



TWIN CITY TIMES

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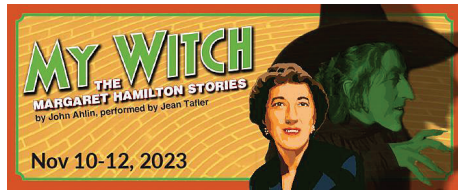
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Thursday, November 9, 2023 • FREE

Have a spellbinding time at *My Witch* at TPT



Jean Tafler as Margaret Hamilton



LEWISTON, ME -- My Witch: The Margaret Hamilton Stories, playing Nov 10, 11 and 12 at The Public Theatre, is the amazing tale of the brains, heart and courage it took for a gentle kindergarten teacher from Cleveland, Ohio to become The Wicked Witch of The West as well as one of the most famous character actresses of her time.

If there is one movie we all share, it's The Wizard of Oz, and this delightful show takes a loving look at the woman behind the cackle and green makeup. Set in the cottage where she lived on a small island in Maine, playwright John Ahlin's script offers the audience entertaining anecdotes of Margaret Hamilton's life along with in-

sightful tidbits about Hollywood and the making of The Wizard of Oz.

Actress Jean Tafler casts a spell on the audience with her mesmerizing portrayal of Margaret Hamilton, whose Wicked Witch of the West scared the living daylights out of every one of us.

Unknown to many, Margaret Hamilton appeared in hundreds of movies, plays and musicals, enjoying a long and rich acting career spanning six decades on stage and screen. My Witch, The Margaret Hamilton Stories is a fascinating show, especially for fans of classic Hollywood movies.

My Witch, The Margaret Hamilton Stories will be performed at The Public Theatre on Friday, Nov 10 at 7pm, Sat Nov 11 at 3pm, and Sun Nov 12 at 2pm. Tickets are \$30. For tickets call 782-3200 or visit thepublictheatre.org. Location: 31 Maple St, Lewiston. Sponsored by Lee Auto Malls and LA Metro Magazine. Season Underwriters: Sun Journal, Platz Associates, and Bennett Radio Group.

Infectious comedy this weekend at GFCC



AUBURN, ME – Make laughter a priority this week at Great Falls Comedy Club with shows on November 10, and 11, at 7:30 pm

Friday's fun will feature comedy magician, Paul Kilmer, and the OG GenXer, Amanda Cohen. Both are well traveled and hilariously funny; you won't want to miss out.

Then on Saturday, the one and only Ray Harrington will headline the club, with feature act Nick Gordon for an early show and a late show. Harrington is an infectious charming, nationally touring headliner, podcaster, and documentarian from Rhode Island. He has appeared on Conan and his latest album, Overwhelmed, debuted at number one on Amazon and at the top of the Billboard Comedy Charts.

Tickets can be found at <https://www.greatfallscomedyclub.com> or purchased at the show. Great Falls Comedy Club is located inside Craft Brew Underground at 34 Court Street, Auburn, under the red awning.

For more information contact the club at info@greatfallscomedyclub.com or by phone at 207-200-5366.

City of Lewiston to open Community Resiliency Center

LEWISTON, ME – The City of Lewiston, in partnership with the State of Maine and community partners, will open the Community Resiliency Center (CRC) at 184 Main Street beginning Mon., Nov. 13. The Red Cross, other local and state partners, and the FBI Victim Services Division have coordinated services for victims' families at the Family Assistance Center (FAC) located at the Lewiston Armory.

The FAC will close on Thu., Nov. 2, at 5 PM and transition to the CRC. Access to services in Lewiston will continue during this transition.

The CRC will be launched under the management of the Lewiston-based non-profit Community Concepts. The CRC will provide supportive services for victims, survivors, first responders, and

families impacted by the mass violence. The CRC will be in downtown Lewiston and is in the process of being established to welcome individuals in need. In the interim, every identified victim has been connected to a victim advocate who will continue to provide support services and resources to them and their families.

More information on the hours of operation of the CRC and the services provided will be released in advance of the opening on November 13. If individuals are in need of immediate support, the following resources are available:

Sweetser will have walk-in capacity for those seeking services and support, located at 217 Main Street, Lewiston, Monday – Friday, 8:00 – 5:00.

Call or text 988: This suicide and behavioral health crisis hotline is answered 24 hours a day, seven days a week by trained crisis specialists offering free, confidential support for anyone. Specialists also can respond by chat at 988lifeline.org. Information for the deaf and hard of hearing is available at the city's website, and the Maine Association for the Deaf has information on counseling and other support.

Veterans and their loved ones can dial 988 then press 1, text 838255, or chat

at www.veteranscrisisline.net.

Teens and young adults can text (207) 515-8398: The National Alliance on Mental Illness Teen Text Line connects youth with other youth to help them manage their challenges every day from noon to 10 PM.

If you're unsure, contact 211. It provides general information, including how to access behavioral health and social service resources, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Information can also be found at 211maine.org.

Clinicians, educators and first responders can call 1-800-769-9819: The FrontLine WarmLine offers free support services to help these professionals manage the stress of responding to disasters from 8 AM to 8 PM, seven days a week.

All of these resources provide free, confidential support.

Correction

In the recent letter to the editor titled "Our country is in crisis," one of the signatories, Tim Gallant, is inaccurately listed as a member of the Lewiston City Council. He is actually a candidate for Lewiston City Council in the November election.

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

CoverME.gov open for shopping and enrolling

AUGUSTA, ME— The Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) announced today that Maine people can now visit CoverME.gov to shop for and enroll in 2024 coverage that fits their needs at a price that works during the Open Enrollment Period that kicks off today, November 1, 2023.

At CoverME.gov, Maine's Health Insurance Marketplace, Maine people can compare private plans, apply for financial savings, and enroll in a 2024 health or dental insurance plan. All plans offered on CoverME.gov provide quality, comprehensive insurance that protects consumers if they have an accident or major illness and fully pays for preventive screenings. This year, Maine people can continue to take advantage of additional federal financial assistance that makes insurance more affordable.

"We encourage Maine people who need affordable health insurance to visit CoverME.gov starting today," said DHHS Commissioner Jeanne Lambrew. "Health insurance is critical to protecting physical and financial health from life's unexpected turns, and to getting and staying healthy over the long term. We stand ready to assist anyone looking for health coverage in finding a plan that

works for them."

Thousands of Maine people have saved and will continue to save hundreds of dollars on average on their CoverME.gov health care premiums due to enhanced premium tax credits extended through 2025. In 2023, 4 out of 5 people enrolled in CoverME.gov coverage qualified for help to pay for health insurance, with an average reduction in premium costs of \$493. Some members pay less than \$10 a month.

Those with income over \$58,320 for an individual and \$120,000 for a family of four may benefit from extra financial assistance for 2024 and are encouraged to apply on CoverME.gov to see if they qualify. This extra assistance particularly benefits older Mainers and rural Mainers who often face higher premiums than others.

Even those who could not afford coverage or did not qualify previously should check out CoverME.gov to see what assistance may be available in the upcoming year. Those who already have coverage through CoverME.gov will be automatically enrolled in the plan that most closely matches their current plan, unless they take action during open enrollment. Still, DHHS encourages those members to go to CoverME.gov to review and compare plans to make

sure the plan they currently have is the best plan in terms of their health care needs and budget.

"CoverME.gov offers quality, affordable coverage for doctor's visits, prescription drugs, mental health, emergencies and hospitalizations," said Hillary Schneider, Director of the DHHS Office of the Health Insurance Marketplace, which runs CoverME.gov. "If you, or a friend, neighbor or family member don't have health or dental coverage, now is the time to go to CoverME.gov or call 1-866-636-0355 to shop for coverage."

This is Maine's third year of open enrollment through CoverME.gov, the State-run health insurance marketplace. After the first open enrollment period run fully by Maine in 2021 following the transition from the federal HealthCare.gov Marketplace, enrollment declines were reversed. Maine's taking greater control of its marketplace, paired with Medicaid expansion, has helped keep Maine's uninsured rate below the national average. In 2022, more than 60,000 Mainers enrolled in health coverage for 2023 through CoverME.gov.

Open enrollment runs from today, November 1, through January 16, 2024. The enrollment deadline for coverage beginning January 1, 2024, is December 15, 2023. Consumers

who enroll between December 16 and January 16 will have coverage beginning February 1. After January 16, only individuals and families that qualify for special enrollment periods – such as a result of losing insurance through a job or MaineCare, a change in marital status, or having a baby -- can sign up for 2024 private health insurance coverage.

This year, CoverME.gov will offer individual or family health plans from Anthem, Community Health Options, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, and Taro Health. CoverME.gov offers dental plans from Anthem and Northeast Delta Dental. Help is available for consumers looking to find the plan that fits their needs at a price that works for their budget. Visit coverme.gov/localhelp or call (866) 636-0355/TTY 711 (for languages other than English, choose option 4) for information.

"Mainers who need coverage can find information about plans that will work best for their health care needs at CoverME.gov, including how much help they can get paying monthly premiums. Many Mainers are also eligible for help with copays and deductibles," said Ann Woloson, Executive Director of Consumers for Affordable Health Care. "CoverME.gov is user-friendly and great resource for any-

one who needs information about coverage options and enrolling in a plan. Maine consumers are fortunate to have a good tool and so many resources available to them to help understand their options and enroll in coverage."

"This is the third year Maine has enrolled individuals with affordable health care coverage through CoverME.gov," said Patty Lovell, Health Care Navigator with Western Maine Community Action. "I'm excited for the beginning of Open enrollment. It's an opportunity for individuals to secure affordable health insurance for the upcoming year and update their current application to ensure they are getting the most out of their health insurance to meet their individual medical needs and the best subsidy for their household. I'm excited for the WMCA Consortium Navigators to support people statewide with enrollment assistance in person, by phone, or online."

With the Plan Compare tool at CoverME.gov/get-started/compare-plans, consumers can evaluate available private health insurance plans and estimate their costs before they sign up for an account or complete a full application. The tool also allows consumers to check whether their preferred health care providers are included in each plan's network, and to view infor-

mation about coverage and out-of-pocket costs for prescription drugs.

CoverME.gov is a one-stop shop for health care coverage and the only place Mainers can get financial assistance to reduce out-of-pocket costs for coverage. People who apply through CoverME.gov who are eligible for MaineCare will have their application sent to MaineCare for review. Eligible Maine people can enroll in MaineCare at any time of year.

Along with the state's expansion of MaineCare to more than 100,000 Maine people, CoverME.gov is at the heart of Maine's effort to ensure that people can see their doctor, afford their medications, and stay healthy. Governor Mills' Made for Maine Health Coverage Act – which passed the Legislature with a strong bipartisan majority – authorized DHHS to run a State-based Health Insurance Marketplace and made some of the most common medical visits less costly. In 2019, Governor Mills also signed into law bipartisan legislation to codify insurance protections for people with pre-existing conditions, ensuring that Maine people with cancer, asthma, or other chronic conditions don't get charged more or denied private coverage altogether from insurance companies regulated by the state.

Republicans respond to decision to pursue Clean Car Rule

AUGUSTA, ME – Senate Republicans issued the following statement in response to the decision made today by the Maine Board of Environmental Protection to move forward with adopting California's Advanced Clear Car II rule:

"Far-left progressives do everything they can to increase the cost of living

for Maine's citizens; and this is yet another example of that. From senseless energy policies to now forcing Maine consumers to buy electric vehicles they don't want, cannot afford or that aren't practical for their needs, just three members of a seven-member unelected board chose to put their own interests

above that of 1.3 million other Mainers," said Sen. Matt Harrington, R-York, who is the Senate Republican Lead for the Legislature's Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee. "The Legislature will need to address this situation where a petition process let 150 special interest lobbyists and their allies force

Maine BEP to even consider this insane rule, let alone a board that itself has run amok."

"Today, 150 people decided to use three members of a seven-member unelected board to hijack the entire legislative process and advance their own far-left agenda through an initiative that will be disas-

trous to Maine's economy and harmful to our people. How sad is it that only one-tenthousandth of all Maine citizens can wreak economic devastation on the rest of us through this awful process?" said Sen. Brad Farrin, R-Somerset, who is the Senate Republican Lead for the Legislature's Transportation Committee.

"During today's meeting, Maine BEP board members admitted they're concerned they will be challenged by the Legislature. Damn right they will be – we won't let seven unelected people who aren't answerable to the public override the 186 members of the Legislature who earned our place at the table through an election."



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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Auburn praises agency cooperation

AUBURN, ME -- As the dust settles after the most heinous crime spree in Maine history, allegations have arisen about the cooperation of agencies responding to the incident. It is disappointing to hear this as we mourn for the victims and their families. In the weeks to come, there will be after-action reviews done to see how our agencies responded and take lessons learned from the incident and apply them to improve our tactics and strategies in the hope we never have to respond to an incident like this again.

In any incident of this

magnitude, the initial response is going to be chaotic, especially with multiple scenes involved. Once an incident command system is established and logistics become manageable, everything becomes more organized.

In this incident, the suspect was identified within the first hour of the incident and suspect and vehicle information was broadcast out on a state-wide level rapidly thereafter. Once the incident shifted to the manhunt phase, a large command post was set up. Auburn Police Command Staff were present within the command

post several times a day receiving briefings from the Maine State Police on the status of the investigation and the manhunt. This information was then passed onto our staff for their situational awareness.

At no time did the Maine State Police withhold information from us at any point. At times there was simply no update to give because there was no new information that had been generated.

The Auburn Police Department enjoys a good healthy cooperative relationship with the Maine State Police and will continue to do so.

Tri-Town Optimist Club announces Student of the Month



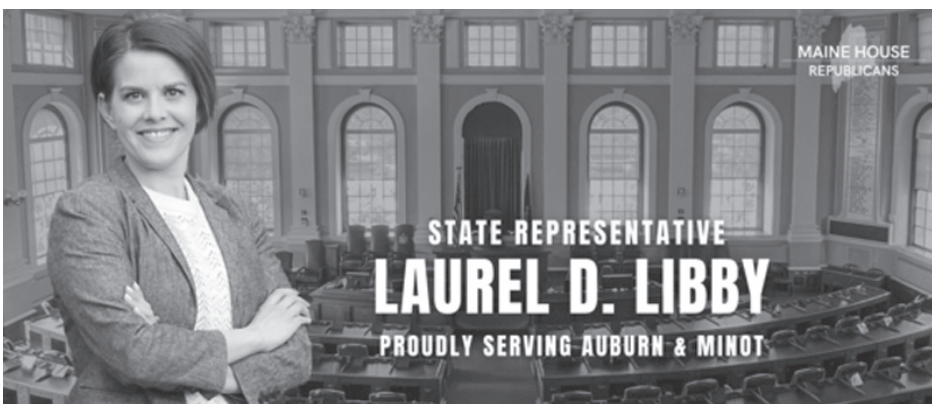
Sixth grader, Aurora Sands, of Poland (L) with her teacher, Margaret Hansen.

The Tri-Town Optimist Club of Mechanic Falls, Minot and Poland is proud to announce its latest RSU 16 Student of the Month recipient. Sixth grader, Aurora Sands, from Poland

Community School was recognized today as our Optimist Student of the Month for October. Aurora is described by her teacher and principal as a student leader who always models the school

code of conduct. She consistently puts forth her best effort and has a positive outlook. Aurora is responsible, kind, and can always be counted on to help others. Congratulations Aurora!

Rep. Laurel Libby on mental health legislation



STATE HOUSE - Augusta, Maine - On October 29, Representative Laurel Libby of Auburn submitted "An Act to Increase Availability of Mental Healthcare Facilities in Maine," an emergency after-deadline bill intended to repeal Certificate of Need requirements for inpatient and outpatient mental healthcare facilities in Maine. Certificate of Need (CON) is the lengthy and expensive process by which Maine health providers must seek approval not only from the state, but also from their own competitors, in order to offer new services or build a new facility.

"We have a chronic, systemic shortage of mental healthcare in Maine. We saw the effect of that shortage last week during the tragic events that took place in Lewiston," said Rep. Libby. "If we real-

ly want to tackle the root cause, then we should eliminate any and all obstacles to maximizing access to mental healthcare in Maine. Repealing CON is the first step in eliminating those obstacles. Time and again, states that have repealed CON have demonstrated an increased ability to respond to the needs of their communities."

"An Act to Increase Availability of Mental Healthcare Facilities in Maine" will face its first hurdle in the Legislative Council, where legislative leadership will vote whether to move the bill forward through the legislative process or not.

"I think Mainers are tired of hearing politicians talk about the problems in our state, but then be unwilling to implement practical solutions that will actually make a difference. I've submitted a

full CON repeal legislation twice before, and the current majority killed it both times," said Rep. Libby. "I am hopeful, having now seen how desperately we need to address the mental healthcare shortage, my fellow legislators will appreciate the need for this narrow CON repeal. It's time to prioritize the mental health of Maine people above the lobby associations that benefit from limiting services."

For more information, please contact Rep. Laurel Libby at 207-632-7619.

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

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Seniors Not Acting Their Age

Whitewater Follies on the New River



A canoeist completes challenging Lower Keeney Falls on the New River



A team of paddlers views a pinned canoe



Paddlers approach the New River Bridge



A canoeist finishes Greyhound Bus Stopper on the New River Gorge

After an exciting paddle on the Gauley River on the first day of our Penobscot Paddle & Chowder Society West Virginia whitewater trip, seven of us decided to descend the New River

Gorge, another renowned West Virginia river. Trip Leader, Ryan Galway, and I paddled a two-person inflatable craft called a shredder; two canoeists and three kayakers accompanied us.

Part of the recently designated New River Gorge National Park and Preserve; the iconic whitewater section of the New River flows through a series of deep majestic canyons. One of the oldest rivers on earth, our intent was to test our skills on the seven-mile stretch of predominantly big volume Class IV whitewater.

We drove to the takeout at Fayette Station situated far below the spectacular New River Gorge Bridge where we met Hills to Hills Shuttle Service. The driver maneuvered a van and trailer down narrow switchbacks deep into the gorge to pick us up. She then transported us out and through a maze of backcountry

roads to the launch in Hinton.

The whitewater excitement began immediately. A rusted railroad trestle marked the beginning of two challenging rapids called Upper and Lower Railroad. We navigated left of a mammoth hole in Upper and plunged down a technical ledge drop in Lower.

After a few easier rapids, we approached three closely-connected Class IV descents named Upper, Middle, and Lower Keeney. We paddled on the left side of a long wave train in Upper and caught an eddy below a gigantic rock on the left.

From that vantage point, Middle Keeney was a river-wide horizon line. Only the tops of exploding waves could be seen below. We chose a route on the far left and avoided most of the turbulent rollers and holes while tumbling down to a pool at the bottom.

Ryan and I followed the kayakers into a narrow channel on the left in Lower Keeney. Once into the rapid, we angled right through large breaking waves while splitting two unpleasant looking holes. Our wide vessel caught part of a powerful hydraulic at the bottom but we managed to remain

upright. The canoeists did great.

After several Class III rapids, the most difficult falls on the river, Double Z, followed. Everyone started far right and then moved to the center to avoid gnarly holes on the right and a severely undercut boulder on the left. Our entire group nailed it. We were feeling self-assured and celebrating our successes while paddling through several technical rapids that ensued.

The impressive arch of the New River Gorge Bridge could be seen towering high above the canyon when we entered a boulder-strewn rapid called Miller's Folly. The most demanding whitewater behind us, we were brimming with confidence when choosing our respective routes. Then disaster struck. A canoeist slammed against a badly undercut rock. He and his boat were swept under. The paddler escaped but the canoe was partially pinned beneath the massive boulder. Despite a determined effort, we couldn't safely reach it.

The canoe-less paddler joined Ryan and me in the shredder and our intrepid band completed the remainder of the trip. We

intended to contact the park service to report the unfortunate development but they called the unlucky canoeist first. His name and phone number were printed on his gear. Some kayakers found the damaged canoe that had apparently flushed out from under the rock and secured it on the shore.

Since we planned another expedition on the New the following day, we had an added mission – canoe recovery. Fortunately, the undercut rock victim had a second canoe.

The next day was essentially a repeat of the first. Perhaps overconfident, we cruised through Double Z not realizing we were in it. Miller's Folly soon followed.

Ryan and I reached the wayward canoe first. Although damaged, it was operable. While waiting, the canoeist who had pinned the previous day capsized and swam. Miller's Folly was clearly his nemesis.

Once the swimmer and canoe were reunited, Ryan paddled the damaged canoe while I maneuvered the shredder to the takeout. Despite the obstacles, we completed two remarkable, chaotic, memorable days on the acclaimed New River Gorge.

Nine more exciting whitewater escapades are related in my book *Maine Al Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine*.

Ron Chase resides in Topsham. His latest book, *"Maine Al Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine"* is available at www.north-countrypress.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 or he can be reached at ronchase-outdoors@comcast.net

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Fund established to assist trauma response, support services

LEWISTON, ME -- Following the mass shooting incidents in Lewiston on Oct. 25, Central Maine Medical Center (CMMC) has established a fund for trauma response and support services.

The name of the fund is the CMMC Compassionate Care Fund for Trauma Response and Support.

Donations to the fund will go toward:

Trauma care for patients without the ability to pay

Trauma care rooms and facilities, including the emergency department, operating rooms and critical care units

Emotional and behavioral support services to ensure trauma care providers, patients, families and communities receive

the necessary ongoing care needed for recovery

Investments in new technology and equipment used for rapid diagnosis and treatment of trauma patients

Training and education for pre-hospital and hospital personnel dedicated to caring for trauma victims and their families

Securing and maintaining adequate supplies and equipment dedicated to responding to mass casualty incidents

Fourteen patients who initially survived the attack were transported to CMMC.

Central Maine Medical Center assembled a team of more than a dozen surgeons with expertise in orthopedics, cardiovascular, thoracic, colorectal, plastic, urologic and gen-

eral surgery, underscoring a need for this type of coordinated surgical care.

Among them was Richard King, MD, who is the trauma medical director for Central Maine Healthcare.

"Ultimately in any case of trauma, it is critical to make sure the right people with the right training and the right equipment are available at the right time," Dr. King said. "That was clearly apparent on October 25. This fund will help ensure that our community has the very best trauma care available and the services to support it."

To donate to the CMMC Compassionate Care Fund for Trauma Response and Support, visit: <https://www.cmhc.org/cmmc/ways-to-give/>.

Return of 'Military and Veteran Deal Days' at OSJL

NORTH KINGS-TOWN, RI - Ocean State Job Lot (OSJL), the region's premier discount retail chain with 152 stores across the Northeast, is pleased to announce the return of "Military and Veteran Deal Days" for military and veteran customers and their families, from November 9th through November 15th.

Military personnel, veterans, and their immediate family members who are registered as a Job Lot Insider will receive a 'Crazy Deal® Gift Card' equal to 40% of their in-store purchase of \$20.00 or more.

"The sacrifice that our military members, veterans, and their families have made, and continue to make, to protect our freedoms is immeasurable," said David Sarlitto, Executive Director, Ocean State Job Lot Charitable Foundation. "OSJL has long been committed to supporting our service members and their families and we hope that the

Military and Veteran Deal Days initiative has a positive impact."

This promotion does not apply to Ship to Store purchases. Promotion may not be combined with any other discount, offer or promotion, including but not limited to advertised sale items, Crazy Deals®, Insider coupons, and Insider Exclusive Deals. No rainchecks. EBT, merchandise credit, and Crazy Deal Gift Cards cannot be used as a form of tender during this promotion. Limited product exclusions apply, including Ocean State Job Lot gift cards, third-party gift cards, clearance items, propane tanks and refills, beer and wine, and live plants and flowers. Offer may not be applied to past purchases. All warranty and return rules apply. To find out more about Crazy Deals®, please visit: <https://www.oceanstatejoblot.com/crazy-deals-faq>.

In order to receive the discount, customers



must present proper photo identification indicating they are an active-duty military service member, a military veteran, or an immediate family member of a servicemember, and ask for the 'Military and Veteran' promotion at check-out. Acceptable forms of identification include: Blue Star Mother's ID, VFW ID Card, DOD Active/Retired Military ID, USAA Membership Card, VA ID Card, VA Hospital ID, DD-214 Military Discharge Papers, Gold Star Family Members (DD Form 1300), CAC ID Card, American Legion ID Card, DOD Active/Retired Military Dependent/Family ID, or a State-issued License with Military or Veteran Designation.

Extension presents Wabanaki perspectives on foodways

ORONO, ME — University of Maine Cooperative Extension is inviting the public to the virtual 2023 Horticulture Keynote on the Wabanaki perspective on foodways from noon-1:30 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 16.

Join Anthony Sutton, Passamaquoddy from Sipawik and assistant professor of Native American studies and food systems at the University of Maine, for his presentation titled "History, Health Disparities, and Action: A Wabanaki Perspective on Foodways in So Called Maine." Sutton will delve into the history that has shaped the motivations behind Wabanaki food sovereignty and share examples of how individ-

uals are responding to and healing those systems in the present. Attendees will also gain access to valuable resources that provide more information about Wabanaki foodways and ways to connect these ideas within non-Indigenous contexts.

The virtual event is free of charge, but registration is required. To attend the live program or receive the recording link, please register on the event webpage.

For more information, media inquires or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact Rebecca Long at rebecca.j.long@maine.edu or 207.743.6329, email extension.gardening@maine.edu or call 207.581.3188.



Photo of Anthony Sutton courtesy University of Maine Cooperative Extension.

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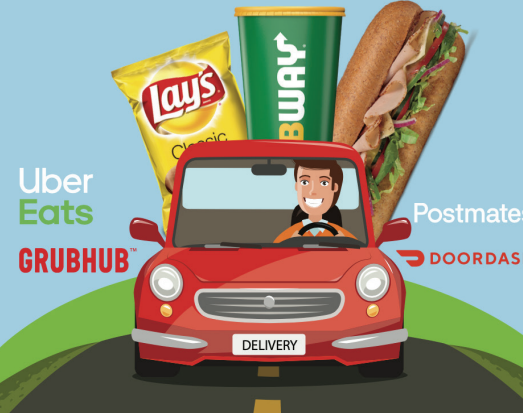
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Arts & Entertainment

Elvis tribute concert coming to Franco Center

LEWISTON, ME—The Franco Center will host an Elvis tribute concert featuring Robert Washington at 7 p.m. Friday, Nov. 17. Facebook fans of World Champion Elvis Impersonator, Robert Washington, who is sometimes known as The Black Elvis, say that Washington is “the best Elvis Impersonator on the planet.”

Washington is the first black man to win the “Elvis Impersonator World Championship” title, and he did it in the

heart of the South: Memphis, Tennessee. Winning that title was a historic event for Washington and other black Elvis impersonators. The championship was won in Elvis’s hometown, “where a black man with a voice like a 747 engine beat out 100 other white contenders, some who had \$30,000 worth of plastic surgery to look like Elvis,” according to his fan page. But not Washington; he is the real deal. He will also perform a few James Brown tunes.

Tickets are \$30 in



The Franco Center will host an Elvis tribute concert featuring well-known local entertainer Robert Washington at 7 p.m. Friday, Nov. 17. Tickets can be purchased online at www.francocenter.org/shows or 207-689-2000. Submitted photo.

advance and \$35 at the door day of show.

Tickets can be purchased through the Franco Center’s box office in person from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays or call 207-689-2000. Ticket purchases can also be made online at www.francocenter.org/shows.

Doors and cash bar open at 6 p.m. Concert is at 7 p.m. 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.

Fans have posted videos of Robert Washington performing as both Elvis and James Brown, such as this one <https://youtu.be/cMdAuRMd65Q> by Stéphan Beauregard.

“We are grateful for our concert sponsors. Our Season Underwriter is Maple Way Dental Care; Media Sponsors are Sun Journal, Turner Publishing, Uncle Andy’s, Bennett Radio Group,” said Jake Hodgkin, production manager. “The show sponsor is Platz Associates.”

Bricks & Bridges Comedy Fest features The Tightest Five

LEWISTON, ME—105.5 WIGY presents the Bricks & Bridges Comedy Fest at 7 p.m. Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, Nov. 9, 10, and 11, at the Franco Center. Any stand-up comedian will tell you they have a tight five minutes, but who has The Tightest Five? Twelve of New England’s rising comedy stars will de-

liver their best five-minute set in hopes of advancing to the semifinals. An opening and closing comedian will bookend the show.

Thursday, Nov. 9 will feature the preliminary round of the Tightest Five contest and special guest comedians. The semifinal round will take place on Friday, Nov. 10, and the finals

on Saturday, Nov. 11.

Friday, Nov. 10 will feature a variety of stand-ups, headlined by comedian, philosopher, and joy sparkler Rodney Norman. The Purveyor of Positivity won the 2008 Rhode Island Comedy Festival, was featured in the Boston Comedy Festival, and has recorded multiple Dry Bar Comedy specials.

Norman’s social media followers and feedback are measured in the millions. His catchphrases including “Have a Super Awesome Day,” “Go Be Weird,” and “Enjoy Your Stupid Life” are proudly repeated and displayed by his ever-growing fanbase. Norman is more than an entertainer, he is an experience.

Saturday, Nov. 11 will feature a variety of stand-ups, headlined by nationally touring comedian, Kelly MacFarland. Comic, improviser, and actress, MacFarland has appeared on NBC’s Last Comic Standing, Comedy Central, The View, and The Today Show. In 2019, she performed for a packed TD Garden at Comics Come Home, a fundraiser for the Cam Neely Foundation which helps cancer patients and their families.

In the corporate arena, MacFarland has worked with the American Heart

Association, Blue Cross Blue Shield, and the Pittsburgh Women in Business Conference. She has also entertained U.S. troops overseas and recorded two albums available on all major streaming platforms.

Saturday night will also include a stand-up showcase and The Tightest Five finals.

The winner of the Comedy Fest will receive a televised stand-up set on The Nite Show with Danny Cashman, a weekly half-hour late-night talk show that airs Saturday nights throughout Maine. The show is based on the formats made famous by Johnny Carson, David Letterman, and Conan O’Brien.

The Comedy Fest show is for ages 18-and-older.

Thursday night tickets are \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door.

Friday and Saturday

night tickets are \$20 in advance and \$25 at the door.

Tickets may be purchased at 207-689-2000 or at www.FrancoCenter.org/shows.

Bricks & Bridges has partnered with Lewiston-based Greater Androscoggin Humane Society and will collect supply and monetary donations at each show to benefit the shelter, which promotes a safe and humane life for all animals.

For more information about the Bricks & Bridges Comedy Fest, visit bricksandbridges.me, call 207-513-0742, or email maineeventcomedy@gmail.com.

Doors and cash bar open at 6 p.m. Comedy Fest is at 7 p.m. 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.

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Benefit to support families of Lewiston shooting victims

LEWISTON, ME – The Lewiston Strong Memorial Benefit Softball Tournament Board is proud to announce the first annual Lewiston Strong Memorial Benefit Softball Tournament on November 11, 2023. Hammond Lumber Company joins as the Presenting Sponsor for the tournament and has generously donated Lewiston Strong apparel that will be available for purchase at each field. Proceeds of the event will go toward all families who lost loved ones in the devastating mass shooting that took place in Lewiston, Maine on Wednesday, October 25, 2023. A 50/50 raffle will

also be held in support of those injured.

Two of the victims, Joe Walker and Ron Morin, were staples within the Lewiston/Auburn softball community. Ron was an umpire with the Maine Amateur Softball Association and Joe was a loved teammate to many.

“Our Board is made up of members of our local softball community,” said Tony Gowell, USA Softball of Maine State Commissioner. “We are a tight knit group. Joe and Ron were family. This is our way of remembering the amazing men we knew while honoring the many lives lost.”

The coed tournament will feature 25 teams spread out between Randall Road Ball Fields (Lewiston) and Pettingill Park Baseball Fields (Auburn), and will include food trucks, raffles, silent auctions, 50/50, apparel available for purchase and mascot appearances from the Maine Celtics and Portland Sea Dogs.

Games will begin at 7:30am with closing ceremonies taking place at Pettingill Park (lower fields) at 8:30pm.

Tournament rules, team bracket information and live viewing can be found on the The Lewiston Strong Memorial Benefit

Softball Tournament website.

Board member Derek Haskell described how amazing it has been to watch the city of Lewiston come together in the wake of an unexpected and horrific event. “Our community faced an unthinkable tragedy,” Haskell said. “It’s a hard thing to wrap your head around. Yet, we have seen an outpouring of support from people near and far. That’s the magic of Lewiston. Despite all of the hurt, people are raising their hands and asking what they can do. It’s been a week since we decided to create this tournament and it has grown exponential-

ly. We have a waitlist for teams, daily emails and calls about volunteer efforts and an outpouring of donations for raffle and silent auction items.”

Food trucks onsite will include Benchwarmerz (Pettingill Park), The Pit Crew Catering (Pettingill Park), L/A Taco (Randall Road), Pinky D’s (Randall Road) and Tripp’s Farmhouse Cafe (Randall Road). The raffle and silent auction will be a three day event taking place at the Auburn Senior Community Center (located in the Pettingill Park plaza) on Friday (online only), Saturday (8am - 7pm) and Sunday from (8am-3pm).

Items available will include signed sports memorabilia, experiences, membership packages, numerous products and services and more.

The public is encouraged to attend to support and cheer teams on. Additional event details and updates can be found on the Lewiston Strong Memorial Benefit Softball Tournament website or social media pages (Instagram: @LewistonStrongSoftball and Facebook: Lewiston Strong Memorial Benefit Softball Tournament).

In case of inclement weather, the event will be moved to Sunday, November 12.

Veterans Forward to host PTSD Help and Healing forum

PORTLAND, ME – Fedcap Maine’s Veterans Forward program will host a PTSD Help and Healing forum dedicated to exploring post-traumatic stress and its profound impact. This important event will take place at Hannaford Hall at the University of Southern Maine in Portland, Maine on November 14, 2023 from 6:30pm to 8:30pm. The event is free and open to the public, but registration is required.

The PTSD Help and Healing Forum will pro-

vide a platform for discussing the far-reaching effects of post-traumatic stress, including tragic events in Lewiston. Sharing experiences and resources is essential in the path toward recovery and prevention and the upcoming forum will help the community move forward.

“In light of recent the recent tragic mass shooting that occurred on October 27, 2023, Veterans Forward expresses its deepest condolences to the victims, their families, and the en-

tire Lewiston, Maine community,” said Brian Cummings, Director of Veteran Services. “Our hearts are with the victims and their loved ones during this difficult time. We acknowledge the pain and loss that the community is enduring and stand in solidarity with those affected. By sharing experiences and resources, this forum aims to promote understanding and facilitate the healing process.”

The mass shooting event is a stark reminder of the importance of ad-

ressing the mental health issues that can lead to such devastating events and how communities must come together to promote understanding, healing, and support for those who need it the most.

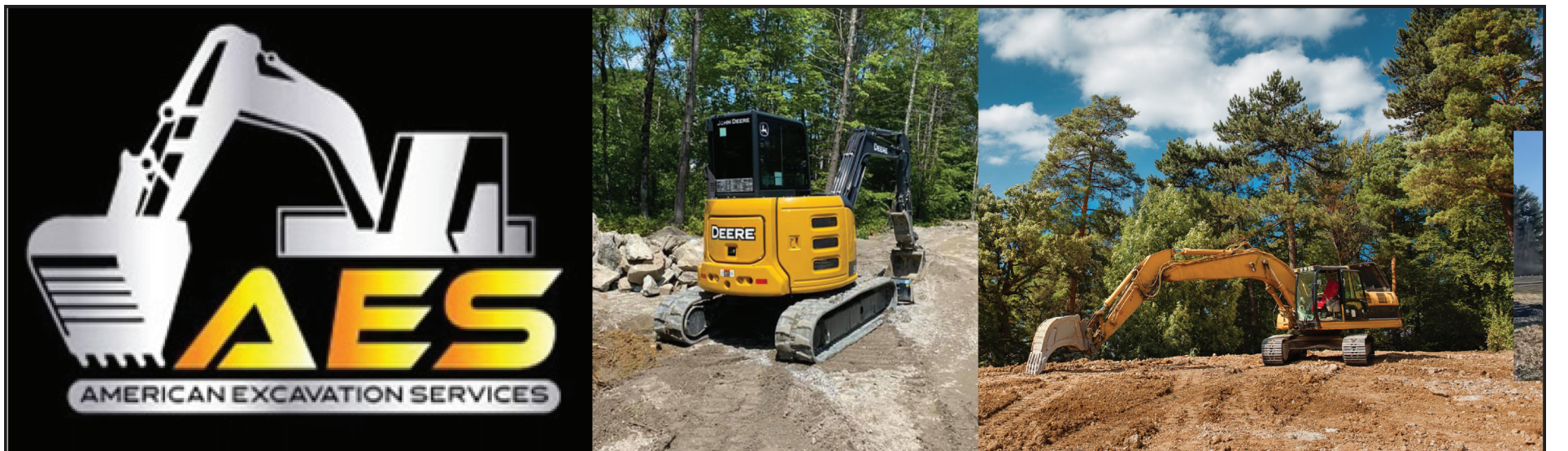
“We encourage the community to come together during this challenging time and to participate in the upcoming forum,” said Serena M. Powell, Executive Director at Fedcap Inc. Serving Maine. “Let us work collectively to raise awareness and support one another in our

journey toward healing and understanding.”

Jason Kander will be the keynote speaker for the PTSD Help and Healing forum, bringing a wealth of experience and a compelling personal journey. Mr. Kander’s impressive career spans military service as an intelligence officer in Afghanistan, where he investigated corruption, espionage, and drug trafficking. He founded Let America Vote, an initiative to combat voter suppression in elections. Since 2019, Jason Kander

has served as the President of National Expansion at the Veterans Community Project, making substantial strides in preventing veteran suicide and homelessness. Jason’s personal story of untreated post-traumatic stress disorder makes him a powerful speaker for this important event.

For more information, sponsorship opportunities, and to register for the PTSD Help and Healing Forum, please visit our website at www.maineveteransforward.org.



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WHA at CMMC announces new art for November



“Gazebo at Thorncrag Nature Sanctuary” by Kenneth Harvey (digital image by Harvey)

LEWISTON, ME -- The Woman’s Hospital Association (WHA) Rotating Art Gallery at Central Maine Medical Center in Lewiston is proud to display the watercolor paintings of Kenneth Harvey and the photographs of Richard Plourde for the month of November. Harvey is a water-

color artist who has been exploring this medium for over thirty years. After working for a major corporation for 32 years he took the opportunity to retire and follow his lifelong dream of becoming a full-time artist. He is presently engaged in plein air painting, is one of a number of artists who participates each year in the Great Paint Out in Boothbay. His work has been shown at several L/A Art Walks.

“My one great hope is that my excitement and enjoyment in producing these images comes through in my work”.

A resident of Lewiston, Plourde’s lifelong passion for being artistically creative has taken many forms including an extensive professional graphic design career with the Geiger owned, Lewiston based publication, “Farmers’ Almanac”. And in 2015, he created his own website design business “BlueStar Graphics”.

Richard’s latest creative interest is now focused on photography where he has become locally known for sharing his stunning photos on social media of Lewiston-Auburn highlighting popular locations around both cit-



The Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul in Lewiston by Richard Plourde (digital image by Plourde)

ies. Many of his photos can be seen promoting the city, events, and economic development.

The works on display may be purchased through

the WHA Gift Shop located adjacent to the main lobby at Central Maine Medical Center. A percentage of sale proceeds benefits patients of CMMC.

The Concord Group named Company of the Year



(L to R): Jackie Artea-Crockett and Ryan Lefebvre of The Concord Group’s Maine Field Marketing team accepted the Insurance Company of the Year award during the Maine Insurance Agent Association Young Agents Committee’s Sales and Leadership Conference.

BEDFORD, NH — The Concord Group Insurance Companies has been selected by the Maine Insurance Agent Association’s Young Agents Committee as its Insurance Company of the Year. The announcement was made during their annual 2023 Sales and Leadership Conference held on October 13, 2023.

“Receiving the Company of the Year award from the Maine Young

Agents Committee is a testament to the collaborative, positive, and supportive approach our employees provide to Maine’s Independent Agents. I appreciate the effort our team has made to ensure our services align with the needs of our Agents and their policyholders. Thank you to the agents who voted for us to receive this year’s Company of the Year accolade!”, said Dan McCabe, President

and CEO of The Concord Group Insurance Companies.

The Insurance Company of the Year award, presented by the Young Agents Committee, is determined through an online vote by Independent Agents in the state of Maine. Insurance carriers are voted based on criteria such as agency/company relations, the delivery and offering of products, and superior service.

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Turning spare space into a thriving community gallery

Guest column by **Briana Hilton**

LEWISTON, AUBURN, ME (September 29, 2023) -- Lewiston-Auburn has a relatively mature population in terms of age. As the Sun Journal highlights, planning for later life has become a key step for many residents, and the community as a whole has a responsibility to provide support and steps to care for this invaluable section of society. The city and its community have already taken significant strides towards this with the decision of the referendum at Lewiston High School creating specific room for adult and senior learning, and there are now spaces being outlined for the use of the entire community in the future. With that in mind, it's worth considering what can make a community space a worthwhile area, starting with considering creativity.

Introducing creativ-

ity A shared communal space needs to have a purpose - especially one that places a focus on that community and its adult citizens. That purpose can be communicated through its creative design, and this nod is especially important if the area is designed for creative uses. Consider, for instance, the use of sculptures, both metal and otherwise.

As ArchDaily notes, sculptures shape urban areas. As well as acting as a focal point, they can reflect and present the values of the town and its people. Some of the most famous sculptures do exactly this. Take, for instance, Barbara Hepworth's Summer Dance, which reflects the cultural and historical ties of its host towns of Cornwall to the ancient links of the region. Artwork should mean something. As it happens, the industrial and



farming history of Lewiston-Auburn is a great basis for the use of metal sculptures. Twisted and sculpted metals can easily provide a fantastic icon which harks back to the golden era of the twin cities, and will be a focal artistic point for an area with real purpose.

Making it utilitarian

It's important that any plans have an edge to them that will lend itself to the educational and vocational development of adults. Given, a public gallery and community space will already provide

the community with some big benefits, ranging from the active space to be used through to the creativity such a space fosters. However, it must also be there for active use and cannot simply be something to look at.

A simple way to manage this is through providing ample sitting space - both conventional (in the forms of benches and such) and improved (such as stone steps, plinths and fountains). This is another great area to get creative with. De-

zeen highlights one sunken garden design used in Los Angeles, where shade can be taken from the sun and a distinctly green aspect given to any learning or other engagement. This is a great way to provide inspiration and make an area feel fully sheltered.

Ensuring inclusivity

Lewiston-Auburn is one of the most creatively dense places anywhere in the country, defined by the amount of public viewable artwork and creations in and around the city. You might not know this, however, if you have any form of motor disability; according to Bates University, the accessibility that enables everyone to view these works of art is simply not there. It is imperative that any new developments put accessibility first.

There are simple principles to adhere to in ensuring that public spaces are accessible. These are providing wheelchair

ramps; ensuring pathways are wide enough for the use of mobility aids; and making sure that pathways are level. Despite this, it can be quite easy to get this wrong. Using US federal and UN guidelines is important, as these will provide the proper widths and requirements for mobility aids and safety measures. This won't just aid people with mobility impairments, either, as those hard of hearing or sight will stand to benefit from inclusive spaces.

Pulling all of this together will ensure that any new public space is fit for the needs of older generations. They have a right to access education and learning, too, but these spaces are not always constructed in a way that's perfect for them. The design of these spaces needs to be carefully managed, of course, but that's entirely achievable while still creating a relaxing and creative area.

Rumford supports mental health for police, families

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today, U.S. Senators Susan Collins, Vice Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, and Angus King (I-ME) announced that Rumford Police Department has been awarded a total of \$163,462 through the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of Community Oriented Policing Services' (COPS) Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act (LEMHWA) grant pro-

gram to provide greater mental health support to law enforcement officers and their families.

"Law enforcement officers willingly place themselves in harm's way to protect our communities. It is our responsibility to equip them and their families with the necessary resources to safeguard their well-being," said Senators Collins and King. "This important funding will support mental health programs for the dedicated

men and women who make up the Rumford Police Department, as well as their families."

Recent studies have found that law enforcement officers have a 54% increase in suicide risk, compared to civilians. This risk is magnified for departments with less than 50 full-time officers, a category which includes the vast majority of Maine's police departments.

LEMHWA implementation grants support

state, local, tribal, or territorial law enforcement agencies seeking to implement new or enhance existing programs that offer training and services on officer emotional and mental health, peer mentoring, suicide prevention, stress reduction, and support services for officers and their families.

In August of 2022, the Public Safety Officer Support Act, co-sponsored by Senator Collins,

was signed into law. This bipartisan legislation acknowledged the reality that law enforcement officers, firefighters, and emergency responders face a heightened risk of developing post-traumatic stress disorders that may lead to trauma-induced suicides. The bill expanded the Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) program to both create an avenue for officers to seek disability benefits for PTSD, and al-

lowed families of officers who die by trauma-linked suicide to apply for death benefits.

Senators Collins and King have been longstanding supporters of law enforcement officers. Last year, they announced more than \$700,000 to hire new law enforcement officers in five communities across Maine and have repeatedly voted for spending packages that increase funding for the COPS program.

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NORTHEAST HARBOR, ME—Maine Seacoast Mission needs help fulfilling its Christmas wish list and to bring joy to thousands this holiday season. The Mission distributes Christmas presents to nursing homes, care facilities, day cares, and children and families living on Maine's unbridged islands and in eastern Hancock and Washington counties.

Since the 1910s, the Mission has delivered gifts to lighthouse keepers' families and those who might otherwise not have a gift to open. In 2022, the Mission distributed gifts to 1,533 people thanks to the

generosity of donors. Wishlist items include personal care items, clothing, books, games, and toys. Because gifts are given to everyone from infants to older adults, items for all ages and sizes are requested. The Mission traditionally includes a knitted or crocheted item with each gift. For knitters and crocheters are invited to donate their mittens, hats, shawls, scarves, socks, and lap blankets.

"The Mission's Christmas program is a tradition that goes all the way back to our founding," says President John Zavodny. "With the help of donors, and volunteers

who wrap each gift in white paper and red string, the Mission can make Christmas a little more joyful for many."

The 2023 Christmas Program wish list and Amazon wish list are now available. donate specific items of need. Gift cards to Walmart and Amazon as well as monetary donations are also welcome, which will help the Mission fulfill specific requests.

Gifts and cards can be mailed to Maine Seacoast Mission Christmas Program. PO Box 428, 39 Weald Bethel Lane, Cherryfield, ME 04622. Checks should be addressed to Maine Seacoast Mission



Christmas Program, P.O. Box 600, Northeast Harbor, ME 04662. The Mission would like to properly acknowledge all contributions, so please include a full name and address on

any package or letter sent to the Mission.

Rooted in a history of compassionate service and mutual trust, Maine Seacoast Mission seeks to strengthen coastal and

island communities by educating youth, supporting families, and promoting good health. For more information, please visit <https://www.seacoast-mission.org/>

Extension offers workshops for youth development, inclusion



ORONO, ME — The University of Maine Cooperative Extension 4-H Northeast Regional Volunteer Connection is offering a series of virtual interactive workshops aimed at empowering volunteers and leaders to create inclusive and supportive environments for youth. The free workshops, to be held from November to April via Zoom, will cover a range of topics including LGBTQ+ inclusion, positive communication, mental wellness and building strong relationships in animal science programs.

The first workshop,

"Building Strong 4-H Clubs," will be held on Nov. 8 via Zoom. The session will provide volunteers with valuable insights and strategies to develop and strengthen their 4-H clubs. Participants will have the opportunity to share their successes, learn from other volunteers and gain access to resources that will support their club development efforts.

On Jan. 10, 4-H will host an interactive workshop titled "Creating LGBTQ+ Inclusive Programs." The session aims to increase fluency with LGBTQ+ inclusive concepts and ter-

minology, while providing practical approaches for creating affirming and supportive spaces for youth of all genders and sexual identities.

The third workshop, "Be a Positive Communicator," will be held on Feb. 13. Participants will learn effective communication strategies to manage difficult situations or conflicts with others. The workshop will explore constructive responses and conciliatory gestures that can be used to de-escalate conflicts and foster positive relationship building and understanding.

On March 12, 4-H will host "Finding Space for Mental Wellness in Every Program." The session will focus on best practices for ensuring safety and belonging for all members, with a particular emphasis on men-



Photo courtesy University of Maine Cooperative Extension.

tal wellness. Participants will gain insights into the 4-H Healthy Living Mental Wellness program, including youth needs, programmatic offerings, resources and strategies to support mental wellness in any program.

The final workshop in the series, "Animal Science — Strong Relationships & Sportsmanship," will take

place on April 9. The session will explore the qualities of strong 4-H clubs within the context of animal science programs. Animal science projects provide authentic opportunities for youth to practice sportsmanship through competitive events and activities. Volunteers will learn strategies for supporting youth and adults in the practice of good sports-

manship — being fair, respectful and gracious.

The workshops are part of 4-H's ongoing commitment to providing quality youth development programs that foster inclusivity, personal growth and positive relationships. By equipping volunteers and leaders with the necessary tools and knowledge, 4-H aims to create a supportive and empowering environment for all youth.

All workshops are free and will be held from 6:30-8 p.m. Registration is required.

To register for any of the workshops or to learn more about 4-H's programs and initiatives, visit the program webpage. To request a reasonable accommodation, contact Jen Lobley, jennifer.lobley@maine.edu; 207.255.3345.

Rumford poet publishes his final work

RUMFORD, ME — Tom Fallon's *Imagine* points to the ancient hu-

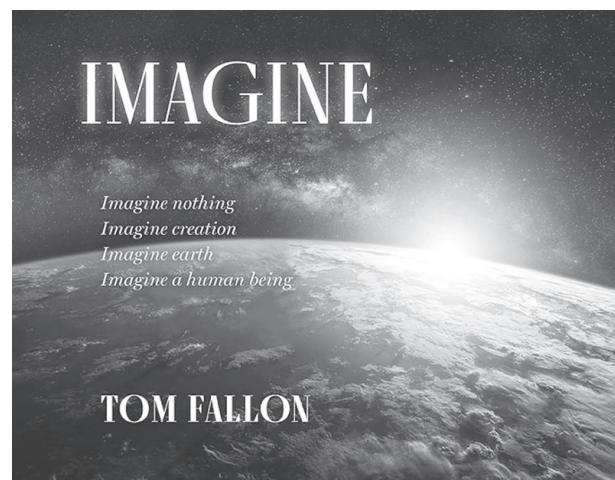
man questions "why creation" and "what is the meaning of life." It is a

prose and free verse literary epic of human beings on a small planet in the mystifying great creation that is beautiful, frightening and astonishing. Two epigraphs—"Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?" (Paul Gauguin) and "I am only interested in the relations between man and God" (Eugene O'Neill)—set its direction. *Imagine* began when Tom Fallon re-

alized at the age of 84 that he was facing the end of his life, death, silence. In response to this realization, he began to create the word creation that would be his last.

Imagine is presented in five sections. These interconnected sections explore the stories of a news reporter who has lived through the danger and violence of human beings,

See Poet, page 12



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Maine cannot afford to not invest in its public universities

Op Ed by UMS Chancellor Dannel Malloy
MAINE -- For decades, the University of Maine System has seriously underinvested in its state-wide physical plant. More than half of academic spaces and three-quarters of residence halls have not undergone real renovation since students used slide rules. Classrooms are not conducive to 21st-century workforce preparation. Research labs lack capacity to meet industry innovation needs. And too many Mainers are opting for costlier out-of-state colleges and higher debt. That's bad for Maine, which depends on its public universities to drive educational attainment and economic development.

has spurred and strengthened thousands of small businesses and helped heritage industries innovate for the future, including growing Maine's wild blueberry production by 500% over the last 50 years. We can no longer paint and plaster our way out of this problem. That's why last month, I presented UMS Trustees with a plan.

By 2028, we need to invest \$1.2 billion in Maine's most important talent and innovation asset, pursuing 400 projects that advance our System's new strategic plan, the State's 10-year economic strategy, energy efficiency, and operation and maintenance cost reductions. Modernizing existing space and systems is planned to ensure reliable heating and cooling, roofs that don't leak, and life safety and ADA compliance. So is demolition of more than 20 functionally obsolete buildings, and also



UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM

new construction, including to expand UMaine's Advanced Structures & Composites Center, which is pioneering commercializable processes to revitalize our forest economy including through 3D-printing of affordable housing using wood waste.

This isn't just a wish list. Funding has been identified for 70% of these university upgrades, including from Congressionally Directed Spending secured by Sens. Collins and King and Reps. Pingree and Golden, Gov. Mills' Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan and the Harold Alfond Foundation. We are also leveraging for-

ward-thinking financing, like revenue bonding and public-private partnerships, where a third-party pays upfront for improvements the university can't afford in return for future revenue. For example, \$11 million in projects underway at the University of Maine at Farmington will be more than paid back through operational cost savings and renewable energy credits. And in Orono, a private developer is currently converting two 19th-century buildings that our flagship cannot restore on its own because of onerous historic registry requirements into a boutique hotel that will be

managed by a Maine-based hospitality group. Some have questioned whether such bold investment is out of touch when our universities are struggling to maintain enrollment, balance budgets and meet employee demands for higher wages. Those challenges are exactly why we must invest, and now. We cannot starve our System to strength. Strategic one-time investments in our infrastructure will pay ongoing dividends for Maine. The semester after the University of Maine at Presque Isle spent \$662,000 from the Legislature to renovate 54-year-old Park Hall, there was a 20% increase in the return rate to that residence hall. Meanwhile, simulation lab enhancements at universities in Augusta, Fort Kent, Orono and Portland are enabling UMS to double nursing enrollment and our output of in-demand BSN-prepared nurses.

Modern facilities that complement the caliber of our world-class education and research will ensure Maine's public universities can compete with better-resourced institutions in the Northeast to keep our best and brightest here, attract new talent, and grow the size and skill of the state's workforce. And by regaining enrollment and reducing our System's footprint, fossil fuel usage and operating costs, UMS will recover the revenue necessary to better compensate employees, sustain our campuses as drivers of jobs and opportunity including in rural regions like the St. John Valley and Downeast, and keep tuition costs and debt down for Maine families. Our System's five-year capital plan provides a path to strengthen our universities and the state's workforce. Maine's economy and communities are depending on us to move forward.

USDA Rural Development invests in local projects

BANGOR, ME— U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Maine State Director Rhannon Hampson today announced that USDA is awarding \$7.6M in grants to Maine towns and businesses. The awards (including grants and loans) are for projects that will save businesses and municipalities money. They also will help safeguard Maine's environment. USDA is funding projects for three businesses and two communities through its Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) and Water and Environmental Program (WEP). This funding is made possible in part by President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), the nation's largest-ever investment to combat the climate crisis.

"The projects announced today, individually, are meaningful to each Mainer who will benefit from them," said Director Hampson. "Together, this slate of diverse investments represents a huge win for all of Maine. This IRA funding supports both municipal and private sector businesses to be climate champions and smart resource managers. The Biden-Harris Administration has re-invested our tax dollars right here at home in our rural communities – allowing us to plan for the future while making the most of today's opportunities. I applaud the companies and communities who are supporting a cleaner, healthier Maine by partnering with us at USDA Rural Development to bring these dollars home to work."

In this round of funding, USDA is investing \$166,452.00 in renewable energy and energy-efficiency projects in Maine. The Department is awarding the REAP grants to:

Mua Lobster LLC of Brunswick (\$37,584.00) to install a 24.93-kilowatt roof-mounted solar photovoltaic system. The company expects to save almost \$7K annually thanks to the project, generating almost 30K kilowatt hours.

Exchange Block Fed Investor LLC of Bangor (\$45,212.00) to install a 16.32-kilowatt roof-mounted solar photovoltaic system. Through this project, the real estate investment business expects to save 830 gallons of gasoline or 17 barrels of oil

annually.

FRG Inc. dba Goodwin's Volvo (\$83,656.00) of Topsham to install an 87.36-kilowatt roof-mounted solar photovoltaic system generating almost 78K kilowatt hours annually. The car dealership expects the project will have an environmental impact equal to planting 906 trees, taking seven homes off the grid, or avoiding 22 cross-country flights.

The second type of USDA Rural Development funding announced in Maine today comes via its Water and Environmental Programs (WEP). This program supports rural economic development by providing grant and loan financing for water and waste infrastructure. USDA RD will award funding to two communities:

The Richmond Utilities District will use a \$100K loan to complete a project it began in 2017 to upgrade its wastewater treatment plant. Through this project, the district has improved services for its users. It has also helped to protect the local environment from pollution by untreated wastewater. Previously USDA RD awarded the district \$7M in grants and the same amount in long-term, low-interest loans. It will use the latest loan to complete work on the wastewater treatment plant and administrative office. Richmond is located on the Kennebec River and Merry-meeting Bay.

The Freeport Sewer District will use its USDA RD grant of \$7.5M and loan of \$12.6M to rehabilitate its

wastewater treatment plant and collection system. It will upgrade equipment that is nearly 50 years old. These improvements will help the system operate more effectively and efficiently and help alleviate health and sanitary concerns. Freeport is located on the Harraseeket River and Casco Bay.

The WEP grants and loans are part of the Biden-Harris Administration's \$55 billion nationwide investment in water and wastewater infrastructure. The administration designated this funding to improve the quality of life for millions of people in rural America by eliminating lead pipes, providing critical access to sanitation, ensuring access to affordable clean drinking water, and reducing drought.

Poet
Continued from page 10
 a young person communicating with his creator, his God, and a beautiful, wild woman.

After three years of uncertainty Fallon completed *Imagine* as the last words of his insignificant human life on the small planet earth in the

great creation opposing his death, drawing with his creative self from the great source in creation. *Imagine* exists as he faces death, silence, his last

words on a very small planet in the great creation: "Why do I exist? Why does the creation exist?"

A retired Rumford paper mill worker, Tom Fallon is the author of five books including *Through a Stranger's Eyes* and *NOW, Works on Paper*, 1976-2006, Poetry and

Antipoetry. Now 87 years old, *Imagine* is his last published creation. Writing in the *Maine Times*, Edgar Allen Beem has described Fallon as a "unique Maine poet." His trilogy of plays "A Dying Animal" was produced by the Atma Theater Company in Boston. Fallon has also served as

a poetry editor the *Maine Times*, sat on the board of directors at the Maine Writers & Publishers Alliance. His honors include two Maine Art Commission awards, and readings at the Maine Festival, New Year's Portland, UMO, UMA, USM, Bates College, and Maine secondary schools.



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Calendar

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Nov 10

BATH -- 7:30 PM - 9:30 PM the Chocolate Church presents Peter Yarrow (RESCHEDULED). Ticket Prices: \$38 ADV | \$42 DOS. Known for his songwriting, sound quality, and commitment to excellence, Peter Yarrow, along with Noel Paul Stookey and Mary Travers, made up the popular folk group Peter, Paul & Mary. Get your tickets at chocolatechurcharts.org

Nov 11

TURNER CENTER -- Christmas Craft Fair Saturday, Nov. 11th from 8 to 1at the Universalist Church, Turner Center, across from the Gazebo. Crafts and Attic Treasures. Lunch available.

Nov 11

BAR MILLS -- DURHAM COUNTY POETS, at Saco River Theatre, 29 Salmon Falls Road, Bar Mills, ME, Nov 11 at 7:30 pm. Tickets: \$15 General Admission at www.sacorivertheate.org or call 207-929-6473 for reservations.

Nov 13, 27

AUBURN -- Anime & Manga Club 4 PM-5 PM at Auburn Public Library. Discuss and watch your favorite anime, or share manga with the rest of the group, while enjoying some tasty snacks.

Nov 14, 21

AUBURN -- Craft Club 4 PM-5 PM at Auburn Public Library. Come hang

out in the Teen Space and work on your current craft project, or start something new with materials we provide! Snacks included.

Nov 15

AUBURN -- Dungeons & Dragons 3 PM-5 PM at Auburn Public Library. Come to the Teen Space for a seafaring D&D adventure in a fantasy world! Open to beginners and experienced players alike. Come with a character sheet (level 1-3) or use one that we provide.

Nov 17

BATH -- 7:30 PM - 9:30 PM the Chocolate Church presents Primo Cubano (Latin). Ticket Prices: \$20 ADV | \$22 DOS. Primo Cubano plays traditional Cuban dance music called "SON" dating back to the turn of the 20th Century. Get your tickets at chocolatechurcharts.org

Nov 18

GORHAM -- Christmas Craft Fair 9:00am - 2:00pm at 33 & 34 Wilson Road, Gorham. White Rock Friendship Club and the White Rock Grange #380 will host our annual Christmas Craft Fair. Join over 30 crafters this holiday season. All items are handcrafted: candles, ornaments, home decor, wreathes, jewelry, hand-

bags, crochet animals & knitted items, and much more! Raffle for themed gift baskets. Check event out on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/events/2027697437587563

Nov 18

BAR MILLS -- DER-EK GRIPPER - Guitarist - at Saco River Theatre, 29 Salmon Falls Road, Bar Mills, ME, Nov 18 at 7:30 pm. Tickets: \$15 General Admission at www.sacorivertheate.org or call 207-929-6473 for reservations.

Nov 19

SABATTUS -- Our Lady of the Rosary Christmas craft fair on Saturday, November 18th from 9 to 3. The fair will be located in the lower level of the church at 131 High St. in Sabattus. We'll have around 30 crafters and vendors, a basket raffle, and a bake sale. Come join us.

Nov 24

BUXTON -- MULTI-CRAFTER SALE Friday, November 24 from 9-2 at 938 Long Plains Rd, Buxton, ME

Nov 25

BATH -- 7:30 PM - 9:30 PM the Chocolate Church presents Pat Colwell & The Soul Sensations Motown Christmas (R&B, Holiday). Ticket

Prices: \$20 ADV | \$22 DOS. A beloved tradition here at the Chocolate Church Arts Center! Pat Colwell and the Soul Sensations bring down the house with a powerful mix of Motown and Memphis soul music that's guaranteed to get the party started. Get your tickets at chocolatechurcharts.org

Nov 25

BAR MILLS -- ERICA BROWN AND THE BLUEGRASS CONNECTION - at Saco River Theatre, 29 Salmon Falls Road, Bar Mills, ME, Nov 25 at 7:30 pm. Tickets: \$15 General Admission at www.sacorivertheate.org or call 207-929-6473 for reservations.

Dec 2, Jan 6, Feb 3, Mar 2, Apr 6, May 4

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.

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

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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 1st, 2nd, and 3rd 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

lies, 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

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



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Breakfasts, 2 Lunches
and 3 dinners. Lodg-
ing for 7 nights in the
same hotel. Highlights
are Nice, Food Tour &
Tasting, Nice Flower
Market, Monaco, Monte
Carlo, Grasse, Cannes,
Saint-Honorat Island
& Wine Tasting, Villa
Ephrussi de Rothchild,
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much more.

**MAY 11 – 19, 2024 –
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in the Asheville area, 8
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will also visit the Ant-
ler Village and winery.
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guide and stops along
the way. A \$75.00 de-
posit per person is due
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way Museum, Okana-
gan Valley, Vineyard Din-

ner and Wine Tasting,
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**OCTOBER 6 – 14,
2024 - NOVA SCOTIA,
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LAND & NEW BRUNS-
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fasts, 1 lunch, and 6
dinners. You will have
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ifax, Peggy's Cove &
Lunenburg. We will visit
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cal Settlement and have
a guided tour of Prince
Edward Island including
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Home. We will have ad-
mission to the Hopewell
Rocks and you will visit
the Waterside Town of
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Salvation Army announces new Director of Advancement

PORTLAND, ME -- The Salvation Army Northern New England Division is pleased to announce the appointment of Tom Fogarty as its new Director of Advancement for the Division.

Fogarty, a distinguished nonprofit and foundation leader with over 25 years of experience, brings with him a wealth of experience, having held key resource development positions at leading educational institutions throughout the United States and at two of Maine's largest healthcare systems. He has a significant track record in advancement programs, overseeing annual and capital campaigns, planned giving initiatives, board development, donor-centric stewardship programs, and community engagement efforts. Notably, he played a pivotal role in the successful completion of the Mercy at the Fore Campaign for Mercy's hospital on Portland's Fore River.

Most recently, Fogarty served as the Community Engagement Officer at Androscoggin Home Healthcare + Hospice, where he led organizational marketing, communications, development, and community relations.

The advancement department at The Salvation Army incorporates donor-centric best practices found in major gift projects, charitable gift planning,



annual giving programs, grant proposals, fundraising events, capital campaigns, and more. The Salvation Army Northern New England Division serves the residents of Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont, with roots dating back to 1884. The organization comprises 20 Salvation Army Corps Community Centers within the region, alongside 210 Service Units operated by dedicated volunteers.

"I am thrilled to join The Salvation Army family and support its timeless mission of Doing The Most Good alongside dedicat-

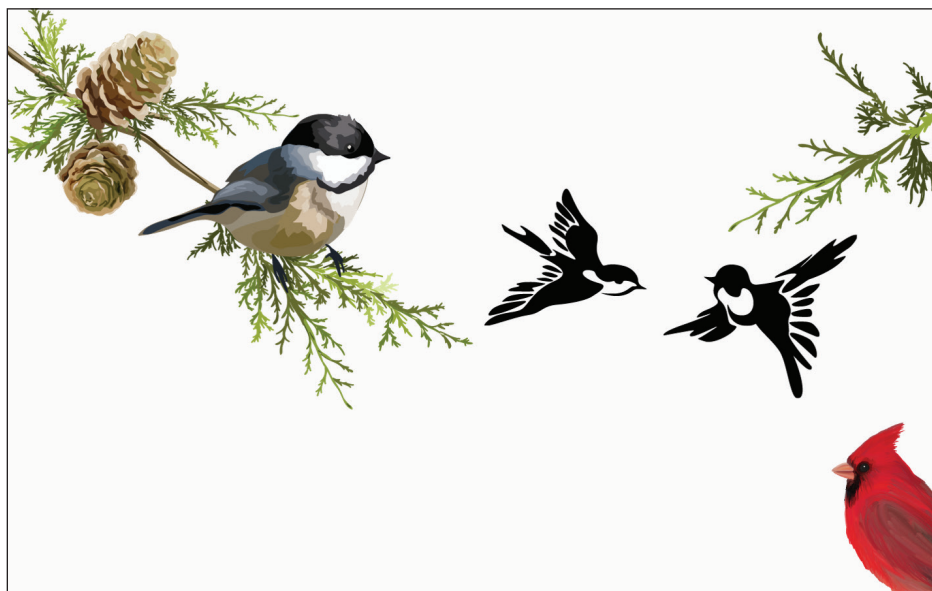
ed Officers, staff, and volunteers. I look forward to aligning the financial goals of our donors with their philanthropic dreams, thereby ensuring that The Salvation Army can continue to serve all those in need in Northern New England for generations to come," Fogarty expressed.

While originally from New York City, Fogarty has been part of the Northern New England community for many years. His contributions as a resource development and institutional advancement executive throughout New England have been marked by his



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dedication to excellence in donor-centric fundraising and institutional advancement. Fogarty currently resides in Auburn, Maine, with his family.



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