



TWIN CITY TIMES

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Community comes together in Lewiston

PORTLAND, ME -- Last month brought some dark days to Maine when Lewiston faced the loss of so many lives to a mass shooting. In the days since, the state and the nation has come together in grief, sympathy, help, and hope for the lives lost and the many affected by this tragedy.

One example of the outpouring of support came together around the new Resiliency Center in the Peck Building downtown. Transforming a large, empty former call center into a warm, welcom-

ing space where people can gather, find peer support, seek professional counseling, and get help finding other services took a village, and a village showed up. This project came together in a matter of days before the November 13 opening, thanks to a great group effort led by Community Concepts, Inc., with help from the city of Lewiston, the American Red Cross of Northern New England, Catholic Charities Maine (CCM), volunteers from Central Maine Community College, and the Marden Family, which

has donated dozens of pieces of new furniture for the space.

"I know the Marden family is both generous and modest, so I wasn't sure how they would respond to being a part of such a public project, but they did not hesitate to help and provided sofas, chairs, tables and more -- all delivered by their crew," CCM CEO Steve Letourneau said. "This is something I am very thankful for this Thanksgiving."

CCM used funding donated from Catholic Charities USA to buy room

partitions that provide quiet, private gathering spaces to the large space, and Marden's offered whatever was needed for each part of the Center, from the public gathering areas to the private rooms.

"This was an easy decision," Jake Marden said, "We're proud to be a part of the Lewiston community. We have a warehouse up the street from this Center, so many of our employees live and work here and we wanted to make sure we were here to help."

Camp of Christmas Rock youth concert at Franco Center Dec. 3



Students from the Great Falls Academy of Modern Music will perform in a holiday-themed concert at 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 3, at the Franco Center, 46 Cedar St., Lewiston. Tickets are \$10 to \$20 in a pay-what-you-can format and can be purchased online at www.franco-center.org/shows or call 207-689-2000. Brian Gagnon Photo.

LEWISTON, ME--Students from the Great Falls Academy of Modern Music will perform in a holiday-themed concert at 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 3, at the Franco Center. "Camp of Rock has been an amazing summer opportunity for kids to rock out in the Lewiston-Auburn area since 2007. But this year, for the first time ever, Camp of Rock has branched out and tried something new," said Brian Gagnon, director of GFAMM. "Come see Camp of CHRISTMAS Rock play some of your favorite holiday rock tunes."

Gagnon added that his young students "have met only four times to learn as many festive, holiday rock songs as they can, and because of their energy and enthusiasm, they've learned a set of five songs. Come listen to them rock the beautiful Franco Center."

The students will perform songs that include "Merry Christmas Baby" by Bruce Springsteen, "Christmas Time All Over Again" by Tom Petty and the Heartbreak-

ers, "Please Come Home for Christmas" by The Eagles, "Christmas Wrapping" by The Waitresses, and "Christmas Eve Sarajevo" by Trans Siberian Orchestra.

This holiday-themed concert, performed by Lewiston-Auburn youth, is open to the public. The 2 p.m. concert will begin with solo performances by the students of GFAMM. Doors and concessions open at 1 p.m.

Tickets range from \$10 to \$20 in a pay-what-you-can method so that more community members can attend and show their support for both the students of GFAMM and the Franco Center. Tickets can be purchased online at www.franco-center.org/shows, at 207-689-2000, or in person at the Franco Center on Tuesdays and Wednesdays between 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.

The Franco Center is at 46 Cedar Street in Lewiston. The building is handicap accessible via an elevator on the Lincoln St. Alley side of the building.

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Letter to the Editor:

The Episcopal Church - A Good Choice

Amidst the divisions of our time, Episcopalians have historically taken the path of the "Via Media"; the "middle way" when addressing theological and social issues. As thinking Christians Episcopalians pursue their love of our Creator with heart mind and soul and attempt to love our neighbors as ourselves, as Jesus recommended.

In the face of divisive and growing Christian Nationalism, we need a remedy for discriminatory thinking, hate, and exclusion of others unlike us. Being a member of an Episcopal Church provides

a sense of belonging to a community that shares similar values and concerns. It offers opportunities for fellowship, spiritual growth, and mutual support. When visiting any of the Episcopal Churches in Maine one will find a thoughtful focus on Caring for Creation, Social Justice, Separation of Church and State, and the Preservation of Democracy as part of civic duty and spiritual values.

In the Episcopal Churches of Maine, caring for God's creation is front and center. Significant steps are being made to promote environmentally sustainable practices. Each

visitor may participate in advocacy efforts, awareness campaigns, and community to mitigate climate change and promote environmental stewardship. Climate change disproportionately affects disadvantaged communities and exacerbates existing inequalities.

The Episcopal Church has a strong commitment to social justice. Past practices of harmful American legislation are reviewed, and efforts are being made for a more equitable and sustainable future for all.

The Episcopal Church has historically supported

the principle of separation of Church and State. We must maintain the separation of church and state to ensure that everyone, no matter their background, is free to live in freedom according to their worldview. If we were to walk a day in others' shoes, we would see that they, like us, are doing their best to live up to their understanding of the virtuous path.

Members value the ability to worship and practice their faith without government interference. All are encouraged to actively engage in civic life and work towards the common good. We invite you

to join a community where freedom of thought is embraced, and where together we can create a world where light overcomes darkness. It is imperative to preserve democracy and prohibit our elected officials from applying their private interpretations of Scripture upon others. The United States is not a theocracy and must never become one.

Most importantly, the Episcopal Church can be the thoughtful persons' church spiritual home. Centuries have passed since the writing of Scripture and the Creeds. Our understanding of how to

read the Holy Writ has evolved and will continue to, over time. A central part of the Episcopal journey is reading and understanding the history of the church and state since its earliest beginnings.

Now more than ever, we need to learn to love our neighbors as ourselves. As Thanksgiving passes and time bends toward Christmas, you are invited to engage in your spiritual growth and civic life at an Episcopal Church near you.

Sincerely yours,
Rev. Jack Fles - All Saints Episcopal Church, Skowhegan, Maine

Maine-ly Harmony presents "Peace on Earth"



I-r, first row, Judy Labonte, Jennifer Clair, Betty Avery, Martha Tait, Lynn Izzi, Kathy Joyce, Lea Davis, Barbara Combs; 2nd row, l-r, Martha Bangs, Peg Dubrow, Candace Pepin, Janet Dunham, LouAnne Mossler, Donna Ryder, Dotti Meyer; third row, l-r, Lynn Rogers, Danielle Bolouc, BJ Sylvester-Pellett, Cathy Anderson, Nancy Bossie, Sue Staples, Director Kathy Greason.

MAINE -- Maine-ly Harmony barbershop chorus has announced its upcoming holiday performances, where they will be singing a treasury of songs of the season.

"Peace on Earth" will be held at the Randolph

United Methodist Church, 16 Asbury Street, Randolph, on Sunday, December 10th at 2 p.m.

The Chorus is suggesting donations for admission and will hold raffles to benefit the church's heating fund. We also of-

fer light refreshments and Santa Claus in person! We believe we all need some "peace on earth" - at least for one afternoon.

We will also be singing at the Lithgow Library in Augusta on Wednesday, December 6, at 6:30 p.m. The public is invited. Women who love singing harmony are welcome to join the chorus on Wednesday evenings at the Randolph United Methodist Church at 6:30 p.m. For more information, contact Donna Ryder at 207-582-5523 or dryder076@gmail.com

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

UMA music program to perform December concerts

AUGUSTA, ME -- The University of Maine at Augusta Contemporary & Popular Music Program presents the fall 2023 Concert Week from December 5th through 7th. All performances are free and open to the public. Most performances are offered in person at the Farber Forum on the UMA Augusta Campus and online. The Farber Forum is located in Jewett Hall, 46 University Dr., Augusta, Maine.

The Contemporary & Popular Music program at UMA is Northern New England's preeminent modern music education resource for live study and one of the top online music programs globally.

Visit <https://www.uma.edu/2023concerts> for

links to the YouTube performances.

The Concert Week events include the following ensemble performances:

Tuesday Dec. 5, 2023
12:00PM - 1:30PM
Rock Ensemble and Jazz/Rock I Ensemble at Farber Forum and Live-streamed on UMA's YouTube page

4:00PM - 5:30PM
Jazz/Rock II Ensemble and Aaron Harmon's Senior Concert at Farber Forum and Live-streamed on UMA's YouTube page

7:00PM - 8:30PM
Jazz/Rock Online Ensemble and Envok Vocal Ensemble Online at UMA's YouTube page

Wednesday Dec. 6, 2023

12:00PM - 1:30PM
Vintage Steel, UMA's Com-

munity Steel Pan Ensemble at Farber Forum and Live-streamed on UMA's YouTube page

Thursday Dec. 7, 2023
12:00PM - 1:30PM

Chamber Ensemble at Farber Forum and Live-streamed on UMA's YouTube page

Victoria Hays' Senior Concert Online at UMA's YouTube page

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

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Landmark business leaving downtown Lewiston after 76 years

LEWISTON, ME— Longtime Lewiston landmark, J.Dostie Jewelers, announced this morning they are relocating the business to Route 1 in Yarmouth. The move will take place in February of 2024 with an anticipated reopening date in April. Founded in 1947, J.Dostie has been a staple in Lewiston for 76 years, and has been located on the corner of Lisbon and Main Streets for the last six decades.

“This has been a difficult decision but one that we have given careful consideration to. A trend we’ve been increasingly experiencing for the past decade has accelerated and over the past two years our business has changed dramatically: since January of 2022 nearly 75% of our sales stemmed from outside of Lewiston. Over that same time, the dynamics here in downtown and city leadership’s focus have both changed in such a way that a sustainable future here is no longer certain. We had to explore how to adapt to best serve our clients on a regional basis.”

Says Michael Dostie, third generation owner and operator of the business, “I am a steward of my grandfather’s business, and that carries a responsibility to our clients; making it especially painful when

considering the effect this move will have on the people coming from the greater Augusta area, and those who already travel so far to visit us from Franklin County or Maine’s Western Lakes & Hills. I can only do my best to make it worth the extra distance.”

The Small Business resource SCORE, this past June wrote that 30% of family businesses survive the transition from first to second generation ownership while only 12% survive the transition from second to third generation. Additionally only 13% remain in the family over 60 years. At 76 years in business spanning across 3 generations, J. Dostie Jewelers is a rarity in today’s world of increasingly larger corporations.

A History of Giving Back

Since the late 1940’s Jules Dostie was known throughout the Central Maine business community as a soft spoken, kindhearted family man and avid Rotarian. He cared about the community and gave back whenever he could. Those values were passed on to his son Daniel who was also an active Rotarian, and his grandson Michael who runs the business today. Shortly after returning to Lewiston as a young adult in 2006, Michael Dostie



Daniel Dostie (left) with his son, Michael Dostie (right) pictured with a photo of Jules A. Dostie who founded J. Dostie Jewelers in downtown Lewiston in 1947

carried on the tradition of giving back by serving on several local boards in the Arts and Business Sectors, was a founding member of the city’s art walks, and most recently the founder of Lewiston’s downtown business association.

“For years I’ve watched the amount of work Michael has put into this city, a level of dedication to rebuilding the downtown business community I haven’t seen in a generation,” writes Daniel Dostie about his son.

“He’s put in hundreds of hours volunteering, brainstorming and coordinating events, and working between the other businesses and many different departments of the city - all to make this a better place.

The events, business attraction & quality of life work, the incredible Blue Jay Mural - you don’t see advocacy like that in Lewiston anymore- I couldn’t be more proud of him.”

Looking To The Future

Although moving a business that has been part of the fabric of the city for ¾ of a century sounds like a daunting task, the Dosties are excited for the challenge; citing Yarmouth as more centrally located to a majority of their client-base and the appeal of a small, quiet town of hardworking people who genuinely care about their neighbors.

“It has been one of the most rewarding challenges to have a family business for so long and

having been so much a part of Lewiston’s history,” writes Daniel Dostie, “I’ve seen recessions in the 80’s and 90’s but the recession in 2008 pushed us to the brink. Difficult decisions and sacrifices had to be made then, and here we are 15 years later with things changing once again. This is the best way for my dad’s, my own, and now my son’s company to be able to serve our friends and customers for the next 20 years.”

The new location will be a slightly smaller than their current store but designed to be more efficient and intimate, allowing the company to re-prioritize the jewelry design and fabrication work that J. Dostie Jewelers has been known for since its early days with Jules Dostie himself. While the building in downtown Lewiston carries generational sentiment, the new location on Route 1 provides easy access from the mid-coast to Southern Maine, is still within 30 minutes of L/A, has ample parking, and located next to a longtime, local landmark.

“Lewiston will always hold a special place in my heart. I grew up here (played a little hockey here), returned as an adult, met my wife, and completely fell in love with

THIS city... but sometimes to move forward you need to let something go,” muses Michael Dostie of his years of working downtown, “With all the pressure of this decision weighing on our family, my brief experiences with the people in Yarmouth have made it clear this is the best place for our future. From my very first outreach, staff at the town hall have been incredibly welcoming and helpful as have the numerous property and business owners, and I am just so excited to join the community. Let’s be honest, can you think of anything more charming than having Pat’s Pizza as your local landmark and a future neighbor? I absolutely love it.”

Lewiston’s Challenges

J. Dostie Jewelers is the most recent of several local businesses to close or relocate out of Lewiston’s city center. In March of this year two restaurants; Sam’s Italian Foods closed their oldest location at 268 Main Street and Cowbell Grill and Tap closed their only Lewiston location at 49 Lisbon Street. In November 2022 Bedard Pharmacy closed their location at 61 College St and Sherman Oaks California Kitchen closed its doors permanently at 50 Lisbon St that same month.

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“Stuff the Bus” brightens holidays for local families

The LA Metro Chamber of Commerce is delighted to kick off its annual “Stuff the Bus” event, a heartwarming seasonal toy and clothing drive designed to bring joy to local families in need during the holiday season. The event, organized by the LA Metro Chamber of Commerce, is set to run through December 4th.

even pets. In collaboration with 18 non-profit partners, the Chamber ensures that the donated items reach those who need them the most. These partners have direct relationships with the identified recipients, facilitating a more personal and impactful distribution.

Exclusive Sponsorship by Northeast Bank:

About Stuff the Bus: Stuff the Bus is a decades-old community initiative that unites individuals, businesses, and organizations to contribute new, unwrapped items such as gifts, winter clothing, and household necessities. The drive benefits a diverse range of recipients, including families, homeless youth, seniors, and

This year, Stuff the Bus is proud to have Northeast Bank as its exclusive sponsor for the second consecutive year. Bethany Belanger, Senior Vice President, Director of Retail Banking for Northeast Bank, expressed the bank’s excitement, stating, “Northeast Bank is excited to sponsor Stuff the Bus for a second year. We en-



courage those donating to stop by one of our seven locations in Maine with items. This is a great event to light up the holiday season for local families, community members, and pets in need.”

Official Retail Partner - Target:

In addition to North-

east Bank, Stuff the Bus is pleased to announce Target as its official Retail Partner for the second year running. Individuals looking to contribute can now easily find and purchase items needed by the families and individuals served by our non-profit partners through the Target Reg-

istry. The registry, along with information about bus stop/drop-off locations and non-profit partners, can be found on the event website: <https://lametrocc.com/STB2023>.

“The support of Northeast Bank allows us to grow this program and reach more people,” said LA Metro Chamber of Commerce President + CEO, Shanna Cox. “This year is our second year partnering with both Northeast Bank and Target, and people love the ease of the registry and being able to ship items directly to the Chamber.”

How to Contribute:

Individuals who wish to contribute to Stuff the Bus can drop off new, unwrapped items at the LA

Metro Chamber of Commerce or at any of the 27 convenient drop-off locations—referred to as “Bus Stops”—across Lewiston Auburn. For more information, including a list of drop-off locations, please visit <https://lametrocc.com/STB2023> or call 207-783-2249.

Importance of the Event:

Given the current challenges faced by many in the community, this year’s Stuff the Bus holds even greater significance. The LA Metro Chamber of Commerce encourages everyone to join in the spirit of giving and making a positive impact on the lives of local families, children, and pets during this festive season.

DEA provides updates on efforts to combat opioids, meth in Maine



WASHINGTON, D.C. –U.S. Senator Susan Collins received a briefing from Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Administrator Anne Mil-

gram on efforts to address illegal Chinese marijuana operations, combat the opioid epidemic, and fight the rise of crystal meth use in Maine.

“No community is immune from the opioid epidemic, and I commend the men and women of the DEA for their work to combat illicit opioid trafficking and distribution. While we continue to target deadly opioids, we must not lose sight of the need to protect our communities from

other emerging threats. The significant increase of crystal meth seizures in Maine – from 3 kilograms in 2021 to 72 kilograms in 2022 – is incredibly shocking,” said Senator Collins. “Administrator Milgram and I also discussed the recent reporting on the illegal Chinese marijuana growing operations in Maine and the potential harm they pose to our public health and national security. We must put an end to these criminal enterprises that

are flooding our State and infiltrating our rural communities. I will continue to push the Department of Justice, including the DEA, to work with state and local law enforcement and shut down these illegal operations.”

In August, Senator Collins and the Maine Delegation wrote to Attorney General Merrick Garland requesting information on what the Department of Justice is doing to shut down these illegal Chinese

marijuana growing operations. Following an investigation by Maine Wire that uncovered more than 100 foreign-owned drug houses throughout rural Maine earlier this month, Senator Collins renewed her call for federal action.

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

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\$8M for Maine preschools serving low-income families

WASHINGTON, D.C. –U.S. Senators Susan Collins and Angus King announced that the Maine Department of Health and Human Services received \$8,000,000 through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Early Childhood Development’s Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5)

program. This funding will allow the State of Maine to expand access to high-quality preschool for children from low-income families.

“Early childhood education is an investment in the future of our children,” Senators Collins and King said. “This funding will expand access to pre-K and help build an educational

foundation for Maine children that will benefit them for the rest of their lives.”

“The first five years of a child’s life lay a foundation for future development and learning. Federal funding to advance a coordinated system in Maine will help young children and families get the critical services need, including developmental screenings and high quality early care and education,” said Stephanie Eglinton, Maine Children’s Alliance.

The PDG B-5 program supports state efforts to create or enhance preschool programs in high-need communities, while developing infrastructure to better deliver preschool services.

Senators Collins and King have always supported Maine’s early childhood education programs. Earlier this month, they cosponsored a resolution recognizing October 20th as National Early Childhood Literacy Awareness Day. They also recently announced more than \$5 million for early learning programs in Maine.

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Seniors Not Acting Their Age

Whitewater Thrills on the Piscataquog River

Each fall, Horace Lake Dam in Weare, New Hampshire, releases copious amounts of water into the narrow North Branch of the Piscataquog River. The drawdown is usually scheduled for mid-October. The result is about five miles of Class III/IV whitewater that tumbles through a scenic rural environment. Participation in the recreational release has become an annual pilgrimage for many New England whitewater enthusiasts.



Evan Eichorn finishes a descent of Woodbury Rapid

For several years, my friend, Ryan Galway, has led a Penobscot Paddle & Chowder Society trip on the Piscataquog during the release. He announced the whitewater outing again this year.

Ten of us met at a convenience store in Dunbarton, New Hampshire, on a cool, partly sunny mid-October morning. Club members from Vermont, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Maine were among the participants. Our ages varied from 13 to 76; as usual I was the senior citizen in the group. Remarkably, thirteen-year old Krea Galway paddled with her Dad, Ryan. They were the first tandem canoe team I've witnessed paddle the Piscataquog.

We drove to a take-out next to a bridge on East Weare Road in Weare. Traveling the rough dirt road required fording a flooded area. After doubling up boats and paddlers, we left shuttle vehicles and proceeded to Horace Lake Dam. On the way, we stopped to scout Buzzzell Hill Rapid, one of several difficult descents and the only one easily viewed from the road. It looked challenging.

The put-in was a busy place. With one exception, we unloaded our canoes and kayaks and

carried down a long, steep embankment to the river. Ryan's son, Mason, chose a much more exciting alternative, a "seal launch" down the precipitous hill. He stayed upright for his thrilling bumpy ride that ended a few feet short of the river.

Stimulating rapids begin immediately on the Piscataquog. After a short distance, we turned sharply left and arrived at the first difficult descent, Slab City Ledge. The site of a former dam, veterans of prior outings knew starting left was the preferred route to safely negotiate the eight-foot drop. Still, turbulent waves tossed us about in the run out.

The pushy current propelled us through several easier rapids to Chase Mill Rapid. From the top, a group of kayakers could be seen removing a downed tree blocking the primary channel. We waited in an eddy until the dangerous obstruction was eliminated. Paddlers still needed to duck beneath another low-hanging tree just beyond.

Woodbury Rapid, a baffling cluttered falls, begins shortly after. We plunged into the attenuated entrance one boat at a time. The site of problems for club members in the past, the entire group en-

joyed successful descents through the complicated maze of boulders.

Easy whitewater continued to the most substantial falls on the river, a double-ledge drop intimidatingly called The Big One. A horizon line from above, there is no discernible route over the second ledge. I followed Mason's choice through the center in my kayak. A pour-over pushed me into a sticky hole that momentarily side-surfed me before I back paddled out. Despite difficulties by most no one capsized.

Buzzzell Hill Rapid was next. Although the advance scouting helped, I experienced problems recognizing routes over the three ledge drops. A kayaker flipped and rolled in front of me just before I caught an eddy on the right below the first ledge. Remembering to remain generally in the center when navigating over the two remaining ledges, I managed to stay upright. Everyone had successful runs, including an exceptional descent by Krea and Ryan.

Turnover Ledge, another precipitous falls, begins shortly after. So named because a powerful hole at the bottom often flips boats; everyone negotiated safely through. Several paddlers executed im-

pressive maneuvers called enders in the hole.

The most difficult whitewater behind us, we relaxed while progressing through several Class II/III rapids. Perhaps overconfident, one kayaker capsized and self-rescued.

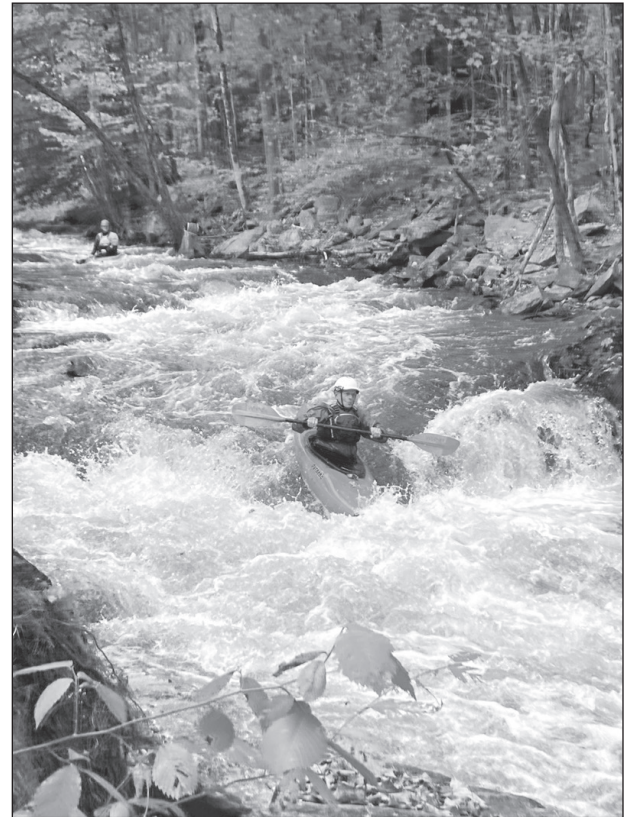
I drifted ahead of the group to a falls that was difficult to evaluate from the top. My choice to go right of an island was the wrong one. I temporarily pinned between some boulders but was able to extricate myself. I signaled my companions to go left but several missed my directions. More mishaps followed.

Despite some minor adversities in the easier rapids at the end, overall we enjoyed an exceptional day on an outstanding whitewater river.

My book, *Maine Al Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine* narrates nine more exciting whitewater adventures.

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 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 ronchaseoutdoors@comcast.net

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



Paddlers navigate difficult Buzzzell Hill Rapid on the Piscataquog



Mason Galway "seal launches" at the Horace Lake Dam



Krea and Ryan Galway completed a rare tandem canoe run on the Piscataquog River

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Arts & Entertainment

A Christmas Carol returns to The Public Theatre!

This holiday season, for one weekend only, The Public Theatre, will present its acclaimed adaptation of A Christmas Carol on Dec 8, 9, and 10th. This inventive version, performed by six actors and a fiddler, was developed and written for The Public Theatre by Co-Artistic Director Christopher Schario in 1993, and has since been published and performed by theatres around the world and is now a Lewiston/Auburn tradition.

“There’s a great reason why this story is told during the holidays and will never go away”, says author Schario. “It’s unfortunately become too easy for the true meaning of the season to get overwhelmed by shopping sales, but somehow watching Scrooge’s journey in this play always awakens my holiday spirit and gets me ready to celebrate Christmas.”

Another thing worth

celebrating, according to Schario, is The Public Theatre’s ticket price of only \$15 for children 18 and under. “With our \$15 youth ticket, we are hoping to introduce today’s children to the magic of professional theatre and give them a gift they’ll have for the rest of their lives.

With all the different versions of A Christmas Carol out in the world, The Public Theatre’s adaptation remains many people’s favorite. “We stay true to the heart of the story, while at the same time telling it with a sense of playfulness and imagination”, says Schario. “Much of Dickens’ original text is used, as six actors and a fiddler grab a handful of props and your imagination and joyfully bring Dickens’ language and characters to life. Creating a magical atmosphere with live music, a hand-cranked wind machine and a thunder sheet,



Dale Place as Scrooge

the audience’s imagination is free to soar, and this classic story comes to life in a way you’ve never

seen before.”

The Public Theatre’s version begins with a child reading a copy of

Dickens’ novel. As the child reads, five actors and a fiddler magically appear and slowly coax the child into joining the story and becoming the character of Tiny Tim. It’s a marvelous metaphor for the way literature grabs and transforms us.

Leading the cast of A Christmas Carol will be Dale Place in the role of Scrooge. Dale has appeared on Broadway opposite Mary Louise Parker in Heisenberg and Off-Broadway at Lincoln Center, The Public Theatre’s Shakespeare in the Park and Manhattan Theatre Club, among others. He is also a familiar face to Public Theatre audiences having appeared onstage in Human Error, Lend Me a Tenor and Deathtrap, among others. The rest of the cast features Russell Berrigan as Marley, Nicholas Perron as Christmas Present, Sheila Stasack as Mrs. Cratchit, McKenna Canty as Belle and local

young actor Simon Golob in the role of the child/Tiny Tim. Fiddle music for the production will be performed by local fiddler Beck Welling.

With a top ticket price of only \$30 for adults, and \$15 for children 18 and under, it’s professional theatre at a price even Scrooge would love! Gift certificates for any production throughout the remainder of the season are also available for the holidays.

A Christmas Carol will be performed on Friday, Dec 8th at 7 pm, Saturday, Dec 9th at 2 pm and 7pm, and Sunday Dec 10th at 2 pm. For tickets visit thepublictheatre.org or call 207 782-3200.

Season Underwriters are Platz Associates, Sun Journal and Bennett Radio Group, and the sponsors are Evergreen Subaru, Lewiston Pawn Shop, Dirigo Federal Credit Union and Androscoggin Home Healthcare + Hospice.

A Christmas Carol

adapted by Christopher Schario

Dec 8, 9, 10

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Sat - 2pm & 7pm
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More laughs at Great Falls Comedy Club this weekend

AUBURN, ME – Make laughter a priority this week at Great Falls Comedy Club on December 2, with the very funny Tim Lovett.

Lovett, who has entertained audiences all over and is a must see comic, will be joined by the hilarious Vanessa Claire and Nic Dufault for this can’t miss show.



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.

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Give thanks and give back: Donate blood or platelets

PORTLAND, ME — As many begin gathering for holiday celebrations with family and friends, the American Red Cross urges donors to give thanks and give back by making a plan to give blood or platelets in the coming weeks.

This time of year is traditionally hard on the nation's blood supply. Seasonal illness, winter weather and holiday celebrations often lead to lower appointment numbers and decreased donor turnout, making it hard to keep up with the demand for blood products. When they give now, donors can ensure

patients have access to life-saving blood and platelets through the end of the year.

The public can schedule an appointment now by using the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting RedCrossBlood.org or calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767). To celebrate the upcoming Prime Video release, Candy Cane Lane, those that come to give blood in December will be automatically entered to win a holiday prize package, including a \$1,000 Amazon.com Gift Card and 65-inch Omni QLED Series Amazon Fire TV. There will be 12 win-

ners. Plus, those who come to give Dec. 1-17 will get a \$10 Amazon.com Gift Card by email. Terms for both offers apply. See rcblood.org/Amazon. Candy Cane Lane features an all-star cast, including Eddie Murphy and Tracee Ellis Ross, and directed by Reginald Hudlin.

Upcoming blood donation opportunities Dec. 1-17:

Androscoggin
Lewiston
12/4/2023: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Saint Marys Regional Medical Center, 99 Campus Ave.
Lisbon Falls
12/4/2023: 1 p.m.

- 5:30 p.m., Holy Trinity Church, 67 Frost Hill Avenue

Cumberland
Gorham
12/14/2023: 1 p.m. - 6 p.m., Cressey Road Christian Church, 81 Cressey Road

New Gloucester
12/13/2023: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., The Commons, 59 Pineland Drive

Portland
12/1/2023: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Maine Medical Dana Center, 22 Bramhall Street
Scarborough
12/5/2023: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Scarborough Com-

munity Services, 418 Payne Rd

South Portland
12/6/2023: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., Southern Maine Community College Campus Center, 2 Fort Road

Windham
12/6/2023: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., North Windham Union Church, 723 Roosevelt Trail, Route 302

12/8/2023: 12 p.m. - 5 p.m., North Windham Union Church, 723 Roosevelt Trail, Route 302

Yarmouth
12/9/2023: 8 a.m. - 2 p.m., Yarmouth Fire and Rescue, 178 North Rd
North Yarmouth

12/15/2023: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Wescustogo Hall and Community Center, 120 Memorial Hwy

How to donate blood
A blood donor card or driver's license or two other forms of identification are required at check-in. Individuals who are 17 years of age in most states (16 with parental consent where allowed by state law), weigh at least 110 pounds and are in generally good health may be eligible to donate blood. High school students and other donors 18 years of age and younger also have to meet certain height and weight requirements.

King urges federal government to use Maine mass timber

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Senator Angus King, co-chair of the Senate Working Forest Caucus, is calling for the utilization of mass timber in federal building projects. In a letter to the Government Services Agency (GSA), King and a number of his colleagues questioned the agency about its process on integrating mass timber into the federal procurement process and using low-carbon building materials in the construction and renovation of federal buildings.

The Senators also highlighted the opportunity mass timber products present in creating rural jobs, reducing wildfire risk, increasing forest resiliency and reducing the carbon footprint of federal buildings. Nationally, the forest products industry employs roughly 925,000 people directly and supports nearly 2 million jobs indirectly. In Maine, the industry supports nearly 14,000 jobs across the state.

“By incorporating more mass timber products into federal buildings,

the GSA has a unique and historic opportunity to help reduce the carbon footprint of federal buildings, all while reducing waste and construction costs and increasing seismic and fire resiliency,” wrote the Senators.

“Since 2015, mass timber has seen unprecedented growth in its use across the United States — from just a handful of buildings 8 years ago to almost 2,000 today. Further, the mass timber industry offers Americans access to good paying forestry jobs,”

they continued.

The letter was also signed by Senators Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.), John Fetterman (D-Pa.), Ron Wyden (D-Ore.), Tina Smith (D-Minn.), Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) and Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.).

As a member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Senator King has been a national leader in efforts to support Maine's forest products industry. This past April, alongside Senator Jim Risch (R-Idaho) and the Working Forests

Caucus, Senator King introduced a resolution to recognize the 151st Arbor Day. He also introduced the bipartisan Future Logging Careers Act to help train the next generation of Maine loggers.

Most recently, Senator King introduced the bipartisan Timber Innovation Act for Building Rural Communities Act to improve forest health and support Maine's rural economy, as well as the Jobs in the Woods Act to improve forest industry improvement. He also introduced

legislation to establish a “Future of Forests” panel tasked with making recommendations to secure the health of America's forests. Senator King was also key in establishing the Forest Opportunity Roadmap Maine (FOR/ME) Initiative, a participant-led initiative that is helping to diversify the state's wood products businesses, attract investments, support research and development, and develop greater economic prosperity for rural communities impacted by mill closures.



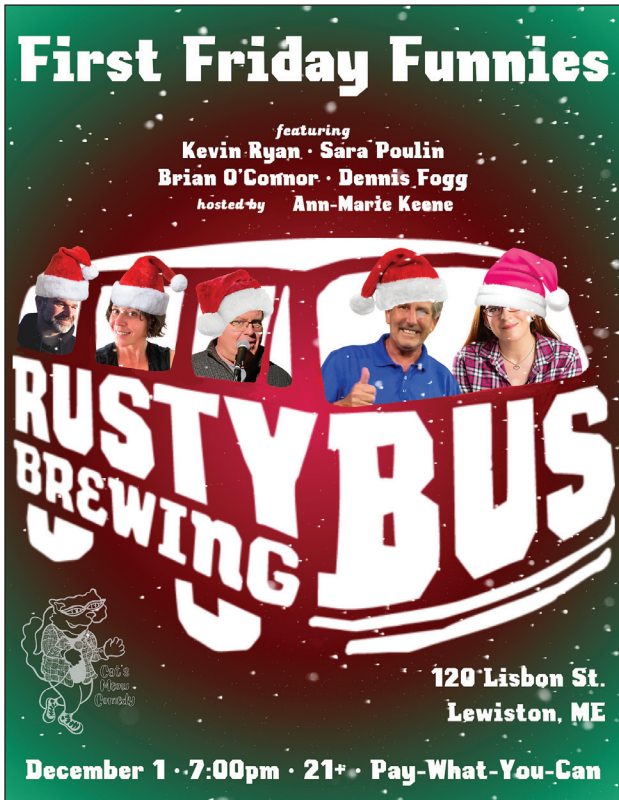
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Veteran comedians to bring laughs at Rusty Bus Brewing



LEWISTON, ME -- Cat's Meow Comedy presents another First Friday standup comedy show at Rusty Bus Brewing on December 1st.

Featured comedians

include Dennis Fogg, Sara Poulin, Brian O'Connor, Kevin Ryan, and host Ann-Marie Keene.

Dennis Fogg is a veteran of comedy who's performed in 37 states and

3 different countries & counting, but he's still always Maine's own. Fogg's been seen on national television in 'Restaurant Impossible' and 'You Bet Your Life' with Jay Leno, and has also worked alongside some great comedy legends including Lenny Clarke, Jay Moher, Gabe Kaplan, Jimmy Walker, and the late Gilbert Gottfried.

Sara Poulin is a stand up comic and local radio personality, co-hosting The Breakfast Club on L/A's local radio station WIGY. Sara is a 20 year veteran stage and vocal performer, and started her standup career in the midst of the pandemic. Her witty and likable style of comedy is whimsical and fun. Sara rocks a lot and plays the ukulele a little...very badly.

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

Skelton Taintor & Abbott named Tier 1 Law Firm

LEWISTON, ME -- Skelton Taintor & Abbott has been named a Tier 1 Metropolitan "Best Law Firms" for Litigation-Real Estate, Family Law, Worker's Compensation Law-Claimants and Litigation-Construction, by U.S. News -- Best Lawyers® in 2024. Tier 1 rankings are determined through a

combination of impressive feedback from peers and clients as well as information provided in response to the "Law Firm Survey" conducted by Best Lawyers.

Skelton Taintor & Abbott has received the prestigious Tier 1 ranking each year since 2010. This ranking follows 4 lawyers in the firm being recog-

nized in The Best Lawyers in America®. Since 1853, Skelton Taintor & Abbott has provided a full range of high-quality legal services to the individuals, companies, and municipalities of Maine. The firm's main office is located in Lewiston.

For more information, visit www.STALaw.com or call 207.784.3200.

Birds of Costa Rica, the next lecture at Stanton Bird Club



Toucan (photo taken and supplied by speaker Dana Little)

AUBURN -- On December 4th, the Stanton Bird Club will be hosting the second in its 2023-24 lecture series with a focus on the birds and natural history of Costa Rica. With its diverse ecosystems and rich biodiversity,, Costa Rica has been called a bird watcher's paradise. It boasts an impressive bird count with over 800 species documented within its borders. Three members of the club, Doug Boyd, Dana Little, and Bob Kleckner traveled to Costa Rica in

November of 2022. They will be sharing photographs and experiences from their visit. While there, they saw over 200 species of bird. Among the birds they will be highlighting are toucans. These colorful birds, with their large, vibrant bills which can be four times the size of their heads, are a common sight in certain parts of the country. Of the 40 species of toucans found in the Americas, six make their home in Costa Rica.

The talk will be held

on Monday, December 4th from 4-6pm at the Auburn Public Library. The public is welcome. The lecture series is free of charge.

The Stanton Bird Club, a leader in environmental awareness, owns and manages the Thorn-crag Nature Sanctuary in Lewiston as well as the Woodbury Nature Sanctuary in Monmouth and Litchfield. More information about other activities of the Club can be found at www.StantonBirdClub.org and on its Facebook page.

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MCP holding auditions for “Peter and the Starcatcher”

MONMOUTH, ME -- The Monmouth Community Players, along with Marquis Season Sponsor Great Falls Federal Credit Union, and season sponsors Winthrop Area Federal Credit Union, Readfield Insurance Agency, and Levey, Wagley, Putman, and Eccher Attorneys at Law are excited to announce auditions for their first show of the 2024 season, “Peter and the Starcatcher” by Rick Elice. Auditions will take place December 17th from 7-9pm, and December 18th from 6-8 pm at the Winthrop Congregational Church. Rehearsals will be Tuesdays from 6-8:30 and Sundays from 1-5pm.

The Show dates are March 1-10, 2024 at historic Cumston Hall. The show is being directed by Emily Carlton, with producer Josie French, Music Direction by Gabe Verrill-Grant, Sound by Alex Lally, Lights by Hannah Hanson, Props by Adam Runnells and stage management by Paige Desmarais.

Tony-winning Peter and the Starcatcher upends the century-old story of how a miserable orphan comes to be The Boy Who Would Not Grow Up (a.k.a. Peter Pan). From marauding pirates and jungle tyrants to unwilling comrades and unlikely heroes, Peter and the Starcatcher playfully explores the

depths of greed and despair... and the bonds of friendship, duty and love.

A young orphan and his mates are shipped off from Victorian England to a distant island ruled by the evil King Zarboff. They know nothing of the mysterious trunk in the captain’s cabin, which contains precious, other-worldly cargo. At sea, the boys are discovered by a precocious young girl named Molly, a Starcatcher-in-training who realizes that the trunk’s precious cargo is starstuff, a celestial substance so powerful that it must never fall into the wrong hands. When the ship is taken over by pirates – led by the fear-

some Black Stache, a villain determined to claim the trunk and its treasure for his own – the journey quickly becomes a thrilling adventure.

Featuring a dozen plus actors portraying more than 100 unforgettable characters, Peter and the Starcatcher uses ingenious stagecraft and the limitless possibilities of imagination to bring the story to life.

FMI, or with any questions, please reach out to the director, Emily Carlton, at emilydances2006@gmail.com. Auditions will consist of individual monologues (available on our website), cold reading and a brief singing audition.



Emily Carlton, director

Christmas craft fair at Our Lady of Ransom Church



Members of The Ladies Guild of Our Lady of Ransom Church, Blessed Teresa of Calcutta Parish in Mechanic Falls are pictured getting into the Christmas spirit as they finalize plans for their annual Christmas Craft Fair. It will be held on Saturday December 2nd from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the church hall at 117 Elm Street. The fair will include craft vendors, raffle baskets, a bake sale and a light luncheon.

Lewiston-Auburn Rotary Club board announced



Pictured here are members of the Lewiston-Auburn Rotary Club Board of Directors for 2023-2024. Seated from left are Todd Goodwin, immediate past president; Christine Wilson, secretary; Roger Philippon, president; Tom MacDonald, treasurer; and Jennifer Frazier, vice-president. Standing from left are Roger Theriault, director; Stephanie Gelinas, scholarship chair; Larry Delhagen, membership chair; and Celeste Yackawonis, director. Missing from the photo is Peter Kowalski, Rotary Foundation chair. The Lewiston-Auburn Rotary Club has been serving this community since its founding in 1917. The club meets every Thursday at noon at the Village Inn Restaurant in Auburn. More information available at lewistonauburnrotary.org.

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For more details and to submit your qualifications or resume, contact CEO@egcu.org by December 15th.



*No fundraising involved. Must live in one of the the six counties listed above.

Sen. Vitelli receives Women Making A Difference Award

AUGUSTA, ME— Senator Eloise Vitelli has been named the 2023 recipient of the Merle Nelson Women Making A Difference Award by New Ventures Maine (NVME). The award was presented at a celebration of NVME’s 45th Anniversary at the University of Maine at Augusta on November 15th.

The Merle Nelson Women Making A Difference Award was established in 2004 to honor the work of Merle Nelson who, in 1977, championed what she called the “economic fairness bill” designed to give women a “hand up, not a hand out.”

Maine legislators Merle Nelson and Barbara Trafton sponsored the original Displaced Homemakers Program legislation.

The award recognizes an individual who has had a positive impact on the lives of Maine women and their families. That is central to the core mission of New Ventures Maine: Helping Maine people succeed in the changing economy and achieve economic security for themselves and their families.

The award was presented by NVME Founding Executive Director, Gilda Nardone, and former NVME Advisory Council

member, Janice de Lima, Norway Savings Bank VP and CRA Officer.

“Eloise is a visionary and a risk-taker. She is also pragmatic and she understands that change is not achievable and sustainable without building alliances...She is an extraordinary strategic thinker, communicator, and collaborator who has both challenged and guided me to innovate and adapt over the years to our dynamic and changing economic and political climate,” Gilda Nardone said in her presentation remarks. “I believe she has done the same thing in the State Senate



Sen. Vitelli speaking at the celebration of NVME’s 45th Anniversary at the University of Maine at Augusta on November 15th



Sen. Vitelli with the Merle Nelson Women Making A Difference Award

and in her own community and region, our state, and beyond. For these reasons, she is well-deserving of the 2023 Merle Nelson Women Making A Difference Award.”

Janice de Lima added, “Eloise has accomplished so much of benefit to so many people...she developed many of the NVME programs that provide guidance to aspiring entrepreneurs and people at life’s crossroads...programs that have a common theme of building self-confidence and self-reliance through practical learning.”

From her work as an early childhood educator in Waldoboro, Nobleboro and Brunswick; to her training role developing curriculum and working with women entrepreneurs statewide while serving as director of programs and policy at New Ventures Maine for 38 years; and nearly a decade serving as a Maine Senator and Senate Majority Leader; Eloise has had a profound impact on the people and families of Maine.

“This is an honor and a privilege. And I’m just so humbled to be here tonight to receive this award...I

am so proud of every single one of the entrepreneurs that have been touched by the New Ventures training program over the years... there is an entrepreneur in every one of us, I firmly believe that—it just takes the empowerment and the opportunity to bring it out.”

Previous award recipients include: Merle Nelson (2004), Ann Schonberger (2006), Betsy Sweet (2009), Mary Cathcart (2011), Mary Herman (2013), Mary Allen Lindemann (2015), Barbara Trafton (2019), and Gilda Nardone (2021).

UMaine-spinout brand launches lobster-based lip treatments

PORTLAND, ME — Marin, the Portland-based skincare start-up and spin-out from the University of Maine, has launched a new lip treatment made with marine glycoproteins, an upcycled byproduct of lobster processing.

The company’s new Glycoprotein Lip Treatment comes in two varieties, unscented and blueberry french toast, and drops just in time for dry skin season. Like Marin’s Soothing Hydration Cream, otherwise known as the “Lobster Lotion,” the new products employ marine glycoproteins as their active ingredient and are designed to help repair the skin barrier.

Robert Bayer, former director of the UMaine Lobster Institute, was responsible for the initial research and discovery of glycoproteins’ use



cases for the skin. Marin co-founders Amber Boutiette and Patrick Breeding (’17, ’19G) worked with Bayer while studying at UMaine as biomedical engineering graduate students, first exploring glycoproteins to treat Boutiette’s stubborn and painful eczema.

When the results exceeded expectations, Boutiette and Breeding founded and incubated Marin at UMaine’s Foster Center for Innovation, with mentorship from Foster Center and Maine Business School staff as they completed pitch competitions and accelerator programs affiliated with UMaine, including Big

Gig, Top Gun and Scratchpad. They then partnered with B-Corp Luke’s Lobster to collect the glycoproteins as a natural byproduct of existing lobster processing, purifying the protein in a lab they built at home. After launching their Soothing Hydration Cream in early October 2020, Marin sold out of their initial inventory within two months.

“It was so rewarding to see these glycoproteins from lobsters helping others in the same way they helped me, and it was just the beginning,” says Boutiette. “My eczema was really bad not only around my eyes and face, but also on and around my lips, so

I knew from experience that there weren’t products that addressed this painful problem. There was a huge gap in the market for lip treatments designed to be safe and effective for this delicate area that everyone can use — we knew we had to introduce a lip treatment.”

Marin’s new product was meticulously developed to deeply hydrate, repair, smooth, soothe and protect lips, and can be used for both everyday dry, chapped lips and conditions like perioral dermatitis (eczema around the lips and mouth).

“We created the unscented lip treatment specifically to help with dry, cracked, flaky and irritated patches on and around the lips, and took it a step further with the blueberry french toast flavor as a nostalgic nod to heritage Maine flavors, reminis-



Marin co-founder Amber Boutiette holding bottles of the company’s new Glycoprotein Lip Treatment attached. Photo courtesy of Marin.

cent of a cozy brunch up at camp. It’s as fun and indulgent as it is functional and effective.”

As Marin prepares to launch their newest product, the company is quickly outgrowing their 3,000-square-foot office and warehouse space in Portland. They have added three new team members in the last six months, bringing their total employee count to six, and recent retail partnerships with L.L.Bean and Sea Bags have significantly expanded their distribution network. The company continues to source its key ingredient through the seafood company Luke’s Lobster, a willing collaborator that seeks to help the lobster industry thrive through product diversifi-

cation.

“We’re humbled by what we’ve been able to build and the amount of impact we’ve had in just three short years with the support of UMaine, Mainers and beyond,” says Boutiette. “Growing our business here, helping others, creating new jobs and adding value in parallel industries has been such a rewarding experience. This product launch represents the next step in Marin’s evolution as a proud Maine brand.”

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

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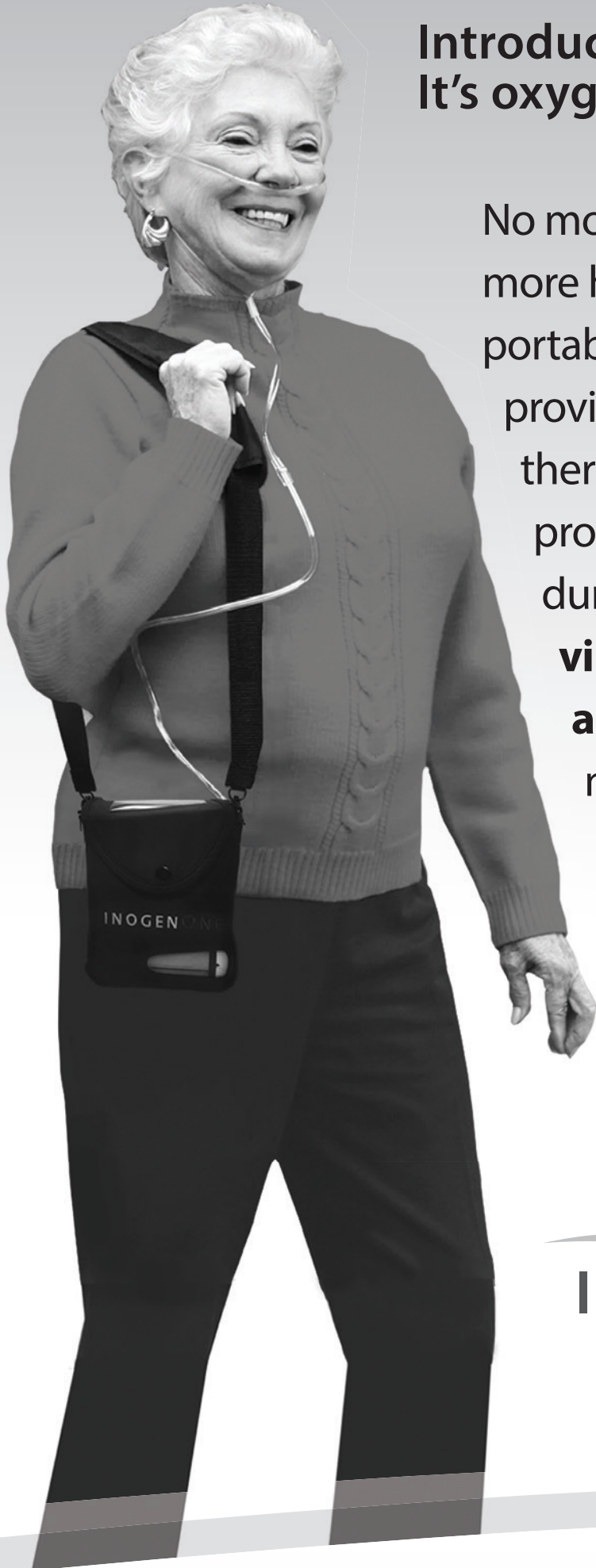
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South Paris businessman helps to knock out cancer



(L to R): Diane Madden, executive director, Cancer Resource Center of Western Maine; John Emerson, Owner, Oxford County Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram.

SOUTH PARIS, ME -- The Cancer Resource Center of Western Maine (CRCofWM) recently received a donation of \$7,462 from John Emerson, owner of Oxford County Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram of South Paris.

In Spring 2023, John participated in Haymakers for Hope, a 501(c)(3) charity that gives everyday men and women the chance to fight back against cancer and raise money and awareness by training for, and competing in charity

boxing events. John designated the CRCofWM as the beneficiary of the money he raised through participating in Haymakers for Hope. The CRCofWM is very grateful for his efforts to support cancer patients in western Maine.

Soft Corner Midwifery announces grand opening

Mothers' Milk Bank Northeast collects milk from parents who have more milk than their babies need; screens, pasteurizes, and tests the milk; then dispenses it to babies whose parents do not have enough milk for them. Milk donor screening, modeled after blood donor screening, includes health history, physician or midwife approval, and a blood test. Milk from donors who pass the screening is also pasteurized and tested by an independent lab to ensure safety before being dispensed to hospitals, dispensaries, or families.

By opening a donor milk dispensary, Soft Corner Midwifery is on the leading edge of organizations providing access to donor milk in the community. The importance of providing human milk for the health of birthing people and infants is well-established, with all major medical and public health organizations endorsing chest/breastfeeding. Use of donor milk supports this in the long run. When a baby requires supplementation in the early days after

birth, research shows that families tend to view donor milk as a temporary bridge and formula as a long-term solution. Therefore, having donor milk available at community locations like a dispensary can be an essential component in improving human milk feeding rates for families who have that goal. A human milk diet for babies has been definitively linked to extensive health benefits for babies including lower rates of certain cancers and diseases, lower rates of obesity, and improved neurodevelopment.

A donor milk dispensary is a community location where a family whose baby has a prescription can obtain donor milk for use at home. Currently, babies at many Maine hospitals can receive donor milk while in the hospital. In the community setting, if a baby needs donor milk, a dispensary is a convenient and important local option. Dispensaries make donor milk easier to access while the maternal milk supply is developing.

"A donor milk dispensary is a forward-think-

ing and innovative way to promote health and ensure that as many babies as possible have access to human milk," commented Deborah Youngblood, CEO for Mothers' Milk Bank Northeast. "We are grateful to Soft Corner for opening a dispensary and making donor milk more available to Maine families."

Mothers' Milk Bank Northeast is a nonprofit community milk bank accredited by the Human Milk Banking Association of North America (HMBANA). The milk bank has been screening donors, pasteurizing milk, and dispensing to over 100 hospitals and to families throughout Maine and the Northeastern United States since 2011.

Families and healthcare providers seeking more information on receiving or donating milk can check the milk bank's website at <https://milkbankne.org/>. For more information and to schedule a donor milk order online with Soft Corner Midwifery at <https://softcornermidwifery.com/milkbank>.

USDA connects Mainers to health care, education options with grants

BANGOR, ME -- As 2023 draws to a close, rural Mainers can look forward to more health care and education options in the year ahead due to grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). USDA Rural Development Maine State Director Rhiannon Hampson announced three new awards today. Two recipients in Maine and one in New Hampshire will use the grants to provide distance learning and telehealth resources to rural Maine residents. Together, the three Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grants (DLT) will benefit an estimated 79,000 individuals across the two

states. "At USDA Rural Development we believe everyone should have access to quality health care and educational resources, regardless of the size or location of their community," said Director Hampson. "There is an urgent need for more health care options in rural areas. And across Maine, we need more diverse educational opportunities, including workforce development and science, technology, engineering, and math classes for students. The Biden-Harris Administration is making unprecedented funding available to move the needle on broadband connectivity

and to provide the equipment necessary to utilize it fully. We're excited to support these projects that will help do so in eight Maine counties."

The three grant recipients announced today will offer a range of services at many different types of locations, from classrooms to libraries and community centers.

Regional School Unit No. 10 (Rumford) will use its \$982,191.00 grant to equip sites in Oxford and Franklin counties with interactive video-conferencing equipment and other resources. Instructors from multiple school districts will expand their collaboration to deliver

expanded course offerings and mental health services. Programming will include workforce development, job training, continuing education, and professional development. The project will benefit approximately 3000 students across multiple campuses.

The University of New Hampshire Center for Digital Health Innovation (Durham) will use its \$129,746.00 grant to equip sites in Strafford, Sullivan, Carroll and Grafton counties in New Hampshire and Kennebec County in Maine with video conferencing, assistive technologies, and virtual reality equipment. This will allow health professionals located at the Center for Digital Health Innovation to offer virtual reality-based mental health and physical rehabilitation services to these underserved rural

areas. The six community sites include libraries, a youth and senior center, and a Cooperative Extension office, serving a total of approximately 70,000 rural residents.

VNA Home Health and Hospice (South Portland) will use its \$614,700.00 grant to equip sites in Aroostook, Hancock, Somerset, Penobscot, Kennebec, and Cumberland counties in Maine with updated telehealth equipment. Health professionals from Northern Light Home Care & Hospice will use the equipment to deliver home care and hospice services to approximately 6000 rural Mainers.

USDA's Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grants help rural communities use technology to overcome the challenges posed by re-

moteness and low population density. The grants may fund the purchase of audio, video, and interactive equipment, broadband facilities used for distance learning or telemedicine, computer hardware, network components, and software, and instructional programming. State and local governments, federally recognized tribes, nonprofits, and other entities that provide education and healthcare are eligible to apply.

Although the USDA Rural Development DLT program is not currently accepting applications, there likely will be an open application period in the coming months. Interested Maine applicants may contact Robert Fry, Telecom General Field Representative (robert.fry@usda.gov or 202-768-0589) with questions.



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Calendar

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Dec 1

LEWISTON -- from 10:00am - 11:30am, the Lewiston Public Library Children's Department will be offering the program Little Footprints Keychain Keepsake. During this program, caregivers and their young children will be able to create a keepsake featuring the unique footprint of their child. The program is recommended for kids ages birth to 5 years and their caregivers. Siblings are also welcome to attend. Free. In person. All material will be provided.

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.

Dec 4

LEWISTON -- "The Lost Art of Tea Leaf Reading Workshop" in Callahan Hall on the third floor of the Lewiston Public Library from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Dec 4

LISBON FALLS -- The Knights of Columbus Council 10019 will be sponsoring a dedicated blood drive in memory of

Tracy Sautter on December 4th at the parish hall of Holy Trinity church 67 Frost Hill Avenue Lisbon Falls from 1:00 PM to 5:30 PM to make an appointment please call 1-800-733-2767 or visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter: HTC

No walk-ins accepted; must make an appointment.

Dec 6

LEWISTON -- Author talk with Clif Travers at the Lewiston Public Library at 5:30 PM. The event listing can also be found on our website at <https://lplonline.org/events/author-clif-travers-to-speak-at-lpl/>

Dec 9

AUBURN -- Sixth Street Congregational Church at 109 Sixth Street in Auburn will have a holiday fair on Saturday, December 9, from 9:00-1:00. Craft vendors are welcome. Tables are \$10. There will be craft items, a white elephant table. Lunch will be available. For more information contact Betty at 576-1331 or Cynthia at 740-2741.

Dec 9

BAR MILLS -- NOVEL JAZZ SEPTET - Dancing with the Duke at Saco River Theatre, 29

Salmon Falls Road, Bar Mills, ME, December 9th at 7:30 pm. Join in the fun, dancing to the music of Duke Ellington, or just settle in and enjoy the concert. Tickets: \$15 General Admission at www.sacorivertheatre.org or call 207-929-6473 for reservations.

Dec 11

LEWISTON -- From 3:30pm-5:00pm, the Lewiston Public Library Children's Department will be offering the program Kids' Collage Picture Frames. During this program, kids will be able to create a unique collage picture frame using a variety of materials, including old books, graphic novels, wrapping paper, and embellishments. The program is recommended for kids ages 6-12. Kids under 8 must be accompanied by a caregiver.

This activity is free, all materials will be provided, and there is no registration required.

Dec 11

LEWISTON -- Visit with Daniel Tiger at the Lewiston Public Library on Saturday, December 9th at 11am in Callahan Hall. This event is in partnership with Maine Public Radio and PBS Kids.

Registration required on Eventbrite: <https://tinyurl.com/2vd4kftu> If you previously registered for the canceled event, you DO NOT need new tickets for this event. You are still registered. Free. In person.

Dec 13

LEWISTON -- Hiring Event on Wednesday, December 13th from 10:00am-noon at the Lewiston Career Center, 5 Mollison Way, Lewiston. Bring your best self and speak with multiple employers all offering great job opportunities! This event is free and open to the public. For a list of participating employers, visit: <https://www.mainecareercenter.com/locations/jobfair.shtml?id=11981779>

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

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SHAM -- "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

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

Homeschool Lego Club and Curriculum Swap on March 13th, and a Homeschool Storytime and Craft on March 20th.

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

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



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APRIL 11 - 19, 2024 - THE FRENCH RIVIERA - Trip includes 9 days, 7 Breakfasts, 2 Lunches and 3 dinners. Lodging 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, St. Paul de Vence and much more.

MAY 11 - 19, 2024 - BILTMORE ESTATE & ASHEVILLE, NC - Trip includes 8 nights lodging including 4 nights in the Asheville area, 8 breakfasts and 6 dinners and a guided tour of the Asheville, North Carolina area. We will have a full day visit to the spectacular Biltmore Estate, America's largest privately owned home. We will visit the Biltmore Village that connects the estates present and past and provides a place for dining, shopping and historical exhibits. We will also visit the Antler Village and winery. We will tour the Blue Ridge Parkway with a guide and stops along the way. A \$75.00 deposit per person is due when signing up. Price is \$1,245.00 pp double occupancy which includes all entrance fees, meal tips and bus driver tip.

JUNE 15 - 23, 2024 - WESTERN CANADA'S ROCKIES, LAKES & WINE COUNTRY - This trip includes 9 days and

8 breakfasts, 2 lunches and 3 dinners. Highlights of this trip are Calgary, Albertan BBQ, Banff, Bow Falls, Lake Louise, Revelstoke Railway Museum, Okanagan Valley, Vineyard Dinner and Wine Tasting, Stanley Park, Granville Island and much more. Call Claire or Cindy for more information.

OCTOBER 6 - 14, 2024 - NOVA SCOTIA, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND & NEW BRUNSWICK - Trip includes 8 nights lodging, 8 breakfasts, 1 lunch, and 6 dinners. You will have a guided tour of Acadia National Park, Halifax, Peggy's Cove & Lunenburg. We will visit King's Landing Historical Settlement and have a guided tour of Prince Edward Island including Anne of Green Gable's Home. We will have admission to the Hopewell Rocks and you will visit the Waterside Town of Saint John, New Brunswick and much more. A \$75.00 deposit is due when signing up. Price is \$1,639.00 per person double occupancy and this includes all entrance fees, meal tips and bus driver tip.

If interested in any of these trips or upcoming trips, please contact

Claire Bilodeau at 784-0302 or 576-8604 or Cindy Boyd at 345-9569. If we are not available, please leave a message and we will call you as soon as we can.

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Cloutier named finalist in National Ideas Challenge

AUGUSTA, ME – Today, Rep. Kristen Cloutier, D-Lewiston, was announced as one of 20 finalists in NewDEAL’s 2023 National Ideas Challenge, a nationwide competition recognizing state and local leaders who have advocated for policy ideas that improve Americans’ well-being and overall quality of life. Cloutier is a finalist in the Creating Economic Opportunities and Lowering Costs for Families policy category for her work this year to implement a statewide paid family and medical leave program in Maine.

“Maine’s new paid family and medical leave program will support our working families, reduce financial insecurity and set our state on a better path to improved health and

well-being,” said Cloutier. “While I am honored to be recognized as a NewDEAL Ideas Challenge finalist, I want to acknowledge that this policy would not be a reality without the tireless commitment and work put in by so many people across the state. Together, we were able to craft a program that works for Maine – one that will have a truly transformational impact.”

The NewDEAL Ideas Challenge is a bi-annual policy competition that accepts submissions at any stage, from ideas to fully implemented policies. During this round, a panel of eight nationally-recognized policy experts evaluated about 80 policy ideas across four categories, and the top five submissions in each of the four categories were recognized as final-

ists. “The Ideas Challenge shows how a group of innovative elected officials are doing more than identifying problems, they are rising to the occasion to find solutions,” said Debbie Cox Bultan, CEO of NewDEAL. “And many of the ideas show how local officials are making the most of the major legislative victories under President Biden to spur long-lasting improvements to neighborhoods, cities and states across the nation. I congratulate the finalists for proposals that, together, set an important governing agenda for the country to follow, with a relentless focus on improving the lives of all our neighbors.”

The winners of the 2023 Ideas Challenge will be announced next month at the annual NewDEAL Leaders Conference in Washington, D.C.

Rep. Cloutier is the assistant House majority leader and is currently serving her third term in the Maine House of Representatives. She represents House District 94, which includes part of Lewiston, her hometown.

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

Student loan basics and repayment at LPL tonight

LEWISTON, ME - The Lewiston Public Library will host Pine Tree Legal on Thursday, November 30, 2023, for their presentation called “Student Loan Basics and Repayment”. This free, public program will start at 5:30 p.m. in the Jeanne Couture Room located on the first floor of the Lewiston Public Library.

Struggling with student loan repayment? Confused about what types of loans you have? Wondering if the new SAVE repayment plan makes sense for you? Questions about Public Service Loan For-

giveness, Income-Driven Repayment, or Total and Permanent Disability Discharge? This student loan presentation will cover the basics of student loans, repayment options, opportunities for forgiveness or cancellation based on disability, profession, or school misconduct, and the rights you have as a student loan borrower.

Pine Tree Legal Assistance is committed to making the justice system more accessible for all Mainers, regardless of income, using three effective strategies: legal advocacy, information about your

rights, and community legal education. Pine Tree Legal wants to empower all Mainers to advocate for themselves by providing them with information about their civil legal rights and responsibilities.

The Lewiston Public Library is located downtown at 200 Lisbon Street, on the corner of Pine Street and Lisbon Street. For more information on Thursday’s program please visit the library website at lplonline.org or by contacting the reference desk at 513-3135 or LPLReference@lewiston-maine.gov.



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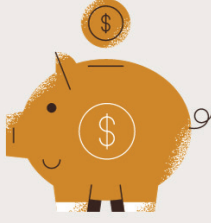


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