.

The Showcase will also feature a panel discussion on computer science education and how Maine is paving the way for students and teachers to be successful in the world of computer science, featuring DOE staff, educators, students, and industry partners. Student and Educator Projects From:

- Augusta Schools
- Bangor Public Schools
- Bar Harbor Schools

- Brewer High School
- Brunswick Schools
- Cape Elizabeth Schools
- East Range CSD
- Gardiner Area Schools
- Hermon Public Schools
- John Bapst High School
- Leeds Central School
- Maine Academy of Natural Sciences
- MSAD 04
- MSAD 11
- MSAD 17
- MSAD 24
- MSAD 27
- MSAD 4
- MSAD 52
- MSAD 75

- Nobleboro Public Schools
- Portland Public Schools
- Princeton Public Schools
- RSU 04
- RSU 05
- RSU 12
- RSU 13
- RSU 19
- RSU 22
- RSU 25
- RSU 26
- RSU 67
- South Portland Public Schools
- Vassalboro Public Schools
- Veazie Public Schools
- Waterville Schools

# \$35M to improve fish migration in Maine

**WASHINGTON D.C. (August 25, 2023)** — Today, U.S. Senator Susan Collins announced that the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT), the Maine Department of Marine Resources (MDMR), and the Passamaquoddy Tribe have received a total of \$35,119,271 through the U.S. Department of Transportation’s (USDOT) Culvert Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) program. This program, established through the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), will

assist with the replacement of road stream culverts in fifteen communities located across Maine. Senator Collins, Vice Chair of the Senator Appropriations Committee, was part of the core group of 10 Senators who negotiated the text of the IIJA.

“The culverts identified for replacement through this project are undersized and negatively impact the passage of native migratory fish, including the endangered Atlantic Salmon,” said Senator Collins. “By replacing these undersized

culverts, we are not only enhancing the health of our aquatic habitats and ensuring safer infrastructure for pedestrians and motorists, but also safeguarding the long-term sustainability of Maine’s fishing heritage.”

“This funding will help address fish passage and infrastructure needs at priority locations in Maine,” said MaineDOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note. “We are grateful to Senator Collins for recognizing that the projects we have selected are worthy of these funding awards.”

The funding is allocated as follows:

Franklin County - \$9,237,600 to replace 7 crossings that are barriers to one or more anadromous fish species native to the Sandy River Region of Maine.

Kennebec County, Lincoln County, Sagadahoc County - \$8,945,221 to replace 7 structures that are barriers to one or more anadromous fish species native to Central Maine, including Atlantic Salmon.

Washington County, Waldo County -

\$9,195,000 to replace 9 crossings that are barriers to one or more anadromous fish species native to Downeast Maine, including Atlantic salmon.

Towns of East Machias, Perry, and Pembroke - \$7,741,450 to replace four municipal road-stream culverts that are barriers to one or more anadromous fish species native to Downeast Maine, including Atlantic salmon, rainbow smelt, river herring, and American shad.

Earlier this year, Senator Collins sent a letter to Transportation Sec-

retary Pete Buttigieg in support of the Maine DOT and Maine DMR grant request.

The bipartisan infrastructure law is expected to deliver approximately \$2.5 billion to Maine over its first five years of enactment for critical broadband, transportation, energy, and environmental projects. Since 2009, when Senator Collins became a member of the Appropriations Committee, she has helped to secure more than \$1 billion in competitive transportation grants for the State of Maine.

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# Hiking New England trails: An author talk with Jeff Romano



**AUBURN, ME (August 24, 2023)** -- Join author Jeff Romano for a slideshow presentation showcasing hiking opportunities throughout New England. The program will cover destinations in all six states with a focus on itineraries featured in his latest guidebook, an updated edition to 100 Classic

Hike New England (June 2023). Jeff will share advice, provide insights, and answer questions on how and where to plan your next hiking adventure. The presentation will also include information on New England wildflowers, birds, wildlife, history, and conservation success stories.

A representative from the Androscoggin Land Trust will also be available to talk about their conservation efforts and available trails.

Jeff Romano is a lifelong New England resident who has been

hiking for five decades. He is the author of four other guidebooks: Hike the Park Acadia (2021), Day Hiking New England (2015), 100 Classic Hikes New England, First Edition (2010), and Best Loop Hikes: New Hampshire's White Mountains to the Maine Coast (2006). Published by Mountaineers Books, these publications will be available for sale after the presentation. Jeff has also written numerous outdoor articles for the Boston Globe and other publications.

When not hiking, Jeff directs public policy

activities for Maine Coast Heritage Trust, a land trust that conserves and stewards Maine's coastal lands and islands. He lives in Hallowell, Maine with his wife, and shares his passion for the outdoors with his family, including his two adult children.

This program will take place in the Androscoggin Community Room on Thursday, September 7, from 4:00-5:00 p.m.

For more information about other upcoming programs at the Auburn Public Library, visit their website at [www.auburn-publiclibrary.org](http://www.auburn-publiclibrary.org).

# More stand up this weekend at Great Falls Comedy Club

**AUBURN, ME (August 24, 2023)** – The Great Falls Comedy Club announces more live stand up and improv comedy for September 2nd, 8th, and 9th at 7:30 pm.

Make laughter a priority and be part of the fun on Saturday 9/2, as head-

liner Charlie Nadler joins a stacked lineup of local favorites featuring Sara Poulin, Sarah Coughlin, Mike Levinsky, Mike Bunker, Adam Gropmann, and Nick Gordon each ready to help you kick off the holiday weekend.

Then plan ahead for

two great nights of comedy the following weekend as Balderdash Academy improv returns to the club on Friday, September 8, and on Saturday, September 9, at Lewiston Auburn Community Little Theatre be sure to catch a rising star on tour for the first time in



Maine, from Olympia, WA, Sam Miller. Miller is a prolific road-comic who has appeared all over the country and has recently signed a three-record deal with Stand-Up Comedy Records.

Tickets can be found at <https://www.greatfallscomedyclub.com> or

purchased at the door. The Great Falls Comedy Club is located inside Craft Brew Underground at 34 Court Street, Auburn.

For more information contact the club at [info@greatfallscomedyclub.com](mailto:info@greatfallscomedyclub.com) or by phone at 207-200-5366.

# EforAll Maine to hold pitch contest for entrepreneurs

**LEWISTON, ME (August 23, 2023)** - EforAll Maine will be hosting its Fall 2023 All Ideas Pitch Contest on Wednesday, October 4th at 6 p.m. This fast-paced,

fun community event helps early-stage entrepreneurs gain valuable exposure and feedback on their business ideas, network with others in the community and compete to win a cash prize to

help fund their dreams. All interested individuals are encouraged to apply. There is no cost to apply or participate.

Covid-19: Masks are encouraged but not re-

quired at this time. If policies or guidelines change, communication will be sent to all attendees prior to the event.

**WHAT:** EforAll Maine Fall 2023 All Ideas Pitch Contest

**WHO:** Open to current and aspiring entrepreneurs with a business idea who live in Maine. This event is open to the

public and we encourage anyone interested to attend! Members of the public are encouraged to register as space is limited!

To register visit: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/eforall-maine-all-ideas-pitch-contest-tickets-668314916907?aff=oddtcreator>

**WHEN:** Wednesday, October 4th at 6 p.m. Inter-

ested participants must apply online by no later than Wednesday, September 13th at noon.

**WHERE:** Lewiston Public Library- Callahan Hall at 200 Lisbon St, Lewiston, ME 04240 (3rd floor)

**LEARN MORE/APPLY:** Visit <https://eforall.org/programs/maine-fall-2023-all-ideas-pitch-contest/>



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# CMMC nurse receives DAISY Award

**LEWISTON, ME (August 25, 2023)** -- A Central Maine Medical Center nurse is the recipient of the DAISY Award.

Rebecca Fairbanks, RN, works at the Central Maine Medical Center (CMMC) cardiopulmonary telemetry inpatient department as a staff RN. She also functions as a preceptor and trains new nurses.

The DAISY Award is an international recognition program that rewards and celebrates the extraordinary compassionate, skillful care nurses give daily. The DAISY Award honorees personify Central Maine Healthcare's (CMH) remarkable patient experience.

At CMH, an extraordinary nurse:



DAISY Award winner Rebecca Fairbanks (third from right) is surrounded by her fellow CMMC team members.

- Provides compassionate, high-quality nursing care.
- Fosters a patient and family-centered experience.

- Creates a culture that empowers and supports all team members.
- Displays professional excellence and is a role model for the nursing profession.
- Is passionate about the work they do for the community they serve.

DAISY Award honorees are nominated by patients. In this case, a patient named Michael Col-

by wrote the following: "Rebecca certainly exemplifies the honor of a DAISY-awarded nurse. Her demeanor and bedside manner are second to none. She treats her patients calmly and caringly and is very candid and informative about our care. I spent weeks under her care and always felt heard and understood."

"We are all extraordinarily proud of Rebecca," said Kris Chaisson, BSN, MS, RN, CCRN-K, NEA-BC, senior vice president of nursing and patient care services, Central Maine Healthcare. "It is always gratifying to have your work recognized, but to be nominated by a patient who was under your care is especially meaningful."

## Gear up for National Preparedness Month with Rocky's



On Friday, August 18, 2023, Rocky's Ace Hardware re-opened its Bath store, located at 55 Congress Avenue, with a ceremonial chainsaw board cutting. Letting the sawdust fly was Rocky's Ace Hardware President and CEO Rocco J. Falcone II. Looking on were (from left to right) Rocky's Chief Operating Office Luis Pedro, Police Chief Andrew Booth, City Manager Marc Meyers, City Council Chair Mary Ellen Bell, Rocky's Marketing Coordinator Melissa Falcone, and Rocky's Director of Merchandising Johnny Falcone (missing from photo is VP of Store Operations Steve Poulin)

**BATH, ME (August 25, 2023)** -- From Florida to Maine, New Jersey to Ohio, from wildfires to tornadoes to torrential rain, high winds and floods: no one is immune from Mother Nature's challenges, and that means everyone should expect the unexpected -- and prepare accordingly -- especially as we head into National Pre-

paredness Month. Navigating catastrophic storms and other severe weather events is traumatic and overwhelming. The right preparation saves lives and property. The best time to prepare is always before the threat of a storm even exists, and the experts at Rocky's Ace Hardware are here to help. The Rocky's

storm preparedness team at the Bath store just celebrated their grand reopening and they would be happy to talk with you about: how to make a family emergency plan; what supplies to stock up on; what to include in an emergency kit and evacuation bag; and how to prepare and protect their homes and other personal property.

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# Red Cross: Steps to help students stay safe

**PORTLAND, ME (August 24, 2023)** — Soon students will head back to school, some entering the classroom for the first time. The American Red Cross Northern New England Region offers ten ways to help make sure your student is safe as they head back to school for the upcoming year.

“There are some special steps parents of younger kids should take, especially if they have youngsters going to school for the first time,” said Stephanie Couturier, American Red Cross Regional CEO, “They should make sure the child knows their phone number, address, how to get in touch with their parents at work, how to get in touch with another trusted adult and how to dial 911. And teach

them not to talk to strangers or accept rides from someone they don’t know.”

Here are more steps to follow to help your child stay safe:

If your student rides a bus to school, they should plan to get to their bus stop early and stand away from the curb while waiting for the bus to arrive.

Students should board the bus only after it has come to a complete stop and the driver or attendant has instructed them to get on. They should only board their bus, never an alternate one.

All students should stay in clear view of the bus driver and never walk behind the bus.

Cross the street at the corner, obey traffic signals and stay in the crosswalk.

Never dart out into

the street or cross between parked cars.

If children go to school in a car, they should always wear a seat belt. Younger children should use car seats or booster seats until the lap-shoulder belt fits properly (typically for children ages 8-12 and over 4’9”), and ride in the back seat until they are at least 13 years old.

If a teenager is going to drive to school, parents should mandate that they use seat belts. Drivers should not use their cell phone to text or make calls and avoid eating or drinking while driving.

Some students ride their bike to school. They should always wear a helmet and ride on the right, in the same direction as the traffic is going.

When children are

walking to school, they should only cross the street at an intersection, and use a route along which the school has placed crossing guards.

Parents should walk young children to school, along with children taking new routes or attending new schools, at least for the first week to ensure they know how to get there safely. Arrange for students to walk to school with a friend or classmate.

**DRIVERS, SLOW DOWN!**

Drivers should slow down as children head back to school. Know that yellow flashing lights indicate the bus is getting ready to stop and motorists should slow down and be prepared to stop. Red flashing lights and an extended stop sign indicate the bus is stopped

and children are getting on or off.

Motorists must stop when they are behind a bus, meeting the bus or approaching an intersection where a bus is stopped. Motorists following or traveling alongside a school bus must also stop until the red lights have stopped flashing, the stop arm is withdrawn, and all children have reached safety. This includes two and four-lane highways. If physical barriers such as grassy medians, guide rails or concrete median barriers separate oncoming traffic from the bus, motorists in the opposing lanes may proceed without stopping. Do not proceed until all the children have reached a place of safety.

**PREPARE FOR EMERGENCIES** Know

what the emergency plan is at your child’s school in case a disaster or an unforeseen event occurs. Develop a family emergency plan so everyone will know who to contact and where to go if something happens while children are at school and parents are at work. Details are available at [redcross.org/prepare](http://redcross.org/prepare).

**TAKE A FIRST AID CLASS** Learn and practice first aid and CPR skills by taking a course so you can help save a life. Download the free Red Cross First Aid app for instant access to information on handling the most common first aid emergencies whether it be before, during or after school. You can find it by searching for ‘American Red Cross’ in your app store or at [redcross.org/apps](http://redcross.org/apps).

## MaineCF grants available for land conservation, access



**ELLSWORTH & PORTLAND, ME (August 11, 2023)** – The Maine Community Foundation (MaineCF) offers two funding opportunities for organizations and projects dedicated to helping Maine people access and connect with the outdoors.

MaineCF’s Maine Land Protection grant program provides general support grants to organizations and projects that build strong connections between people in Maine and our land and water through land acquisition, conservation and easements. Grants from the Conservation for All program invest in organizations and projects that pro-

vide access to the outdoors for all Maine people.

In 2022, Maine Land Protection awarded five grants totaling \$153,600. Two additional grants totaling \$20,000 were made by donors with advised funds at MaineCF.

MaineCF launched the grant program in 2020 and has awarded more than \$1 million to 29 projects. The Maine Land Protection grant program provides grants for land acquisition or land conservation easement projects that build strong connections between people in Maine/ Wabanaki territory and its land and water.

2022 grantees include:



Friends of Haystack Mountain was awarded a 2022 Maine Land Protection grant to conserve a 57-acre parcel in Montville for public recreation. Photo courtesy Friends of Haystack Mountain

Friends of Haystack Mountain, to acquire 57 acres in Montville, which includes recreational trails and blueberry barrens

Land in Common, to purchase 105 acres in Greene: 70 will be returned to Wabanaki care, 22 will be added to an existing agricultural ground lease, and 13 will become

long-term ground leases for new BIPOC land stewards

Trust for Public Land, to purchase 24 acres in Portland to create the North Deering Park.

Last year, the Conservation for All grant program awarded 12 grants totaling \$153,000. An additional seven grants total-

ing \$34,400 were made by donors with advised funds at MaineCF. Conservation for All focuses on programs and projects that help create equitable access to the outdoors, clean air and clean water.

2022 grantees include:

Land in Common, to collaborate with commu-

nities directly impacted by injustice on projects that create land access for affordable housing, foodways, ecological stewardship, social transformation, joy, and liberation

Maine GearShare, to increase its inventory and break down barriers for people who can’t access gear

Women for Healthy Rural Living, for its Outdoor Women Lead program.

The deadline to submit proposals for both grant programs is Sept. 15. For more information, eligibility requirements and to submit a proposal, visit [www.mainecef.org](http://www.mainecef.org).

For more information, contact Program Officer Stephanie Cesario, [scenarios@mainecef.org](mailto:scenarios@mainecef.org) or 207-412-0824.

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).

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## St. Mary’s Bank Foundation awards \$5K to Stepping Stones

**MANCHESTER, NH (August 9, 2023)** — St. Mary’s Bank Charitable Foundation has awarded \$5,338 to Stepping Stones, Greater Nashua’s only drop-in center for homeless, unaccompanied youth aged 25 and under. The grant award will enable Stepping Stones to provide two youths with six months of services, some of which will include food, clothing, and access to a

shower and laundry.

“Stepping Stones provides a vital service to a segment of the population that is underrepresented and often forgotten,” said Ken Senus, St. Mary’s Bank CEO. “We applaud and support their critically important mission.”

Established in 2020, the Foundation ensures St. Mary’s Bank can sustain “a high level of community giving for the long term.”

“An investment in Stepping Stones directly reflects our broader philanthropic areas of concern,” added Senus.

According to Zach Paone, development and communications coordinator for Stepping Stones, the grant supports their goals to help young people plan their career, educational, and housing goals.

“We depend on funds

from charitable organizations to provide this safe haven as more youth turn to our new transitional housing that opened this past spring,” he said.

Since 2020, Stepping Stones has helped more than 130 young people with nowhere to go access food, clothing, showers, laundry, mail, and lockers. To learn more about Stepping Stones, visit [steppingstonesnh.org](http://steppingstonesnh.org).



# Agren celebrates groundbreaking in Auburn

**AUBURN, ME (August 11, 2023)** -- Agren Appliance, a leading name in Maine's retail industry, broke ground on their cutting-edge distribution center in Auburn on July 17th. This milestone event paves the way for enhanced delivery services, operational efficiency, and continued commitment to customer satisfaction.

The new distribution

center will serve as a hub for Agren's delivery, service, and installation operations, boasting a skilled workforce of over 60 dedicated employees and a fleet of more than 50 vehicles. This strategic expansion enables the company to scale up its purchasing capabilities, ensuring the ability to match competitive box store pricing without compromising product

quality or service excellence.

Spanning an impressive 51k square feet and occupying a sprawling 12-acre corporate campus, the warehouse signifies Agren's dedication to meeting customer demands swiftly and effectively. Conveniently located just off the I-95 exit in Auburn, adjacent to the company's official headquarters, the

center's strategic positioning further enhances the company's logistical advantages.

"Breaking ground on our distribution center in Auburn is a testament to our commitment to customer satisfaction and operational efficiency," said CEO Jason Agren. "This milestone empowers us to deliver unmatched service while matching competi-

tive pricing and maintaining top-notch quality. We anticipate a big positive impact on our community and the retail sector as a whole."

The ambitious project represents Agren's most significant financial commitment to date, with an estimated investment of approximately \$9.5 million for its successful completion. The company is eager

to bring this vision to life and looks forward to its positive impact on the local economy.

As construction commences, Agren is unwavering in its commitment to maintaining the highest quality and environmental sustainability standards throughout the process. The distribution center is anticipated to be fully operational by 2024.

# Lakes & Mountains Walk to End Alzheimer's returns

**LEWISTON, ME (August 25, 2023)** -- The Alzheimer's Association is inviting residents from Lewiston, Auburn and surrounding communities to join the fight to end Alzheimer's by participating in the Lakes & Mountains Area Walk to End Alzheimer's at Sismard-Payne Park on Saturday, September 16, 2023.

The Alzheimer's

Association Walk to End Alzheimer's is the world's largest event to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's care, support and research. On Walk day, participants honor those affected by Alzheimer's with the poignant Promise Garden ceremony — a mission-focused experience that signifies our solidarity in the fight against the disease.

"We're closer than ever to stopping Alzheimer's," said Drew Wyman, Executive Director of the Alzheimer's Association Maine Chapter. "We hope that everyone in our community can join us by starting a team to help the Alzheimer's Association raise awareness and funds for families facing the disease today, and take more steps toward treatments and fi-

nally ending this disease."

The Walk to End Alzheimer's takes place at seven locations across Maine during September and October. In 2022, more than 200 residents from the Lewiston/Auburn area joined the Lakes & Mountains Area Walk to End Alzheimer's while raising nearly \$39,000. This year the Walk aims to raise \$50,000.

More than 6 million Americans are living with Alzheimer's disease — a leading cause of death in the United States. Additionally, more than 11 million family members and friends provide care to people living with Alzheimer's and other dementias. In Maine alone, there are more than 29,000 people living with the disease and 51,000 caregivers.

Participants can choose to start a team, join a team, or walk as an individual during the annual fundraiser. The Lakes & Mountains Walk to End Alzheimer's will begin following the Promise Garden Ceremony at 10 a.m. To register and receive the latest updates on this year's Walk to End Alzheimer's, visit [alz.org/maine/walk](http://alz.org/maine/walk).

# SeniorsPlus receives Best Places to Work in Maine 2023 recognition

**LEWISTON, ME (August 24, 2023)** -- The Maine State Council of the Society for Human Resource Management, Best Companies Group and BridgeTower Media have named SeniorsPlus, Western Maine's designated Area Agency on Aging, as one of the Best Places to Work in Maine. SeniorsPlus, a nonprofit, has been recognized in the medium-sized company category. SeniorsPlus has 135 statewide employees and is headquartered in Lewiston with additional offices in Wilton and Norway.

"SeniorsPlus is proud of this honor and we attribute our success to our wonderful team of employees," said Betsy Sawyer-Manter, President and CEO. "We pride ourselves on listening to our staff and working to accommodate their schedules and interests to encourage their best work."

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 and information and assistance) that support independent living, healthy aging, and fight isolation.

The overall program goal of SeniorsPlus is to assist older people and adults with disabilities in its tri-county area to remain

safely at home for as long as possible. 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 more than 8,000 individuals and fields 170,000 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.

Best Places to Work in Maine identifies, recognizes and honors the best places of employment in Maine in three categories: small companies (15-49 U.S. employees), medium companies (50-249 U.S. employees) and large companies (250 or more U.S. employees). To be considered, companies must have at least 15 full-time or part-time employees working in Maine; be a for-profit or not-for-profit business or government entity; be a publicly or privately held business; have a facility in the state of Maine; and be in business a minimum of one year.

Best Companies

Group managed the overall registration and survey process and also analyzed the data and used their expertise to determine the final rankings. There were two parts used to determine the rankings. The first consisted of evaluating each nominated company's workplace policies, practices and demographics, worth approximately 25 percent of the total evaluation. The second part consisted of an employee survey to measure the employee experience, which consisted of 75 percent of the total. The combined scores determined the top companies and the final rankings. The final rankings will be announced at the October 11 awards program.

"The 2023 Best Places to Work in Maine know that the people in their organizations are the key to their success. The companies foster a positive environment for innovative teams to thrive," said Suzanne Fischer-Huettner, managing director of BridgeTower Media for the East Division. "We are pleased to join our partners, the Maine State Council of the Society for Human Resource Management and the Best Companies Group, in honoring these businesses."

The winners will be honored October 11 at a celebration at the Augusta Civic Center.

For an updated listing of sponsors and more information about the event, visit [bestplacestoworkme.com](http://bestplacestoworkme.com).

# Saint Dominic Academy Earns Accreditation from NEASC



**AUBURN, ME (August 4, 2023)**---Saint Dominic Academy (pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade), with campuses in Auburn and Lewiston, has received institutional accreditation from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC).

NEASC accreditation is structured in a self-study report featuring input from the entire school community as well as a peer review that is completed by a visiting committee of education professionals and experts.

"The visiting committee spent time at our school observing classrooms and meeting with faculty, staff, board members, and parents to review and substantiate the school's self-assessment," said Alanna Ste-

venson, principal of the Auburn campus.

"The results provide our school community with the tools to develop a meaningful strategic plan of indicators and goals to inspire continuous school improvement."

The NEASC praised the academy's deep commitment and will to ensure the enduring viability of the school.

"They were impressed by the tremendous love for the school among all constituencies and the vibrant legacy of St. Dom's in the Auburn and Lewiston communities," said J.P. Yorkey, principal of the Lewiston campus.

Other NEASC-accredited Catholic schools in Maine include St. Brigid School in Portland, St. Michael School in Augusta, St. James School in Biddeford, St.

Thomas School in Sanford, All Saints Catholic School in Bangor, and Cheverus High School in Portland.

"The purpose of our schools is to educate the whole person of the children who participate in these centers of educational excellence," said Bishop Robert Deeley. "St. Dom's successfully helps our young people to see the incredible gifts they possess and the responsibility they have to share those gifts with others. Our Catholic schools, students, and dedicated staff members truly bring hope to our world."

For registration information or to take a tour, visit [www.stdoms-maine.org](http://www.stdoms-maine.org). To learn more about Catholic schools throughout Maine, visit [www.portlanddiocese.org/schools](http://www.portlanddiocese.org/schools).



# Maine author celebrates neurodiversity, empathy

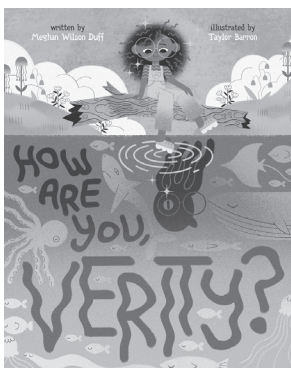
**MACHIAS, ME (August 11, 2023)** – A neurodivergent child interacts with their neighbors to discover the true meaning behind greetings and salutations.

When people say “How are you?” are they really asking or just saying hello? Verity, who is neurodivergent, plans an experiment to figure this out.

Verity is bubbling with excitement about an

upcoming school field trip to the aquarium! When neighbors ask, “How are you?” Verity shares their excitement and fascinating facts about sea animals. Their older brother John kindly suggests that the question “How are you?” is actually a greeting and not an invitation to share so much. Verity plans an experiment to find out if their brother is right.

But when the trip to



the aquarium is canceled, Verity is heartbroken.

When people ask “How are you?” what should they say then?

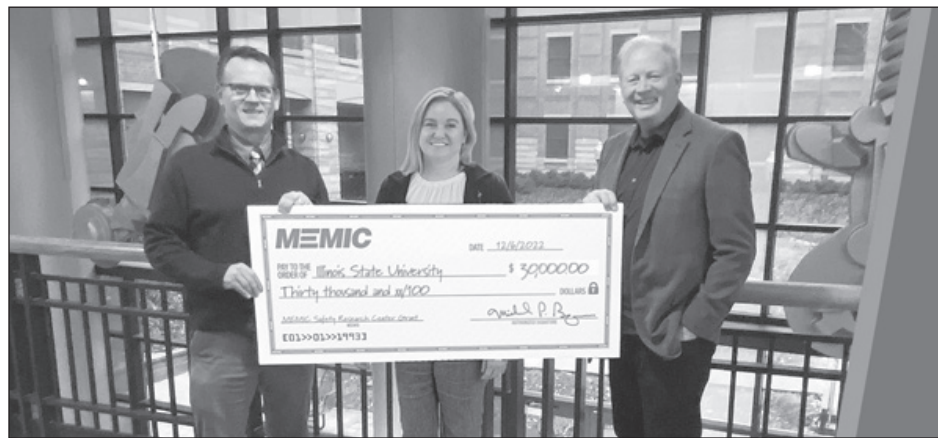
Readers will come for the lesson on social pragmatics, but stay for the happy infodumping about sea life with neighbors.

Meghan Wilson Duff wanted to be a marine biologist when they were younger, but somewhere along the way they got distracted by trying to figure out other people

and became a psychologist. They write books for children. How Are You, Verity?, illustrated by Taylor Barron and released by Magination Press in August 2023 is their first published book. They are a faculty member in the Psychology & Community Studies program at the University of Maine at Machias. Prior to teaching, they worked as a child and family therapist and ad-

olescent addictions treatment provider. Meghan is a member of the Society for Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI), Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance (MWPA), and a Schweitzer Fellow For Life. They are a Maine Writing Project Teacher-Consultant and part of the National Writing Project's Writers Council. (www.meghanwilsonduff.com)

# MEMIC seeks workplace safety research proposals



**PORTLAND, ME (August 25, 2023)** – The MEMIC Safety Research Center is accepting applications for a grant of up to \$30,000 to engage in research that makes a positive impact on workforce safety and health.

This is the third round of grants offered by the MEMIC Safety Research Center, created in 2021 to facilitate understanding and prevention of occupa-

tional injury and illness in partnership with MEMIC staff, policyholders, and academia. Funding in the 2023 round is available to researchers from higher education institutions in the United States and its territories.

MEMIC Group President & CEO Michael Bourque said the grant program's third year will add to beneficial workplace safety research begun in 2021.

“We are excited to continue the program and see it flourish,” Bourque said. “MEMIC Safety Research Center grants are an opportunity for researchers to intensively examine workforce safety challenges, gain high-profile publicity for their work, and create positive change for the American workforce in partnership with MEMIC. Research generated by this program will be integrat-

ed with the work of expert MEMIC Loss Control professionals who are continuously implementing real-time safety solutions.”

The MEMIC Safety Research Center made its first-ever award in 2021 to a faculty team at Indiana University of Pennsylvania's Department of Safety Sciences investigating ways to limit slips, trips, and falls in the workplace. In 2022, a research team at Illinois State University began MEMIC-funded research into how wearable technologies can best benefit workers.

“The MEMIC funding is essential as we strive to keep new technology at the forefront of our research, giving us the opportunity to understand how new technology can be used to address a historically problematic hazard on construction sites,” said

Dr. Wanda Minnick, lead researcher for the Indiana University of Pennsylvania team. “This type of applied research is fundamental in developing interventions to minimize the likelihood of slips, trips, and falls.”

The MEMIC Safety Research Center was launched as part of The MEMIC Group's mission to make workers' comp work better with compassion, trusted partnerships, and relentless commitment to workforce safety. By working closely with policyholders over the past 30 years, MEMIC safety experts have reduced the probability of occupational injuries and illnesses by directly observing, collecting, and analyzing data to identify the root causes of injuries and provide practical preventive solutions.

Proposals for 2023 MEMIC Safety Research

Center grants must be submitted online via the proposal submission form by Oct. 20. Grants will be awarded in November.

Funded projects must be completed within two years, and results disseminated through peer reviewed journals or via published thesis or dissertation. Updates on research progress must be provided on a semi-annual basis. Proposals must indicate short- and long-term impacts to workforce safety and health.

Visit [memic.com/research](http://memic.com/research) for more information about The MEMIC Safety Research Center and a full description of application requirements. Visit <https://www.memic.com/research-center/published-work> to view a list of peer-reviewed articles published by members of MEMIC's Loss Control Department.

# Maine push to shut down illegally operated marijuana businesses

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (August 24, 2023)** – Maine's Congressional Delegation is pushing the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) to shut down illegally operated Chinese marijuana growing operations in Maine. In a letter to Attorney General Merrick Garland, Senators Susan Collins and Angus King, and Representatives Chellie

Pingree and Jared Golden ask the DOJ to address the illegal growing operations run by foreign governments or entities.

The letter comes in response to media reports indicating that there could be 270 suspected Chinese illegal marijuana growing operations in Maine worth an estimated \$4.37 billion.

“Maine state law

permits marijuana use in certain circumstances, and the Maine Office of Cannabis Policy (OCP) provides oversight,” wrote the Maine Delegation. “OCP is responsible for licensing, compliance, and general oversight of both medical marijuana use and recreational use, and it consults with other state agencies—including the Department of Agri-

culture, Conservation and Forestry; the Department of Health and Human Services; the Department of Labor; and the Department of Public Safety—on rulemaking related to their areas of expertise.”

The Maine Delegation continued, “These reports of illegal growing operations within the state are alarming, and we are writing to request additional information about what the DOJ is doing to address this situation. We request answers to the following questions: What is the DOJ doing to address illegal growing op-

erations, including illegal growing operations that are run by foreign governments or entities? How are the profits from these illegal operations being returned to the country of origin? These reports identify Chinese ownership. Is the DOJ aware of this alleged Chinese ownership or any other foreign involvement in these operations? Please provide any additional information about the memo identified in these reports, including who produced it, when the information contained in the memo was first obtained, and

what actions have been taken in response? What action is the DOJ taking to swiftly shutdown any illegal marijuana growing operations in the state of Maine?”

The Cannabis Legalization Act, passed by voters in 2016, established a regulatory framework governing adult cannabis use in Maine. The legislation specifies regulations for tracking cannabis plants and product, enforcement and compliance, health and safety data, labeling and packaging, and licensing and fees.



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# Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

**Aug 31**  
**AUBURN** -- The Maine Iris Society will hold its Annual Siberian & Daylily Auction on Saturday, September 2nd at the United Methodist Church which is located at 439 Park Avenue in Auburn, ME. The auction begins at 1:00 pm and will be held outdoors, weather permitting. Attendees may wish to bring their own lawn chairs for more comfortable seating. Admission is free and open to the public.

**Sept 2**  
**GORHAM** -- On Saturday, September 2nd, starting at 1:00 pm at the United Methodist Church, 439 Park Avenue in Auburn, the Maine Iris Society will hold its annual auction of Siberian irises and daylilies. All are welcome.

**Sept 2**  
**BAR MILLS** -- DAVID MALLET - at Saco River Theatre, 29 Salmon Falls Road, Bar Mills, ME, Sept 2 at 7:30 pm. Tickets: \$15 General Admission at [www.sacorivertheatre.org](http://www.sacorivertheatre.org) or call 207-929-6473 for reservations.

**Sept 6**  
**BAR MILLS** -- MARIA MULDAUR'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF "MIDNIGHT AT THE OASIS" - at Saco River Theatre, 29 Salmon Falls Road, Bar Mills, ME, Sept 6 at 7:30 pm. Tickets: \$15 General Admission at [www.sacorivertheatre.org](http://www.sacorivertheatre.org) or call 207-929-6473 for reservations.

theatre.org or call 207-929-6473 for reservations.

**Sept 8**  
**LEWISTON** -- Opening Minds through Art (OMA) art show Friday, September 8, 2023 from 1-3 p.m. SeniorsPlus, 8 Falcon Road, Lewiston, ME. The public is invited to an art opening in the Lewiston headquarters featuring OMA artists and their art. Free. Contact SeniorsPlus at 207-795-4010, [edcenter@seniorsplus.org](mailto:edcenter@seniorsplus.org).

**Sept 8**  
**LEWISTON** -- 10:00am at the Lewiston Public Library: BABY'S 1ST MASTERPIECE - MESS-FREE PAINTING Help your baby create a mess-free masterpiece. Free. No registration required. Recommended for caregivers and their children ages 3 months-12 months. 513-3133; [www.LPLonline.org](http://www.LPLonline.org)

**Sept 13 and 2nd and 4th Wednesday each month**  
**LEWISTON** -- MAKE ART WITH ARTVAN 2nd and 4th Wednesday each month, 3:30PM starting September 13th

ArtVan will be providing hands-on creative art program in the Children's Department of the

Lewiston Public Library for children ages 5-14 (ages 5-8 must be accompanied by an adult) for self-expression, personal growth, and fun.

Free. All art supplies will be provided. 513-3133; [www.LPLonline.org](http://www.LPLonline.org)

**Sept 14**  
**AUBURN** -- Job-InME is hosting a Career Fair that is Free to job Seekers at the Hiron Garden Riverwatch on Sept 14, 2023 from 3-6 PM. Some of the best companies in Maine will be there looking to hire!

**Oct 21**  
**WESTBROOK** -- Annual Holiday Craft Fair and Silent Auction Where: Prides Corner Community Church, 235 Pride St. Westbrook, ME 04038

When: October 21, from 9AM to 3PM

Handmade crafts, baked goods and very popular silent auction items featuring sports memorabilia, game tickets, themed gift baskets, fabulous items and gift certificates! SILENT AUCTION ENDS AT 2PM.

**Oct 28, 29**  
**LEWISTON, TOPSHAM** -- "Soulful Expressions" Saturday, Oct. 28, 2023, 7:00 p.m. - Franco

Center, Lewiston; Sunday, Oct. 29, 2023, 2:30 p.m. - Orion Performing Arts Center, Topsham

**Jan 20, 21**  
**LEWISTON, TOPSHAM** -- "Song & Dance Music from Around the World" Saturday, Jan. 20, 2024, 7:00 p.m. - Franco Center, Lewiston; Sunday, Jan. 21, 2024, 2:30 p.m. - Orion Performing Arts Center, Topsham

**Mar 23, 24**  
**LEWISTON, TOPSHAM** -- "A New Artistic Mélange" - Emily Isaacson, Guest Conductor Saturday, Mar. 23, 2024, 7:00 p.m. - Franco Center, Lewiston; Sunday, Mar. 24, 2024, 2:30 p.m. - Orion Performing Arts Center, Topsham

**May 18, 19**  
**LEWISTON, TOPSHAM** -- "Cityscape, Seascape, Soundscape" Saturday, May 18, 2024, 7:00 p.m. - Franco Center, Lewiston ; Sunday, May 19, 2024, 2:30 p.m. - Orion Performing Arts Center, Topsham

**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

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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](mailto: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 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. 513-3133; [www.LPLonline.org](http://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](http://seniorsplus.org).



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

## NOVEMBER 29, 2023 TO DECEMBER 1, 2023 - WHITE MOUNTAIN HOTEL & RESORT –

This trip includes 2 nights lodging, 2 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 2 dinners and 2 different entertainment shows, an Austrian sleigh ride at Nestlenook Farm in Jackson, NH., shopping at Settler's Green or in town shopping. All room and meal taxes & gratuities included. The price is \$589.00

per person double occupancy. A \$100.00 deposit per person is due at registration. Final payment is due October 28, 2023. Pickup location is The Auburn Mall (in back of J.C. Penney) 500 Center Street, Auburn, ME at 10:30 A.M. For more information on any of these trips please contact Claire at 207-784-0302 [Home] or 207-576-8604 [Cell] or Cindy at 207-345-9569 [Home].

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# Rotary Clubs Welcome New District Governor

AUBURN, ME tary District Governor ville was the special guest (August 4, 2023) -- Ro- Tina Chapman of Water- speaker at a joint meeting



held recently at Gipper's in Auburn. Chapman is governor of Rotary District 7790, which is comprised of all Maine clubs from Lewiston-Auburn north and all clubs in the province of Quebec. Members attending were from the Auburn-Lewiston Rotary (breakfast club), the Lewiston-Auburn Rotary (lunch club) and the Winthrop Rotary (breakfast). These three clubs along with the Winthrop club are in Area 11 of Rotary District 7790. In the photo from left are Bill Hunter, assistant governor for Area 11; Tricia Foster, president of the A-L breakfast club; Governor Chapman; Dick Coleman, president of the Winthrop Club; and Roger Philippon, president of the L-A lunch club. A global organization of more than 1.4 million members, Rotary clubs provide service to others, promote integrity, and advance understanding and goodwill through a fellowship of community, professional, and community leaders.

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