

Gorham Artist-in-Residence prepares to present exhibit

GORHAM, ME -- The University of Southern Maine Art Gallery is pleased to announce the 2024 Artist-in-Residence, Ryan Adams.

During his residency, Adams will complete a mural as part of his Piece Together Project. Adams's vibrant Piece Together series was conceived with his artistic collaborator and wife, Rachel Gloria Adams. The series celebrates individuals that comprise the fabric of the neighborhood, with the goal that their faces will serve as an inspiration for future generations.

Piece Together's portraits serve as a catalyst for artistic and civic engagement among visitors and residents. The project brings visibility to individuals from communities whose participation in the art world is often minimized, obscured, or overlooked, especially those from Black, Indigenous, and LatinX communities and other communities of color.

Throughout the Spring semester, Adams will work with students to select a wall for mural placement, compose the design, and paint.

The first event of Adams's residency will be his artist lecture on February 8 at 6 pm in the University's Glick-



Ryan Adams. Photo: Kaitlin Toto.

man Library, 7th Floor. A simultaneous broadcast will also be held via Zoom. A complete list of all scheduled events and times can be found at usm.maine.edu/gallery.

Ryan Adams is a painter and muralist based in Portland, Maine. His background in traditional graffiti led him

to create large-scale mural work and hand-lettered signage while maintaining a studio practice. His signature 'gem' style of work is a geometric breakdown of letterforms with shadows and highlights embedded within to create depth and movement throughout the pieces, often including hidden statements. These

statements can be literal or figurative but often highlight sociocultural issues. His studio practice is rooted in the exploration of form and abstraction while remaining true to his background in letter studies.

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE ART GALLERY

The Art Gallery serves the most diverse population of any Maine institution of higher learning. It is known for its rich blend of contemporary art exhibitions, lectures, events, and Artist-in-Residence community projects. Our exhibitions in Gorham and Portland showcase art students' multidisciplinary projects in a range of media, as well as regional collaborations and curated themes with socially engaged public programming that underscores the University's broadly inclusive mission.

The University of Southern Maine Art Gallery is open 11:00 am– 4:30 pm, Tuesday – Saturday. The Art Gallery is closed on Sunday and Monday. For more information about the University of Southern Maine Art Gallery, visit <https://usm.maine.edu/gallery/>. This program is made possible with generous support from The Warren Foundation.

Gorham Fire Chief receives Commendation for Valor

GORHAM, ME -- The Gorham Fire Department would like to congratulate Chief Ken Fickett on his Commendation for Valor. The Gorham Police Department presented the Chief with this award for a courageous rescue made March 7th, 2023.

Chief Fickett was the first fire department unit to arrive and rescued a victim from the room that was involved by fire. His quick action with the assistance from two police officers on the scene saved a life.

We are proud to serve a Chief who prioritizes our citizens' safety first! Thanks for setting a great example of how we do the job right Chief!



The Bangor Savings Bank grants empower local nonprofits

BANGOR, ME--The Bangor Savings Bank Foundation continues its commitment to supporting Northern New England communities with \$195,000 in grants awarded to 22 nonprofit organizations. These grants aim to positively impact Maine and New Hampshire organizations dedicated to uplifting communities in areas such as housing, healthcare, education, and community recreation.

"As a steward of our communities, we share in the inspiring vision of these organizations and work together to strengthen our communities," said Bob Montgomery-Rice, President and CEO of Bangor Savings Bank. "These recipients dedicate their time to serving diverse needs through their programming and services, which further the well-being of the region."

One recipient is MaineGeneral Medical Center in Augusta, Maine, for which the Foundation awarded a \$75,000 multi-year grant (\$25,000 over three years). MaineGeneral, Central Maine's largest and sole community hospital, offers comprehensive healthcare services for all ages. As the third largest healthcare system in the State, MaineGeneral includes the 198-

bed Alford Center for Health in Augusta, the state's largest outpatient center (Thayer Center for Health in Waterville), a regional cancer center, primary and specialty care practices, long-term care facilities, rehabilitation services, home health care, hospice, specialized memory care, and community outreach programs.

The grant will support the expansion of the Harold Alford Center for Cancer Care with increased exam rooms, improved patient flow, dedicated space for education and support programs, and additional services for patients battling cancer.

Local grant recipients include:

Alzheimer's Association Maine Chapter | \$7,500 Scarborough, Maine (Statewide)

Foundation for Portland Public Schools | \$7,500 Portland, Cumberland County, Maine

Greater Portland Immigrant Welcome Center | \$5,500 Portland, Cumberland County, Maine

Kennebec Valley Community Action Program | \$7,500 Skowhegan, Somerset County, Maine

Young People in Recovery | \$5,500 Portland, Maine (Statewide)

Town of Gorham offers free Medical Loan Closet

GORHAM, ME -- The Town of Gorham, through its Medical Loan Closet and its volunteers, loans FREE health aides such as wheelchairs, commodes, beds, walkers, crutches and more to any Gorham resident.

To make a request, please call Medical Loan Closet volunteers Lois MacDonald at 839-2484 or Gerry Day at 839-3859,

during office hours of Monday through Thursday, 8am to 4pm.

The Medical Loan Closet is located at the Gorham Municipal Center at 75 South Street, down the hall from Shaw Gym.

For assistance, please call the numbers provided, or visit the Recreation Office or Town Manager's Office during regular office hours.



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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Red Cross responds to growing climate-driven humanitarian needs

PORTLAND, ME— In 2023, the intensifying climate crisis took a devastating toll on people in the U.S. who turned to the American Red Cross for help coping with a record number of billion-dollar disasters.

So far this year, an all-time high of 25 billion-dollar disasters ravaged communities across the country. In our region, we saw historic flooding devastate much of Vermont this summer. Additionally, families sweltered in the nation's hottest summer on record, including places which rarely experience such extreme temperatures. Back-to-back disasters led to a series of blood drive cancellations, which further strained the national Red Cross blood supply that was already dwindling from summer travel and back-to-school activities.

"Intensifying extreme disasters are causing more humanitarian needs for families in Maine and across the country," said Stephanie Couturier, regional chief executive officer, Red Cross Northern New England. "This holiday season, please remember those who need support in the face of emergencies — and join us to provide care and comfort by making a financial donation, becoming a volunteer or by giving blood or platelets."

Help during the holidays by visiting redcross.org to make a financial donation or visit RedCrossBlood.org to make an appointment to give blood or platelets. Individuals can also learn more about joining our team through our upcoming virtual volunteer fairs on December 14, 2023, or February 22, 2024. Register here.

INCREASING SUPPORT AMID THE CLIMATE CRISIS

With the growing frequency and intensity of disasters driven by the climate crisis, the Red Cross is racing to adapt its services and grow its disaster response capacity across the country. As part of this national work in 2023, the Red Cross distributed \$108 million in financial assistance directly to people after disasters of all sizes, including July's catastrophic flooding across Vermont — and for other major disasters such as Hurricane Idalia, the Hawaii wildfires and a spate of tornadoes across multiple southern states.

Across the country, the Red Cross is delivering this vital financial assistance on top of its immediate relief efforts — including safe shelter, nutritious meals and emotional support — which have been provided on a near-constant basis for this



year's relentless extreme disasters. In fact, 2023's onslaught of large disasters drove an increase in emergency lodging provided by the Red Cross with partners — with overnight stays up more than 50% compared to the annual average for the previous five years.

Locally, Red Cross disaster volunteers continued working 24/7 to help Mainers affected by local home fires, the nation's most frequent disaster. In 2023, our Disaster Action Teams assisted 802 people after 222 home fires in Maine. These same teams doubled down on home fire prevention efforts by installing at least 944 free smoke alarms in homes across the state this year.

RESPONDING TO ADDITIONAL EMERGING NEEDS

Beyond extreme disasters, people stepped up through the Red Cross to address other emerging

needs for communities, including:

BLOOD DONATIONS: As the nation's largest blood supplier, the Red Cross is grateful for the millions of donors who rolled up a sleeve throughout the year for patients in need. To further improve people's health outcomes, the Red Cross has been working with community partners to introduce blood donation to a new and more diverse generation of blood donors — which is critical to ensuring that a reliable blood supply is available to the 1 in 7 hospital patients who need a lifesaving blood transfusion.

LIFESAVING TRAINING: This year, the Red Cross expanded its training to empower people to act during current-day crises — which is vital considering that nearly half of U.S. adults report being unprepared to respond to a medical emergency. This

included launching the new "Until Help Arrives" online training course last spring for opioid overdoses, severe bleeding, cardiac arrest and choking emergencies, and partnering with professional sports leagues through the Smart Heart Sports Coalition to help prevent tragedies among student athletes by offering CPR training and increasing access to AEDs.

MILITARY FAMILIES: Red Cross workers helped service members on U.S. military installations and deployment sites worldwide — including in Europe, the Middle East and Southeast Asia. As part of our support this year, Red Cross volunteers delivered emergency communications messages connecting more than 87,000 service members with their loved ones during times of family need, while also engaging members in morale and wellness activities during deployments.

INTERNATIONAL: As part of the world's largest humanitarian network, the American Red Cross supported international response efforts to disasters such as this year's massive earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria, the drought and hunger crisis in Africa, and flooding in Pakistan and Bangladesh. This has included providing millions in cash assis-

tance, food, shelter, basic supplies, medical care and mental health services. As devastating conflicts persist in other areas of the world, the global Red Cross Movement continues to provide aid for people suffering, including those in Ukraine and in Israel and Gaza, as part of its neutral, humanitarian mission.

Visit redcross.org/NEHoliday for more information about how the Red Cross of Northern New England helped people across our region in 2023.

The Red Cross is grateful for community partners and corporate supporters who contribute to our mission. Thanks to their generosity, the Red Cross is able to bring help and hope to people in need.

Send all items for Newsmakers, Names & Faces to the Editor. Deadline is Friday by five.

SNAP deadline to apply for help replacing food extended

AUGUSTA, ME— The Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) announced today that Maine people who lost food purchased through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as a result of Monday's storm now have until January 18, 2024, to apply for benefits to replace that food.

SNAP recipients originally had 10 days from

when the food was lost or from when power is restored to apply. Maine DHHS requested and received approval within 24 hours for the extension from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which oversees the SNAP program, to give Maine people who are still recovering from the impacts of the storm more time to apply.

How to apply for

SNAP benefits to replace lost food:

SNAP recipients who lost food purchased with SNAP benefits due to a power outage, flooding, or other misfortune related to the storm may be able to receive benefits to replace that food.

Losses must be reported to DHHS by January 18, 2024.

SNAP recipients

should fill out a simple form (PDF) available on the DHHS website at maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/applications-forms and email it to farmington.dhhs@maine.gov. Paper forms are also available at local DHHS offices.

The replacement benefit amount is the lesser of the total value of the food purchased with SNAP that was lost, or one month's

benefit.

General Assistance (GA) is another resource that Maine people can access to address immediate needs related to the storm. In an emergency, GA administrators in municipalities may presume individuals are eligible prior to full verification if the applicant reports an emergency that requires immediate assistance, and the administrator can rea-

sonably presume, after an initial interview, that the applicant will be eligible for assistance upon full verification. Loss of food or other impacts related to Monday's storm may be considered as a qualifying emergency. People can apply for GA in their city or town offices. If anyone is unable to reach their local GA administrator or has questions, they can call 1-800-442-6003.



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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

'Tis the season to give blood or platelets in Gorham

PORTLAND, ME — When blood products are fully stocked on hospital shelves, patients don't have to wait for critical care. Giving blood or platelets with the American Red Cross in December can help those in need make more holiday memories with loved ones.

This is a busy time for many. Holiday gatherings, travel and seasonal illnesses can all impact donor availability, making it hard to collect enough blood and platelets. Unfortunately,

trauma patients in the emergency room, those undergoing cancer treatment and new parents in need of lifesaving transfusions can't take a holiday break. Donors are needed every single day.

Those who come to give blood, platelets or AB Elite plasma Dec. 18, 2023-Jan. 5, 2024, will receive an exclusive Red Cross long-sleeved T-shirt, while supplies last. To extend a special thank-you to donors for helping address the need for blood, plate-



lets and plasma during the critical post-holiday time, those who come to give Jan. 1-31, 2024, National Blood Donor Month, will be automatically entered for a chance to win a trip for two to Super Bowl LVIII in Las Vegas. Details are available at RedCrossBlood.org/SuperBowl.

Upcoming blood donation opportunities for

Dec. 20 - Jan. 5:
 Cumberland Brunswick
 12/27/2023: 12 p.m. - 5 p.m., Elks Lodge, 179 Park Row
 1/4/2024: 11 a.m. - 4 p.m., Martins Point Healthcare, 114 Bath Road
 Cape Elizabeth
 12/28/2023: 12 p.m. - 5 p.m., Saint Bartholomew Church, 8 Two Lights Rd
 Falmouth
 12/28/2023: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., The Episcopal Church of St. Mary, 43 Foreside Rd

Gorham
 1/4/2024: 1 p.m. - 6 p.m., Cressey Road Christian Church, 81 Cressey Road
 Portland
 1/3/2024: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., Portland Elks Lodge, 1945 Congress St.
 Scarborough
 12/29/2023: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Public Safety Building, 275 US-1
 12/29/2023: 2 p.m. - 7 p.m., Public Safety Building, 275 US-1
 South Portland
 1/2/2024: 9 a.m. -

1:30 p.m., South Portland Community Center, 21 Nelson Road
 Yarmouth
 12/29/2023: 12 p.m. - 5 p.m., American Legion Post 91, 196 Main St
 Making and keeping appointments throughout the month can help safeguard the national blood supply into the new year. Schedule an appointment by using the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting RedCrossBlood.org or calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

Take the plunge at NRCM's Polar Bear Dip & Dash

PORTLAND, ME -- Picture this: a brisk 5k run (or walk!), with the wind in your hair, followed by an invigorating plunge into icy waters—all in the spirit of fighting climate change.

It's not just a run and a dip; it's a powerful statement and a commitment to a sustainable future.

Come on out and show your support at the 2023 Polar Bear Dip & Dash, organized by the Natural Resources Council of Maine.

Here are the details:
 2023 Polar Bear Dip & Dash

Location: Southern Maine Community College, South Portland
 Date & Time: Sunday,

December 31, 2023
 Run/Walk 9:00 a.m.
 Polar Plunge 10:30 a.m.

Online registration closed 12/26, but same-day registration will be available at SMCC the morning of the event.

Prizes from some of our favorite retailers like Patagonia, L.L. Bean, & the Portland Seadogs will be awarded to the top runners, top fundraisers, and best costume.

If the intensity of the Dip & Dash isn't your thing, consider making a donation to support the cause: every dip, dash, & donation helps us meet our goal!

Hope to see you at the starting line!



Volunteers needed for New Year Gorham



GORHAM, ME -- The New Year Gorham (NYG) Committee is seeking volunteers to help with the specific tasks below on December 31st:

Decorating between Noon and 2pm
 Children's Crafts between 3:30 and 5:30pm
 Staffing for Admission tables for an hour

between 3:30 and 8:30pm (training provided)

Please contact NYG Coordinator Thomas Hasbrouck (trhasbrouck@icloud.com) if you can help make New Year Gorham the best it can be!

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

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Aquarium welcomes guests with extended hours, new animals

BOSTON, MA – The New England Aquarium is excited to welcome guests this holiday season to see two newly arrived California sea lions, a new film in the Simons Theatre, and a free outdoor photo exhibition called “Voices of the Waterfront.”

The Aquarium will extend its hours from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily from December 26 to January 2. Guests are strongly encouraged to purchase tickets online in advance at neaq.org, as timed ticket slots may sell out. Highlights for the week include:

Meet Gio and Farley
The Aquarium recently welcomed two California sea lions, Gio and Farley. The 15-year-old sea lions are now permanent residents in the Aquarium’s New Balance

Foundation Marine Mammal Center, and join three other California sea lions: Zoe, Sierra, and Tipper. Daily presentations have returned to the Marine Mammal Center at 12 p.m. and 2 p.m. and are a great way for visitors to see the sea lions interacting with their trainers.

Nurse shark feedings
Continuing its decades-long commitment of caring for and protecting sharks, the Aquarium is welcoming a new nurse shark, named Cirri, to its Caribbean coral reef exhibit. Guests can view daily feedings at the top of the Giant Ocean Tank with Cirri and other animals at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Simons Theatre films

The Aquarium’s Simons Theatre is now showing ARCTIC: Our Frozen Planet, a 45-min-



Protecting the blue planet

ute documentary filmed on a scale never attempted before. The film captures a year-long adventure across the seasons in the Arctic—and the subsequent impact our changing climate has had on it. Tickets and show times are available at all Aquarium ticketing locations by calling 617-973-5206 or by visiting neaq.org. Also showing are Blue Whales: Return of the Giants 3D, Great White Shark, Incredible Predators 3D, and Secrets of the Sea 3D.

Voices of the Waterfront

In partnership with the Coalition for a Resilient and Inclusive Wa-

terfront, the Aquarium created “Voices of the Waterfront,” a free exhibition of 27 large-scale photos wrapping around the Aquarium’s exterior along Central Wharf. The exhibition celebrates the creative ways that people and organizations are accessing Boston’s waterfront and encourages more involvement to bring about more change to it as a public good amid environmental challenges.

The Aquarium gift shop will have extended hours of 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. during the week of December 26, and the Harbor View Café will be open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., with the exception of December 31, when it will close at 3 p.m. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit neaq.org or call 617-973-5200.



Female sea lion Gio sticks out her tongue during a recent training session. CREDIT: Vanessa Kahn/New England Aquarium



\$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 chil-

dren,” 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 develop-

ment 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 Eglington, 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 support-

ed 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.

Maine housing remains in high demand

AUGUSTA, ME -- Most counties in Maine are seeing plenty of qualified buyers for available single-family existing homes. According to Maine Listings, 1,218 homes changed hands in November 2023, a decrease of 5.51 percent from November 2022. The median sales price for homes sold in November reached \$355,000—an increase of 9.23 percent compared to No-

vember 2022. The MSP indicates that half of the homes were sold for more and half sold for less.

“Winter is a great time for sellers to list their property,” says Carmen McPhail, 2023 President of the Maine Association of REALTORS® and Associate Broker at family-owned United Country Lifestyle Properties of Maine with offices in Lincoln, Bangor and Lubec. “Life circum-

stances often prompt the need to buy or sell homes, regardless of the season.

“Typically, fewer homes come on the market during the holidays, which impacts the already tight for-sale inventory” added McPhail. “Qualified buyers remain active, and sellers of well-maintained, properly priced homes can expect multiple offers in many markets.”

Nationally, November 2023 sales eased 7.3 percent from November 2022. According to the National Association of Realtors, the national MSP for existing single-family homes increased 3.5 percent to \$392,100 last month. Sales in the regional Northeast declined 13 percent and the regional MSP rose 4.8 percent to \$428,600 comparing November 2023 to a year ago.

“We know that Maine’s real estate market continues to be challenging,” says McPhail. Working with a Realtor will allow you to be the best-prepared buyer or seller in your market. Realtors are able to evaluate offers for sellers and quickly act for their buyers when the opportunity arises.”

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Seniors Not Acting Their Age

Quest for North Peak



A sloping escarpment turned out to be a false summit

North Peak of Moxie Bald Mountain was a setback for my son, Adam, and me. We had hiked Moxie Bald in early November but failed in an attempt to ascend the elusive North Peak, a summit too far given the limited fall daylight.

We were also unsuccessful climbing both peaks last winter due to difficulty of trailhead access. That problem was not going to change this coming winter, so we decided to return to North Peak this fall before snow and ice-covered roads became an impediment.

Moxie Bald Mountain and North Peak are located in remote Bald Mountain Township on the east side of Moxie Pond approximately twelve miles east of Caratunk. The Appalachian Trail (AT) is the only means of hiker access. As the name

implies, North Peak is situated north of Moxie Bald. Supposedly, a spur trail leaves the AT somewhere north of Moxie Bald and leads to the North Peak summit. We were unable to find it during our previous expedition but were determined to accomplish our goal this time.

There are no good roads to AT trailheads for the Moxie Bald Peaks. In my opinion, the best of the bad choices is to follow Lake Moxie Road from The Forks to Moxie Pond. From there, driving south on Troutdale Road along the western shore of the pond brings one to an AT crossing a little south of the pond. The water level in that area was too high for safe hiking during our earlier visit, so we continued on rutted rocky dirt roads to a higher elevation AT crossing. That was again our plan.



Cairns and blue blazes marked the North Peak Trail

Arriving at Moxie Pond, we were surprised to find the water level substantially lower than on our previous visit because the dam operator had drawn down the pond. The AT near the southern end of the pond was now passable. However, because the hiking distance to our goal was uncertain, we decided to continue to the loftier AT crossing closer to the peaks.

The mountains had also changed since our prior hike. Snow could be seen on the peaks as we drove south on Troutdale Road. I decided to carry micro spikes.

The trail was free of snow and ice when we began the trek in a hardwood forest. The terrain transitions to a conifer forest when one gains elevation. A light layer of snow and patchy ice covered the path as we progressed to a junction

on the right where the AT continues over Moxie Bald Mountain.

Turning left, we proceeded on the Moxie Bald bypass, a snow-covered rolling passageway. Sporadic views of barren North Peak could be seen shortly before reconnecting with the AT.

Leaving the junction, the trail dropped abruptly into a wet, irregular sector inundated with ice. Skirting hazardous areas, we began climbing gradually on partially exposed ledges. Soon after, we arrived at North Peak Trail on the left.

Marked with cairns and blue blazes, the spur trail rises gradually on a succession of exposed granite ledges in a sparse conifer forest. The rocky surface was partially covered with ice and snow. We persisted steadily upwards while avoiding ob-



The summit of North Peak provided 360 degree views

vious slippery areas.

Emerging above tree line, we encountered a spectacular continuum of enormous granite ledges. We scrambled up a massive steep sloping escarpment expecting to find the summit. Instead, it was the first of several additional imposing inclines.

During the Moxie Bald expedition, we had sighted a Canadian lynx while driving to the trailhead. No lynx this time. However, in a snowy section a little below North Peak summit, we found fresh Fisher cat tracks. According to knowledgeable friends, the secretive predators frequent the area.

A climb over a series of precipitous ledges in icy winds brought us to the true summit. We donned parkas, stocking caps, and mittens to protect from severe wind chills while enjoying fabulous 360 degree views. We had anticipated an exceptional mountaineering experience but the expansive exposed summit exceeded even our high expectations.

The harsh wind chills forced us to retreat below tree line sooner than we preferred. It was difficult to leave such a remarkable alpine setting.

The temperature decreased and parkas were needed for the remainder of the hike. We completed our return without complications. My micro spikes were along for the ride, I never used them.

My book, *Maine Al Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine* narrates nine more exceptional mountaineering expeditions.

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.ronchaseoutdoors.com or he can be reached at ronchaseoutdoors@comcast.net

Annual ag-focused calendar celebrates farming, land & sea

ORONO, ME — The Maine Agricultural Mediation Program (MAMP), which is part of University of Maine Cooperative Extension, has released its 2024 wall calendar.

The theme of this year's calendar is "Farming and Tending to the Land and Sea Throughout the Seasons." It features

twelve charming images from Maine-based artists that capture the essence of agricultural work and life. From vibrant fields of crops to somber coastal scenes, each image tells a unique story of Maine's agricultural journey throughout the seasons.

Measuring 8.5 by 11 inches, the calendar is de-

signed with wire binding for easy hanging. Copies are now available for purchase for \$6.50, which includes shipping. Order a copy by visiting UMaine Extension's website.

MAMP is one of 43 U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Mediation Programs. It supports the agricultural

community in Maine by providing conflict resolution, contract and lease consultation and financial coaching.

MAMP provides services in three major areas: mediation/ conflict resolution; contract/ lease consultation and co-drafting; and financial coaching. The MAMP staff,

mediators, and financial coaches are person-focused and aim to provide compassionate assistance, support and resources to agricultural producers, their lenders, USDA agencies, and others involved in various conflicts. All MAMP services are voluntary and confidential and are no-cost/ low-cost to

participants. Visit the program website to learn more about agricultural mediation at UMaine Extension. All MAMP services are voluntary and confidential and are no-cost/ low-cost to participants. Visit the program website to learn more about agricultural mediation at UMaine Extension.



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Clothes Galore at Gorham's Mission of Hope Clothes Closet

GORHAM, ME (April 29, 2023) -- The FREE Clothes Closet at Cressey Road Church (Mission of Hope Clothes Closet) is open to all who need Fellowship, Friendship and Clothes. We are located at 81 Cressey Road, Gorham, and we are open on the FIRST and THIRD Saturday of each month from 9 o'clock AM to 12 Noon.

We focus on clothes and accessories (gloves, scarves, hats, etc.) and

welcome your donations during our operating hours. Clean clothes in good shape help the most, as they go right out to help people locally or in nearby communities. An attempt is made to have season appropriate clothes available to you. After we have displayed them for a time, they are donated to serve the people in need in Ukraine.

In addition to helping folks find clothes, we want to spend time with you!

There are tables to sit, talk and to share a cup of coffee and usually a goodie with volunteers or others. Come see us! You might make a new friend. All are Welcome!

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

Win big with Gorham Lions Club's "Prize-A-Day"

GORHAM, ME -- Who wants to have and share some exciting fun to kick-off 2024 as well as support your local, national, and world-wide communities? For only \$10, you can buy a Gorham Lions Club "Prize-

A-Day" calendar for multiple chances to win one of many amazing prizes drawn daily during the entire month of January 2024. That's 31 chances to win!

This is a great holiday gift idea for a friend,

loved one and for yourself! Get your calendar(s) today at one of these locations: Plummer's Hardware, 57 Main St., Gorham, at the Gorham Lions Christmas Tree Sales outside Plumber's Hardware, or by calling Ken at 207-929-9182.

Knights of Columbus Free Throw Competition

Saturday, December 30, 2023



Time: Registration at 10am, Competition at 11am

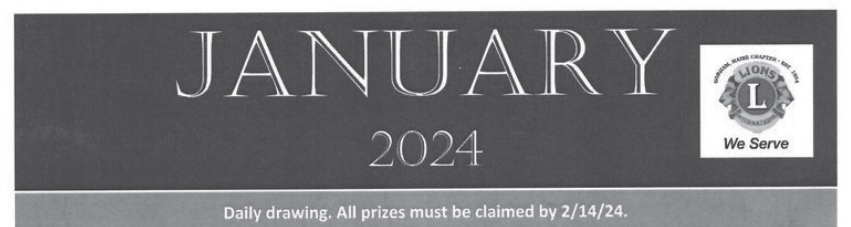
Where: Shaw Gym, 75 South Street (adjacent to Town Hall), Gorham

Who: Boys and Girls ages 9-14 (need to provide proof of age at sign up)

What: Best Score out of 15 free throws

FMI: Jim (207) 222-0744 / Ben (207) 436-0223

**Winners Advance to State Championship
Saturday, March 9, 2024 at Old Town High School!**



Daily drawing. All prizes must be claimed by 2/14/24.

The Gorham Lions thank all who contributed to make this calendar possible and a special thank you to the following sponsors:



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 \$50 Gift Certificate Junction Bowl	2 Taste of Maine gift basket by Sherrie Benner Group	3 \$50 Gift Certificate O'Donal's Nursery	4 Doggie Basket by Doggie Door	5 \$40 Gift Certificate MK Kitchen	6 \$50 Gift Certificate to Hannaford Tickets to Saco River Theatre
7 \$50 Cash Carters Auto Service	8 \$25 Gift Certificate Sullivan House Bakery	9 \$50 Gift Certificate Plummer's Hardware	10 Makeup Bag by Erin Flett	11 Gift Basket by Brown Dog Original	12 \$25 Gift Certificate Gorham House of Pizza	13 Bosch orbital sander by Ware- Butler Building Supply
14 \$50 Cash Hillside Lumber	15 \$25 Gift Certificate Gorham House of Pizza	16 \$20 Gift Certificate Mister Bagel	17 United States Flag and Pole by Gorham Flag Center	18 Doggie Basket by Doggie Door	19 \$25 Gift Certificate Lucky Thai	20 \$25 Gift Certificate Hops & Vine Tickets to April show by USM Theatre
21 \$50 Cash Carters Auto Service Tickets to the Tate House Museum	22 \$25 Gift Certificate Bookworm	23 18 Holes and a Cart by Sunset Ridge Golf Links	24 \$50 Gift Certificate by Plummer's Hardware	25 Doggie Basket by Doggie Door	26 Assorted Wine and Spirits Basket by Willis Real Estate	27 \$35 Gift Certificate Nail Xperts
28 \$50 Cash Plowman Real Estate Group	29 Makeup Bag by Erin Flett	30 \$25 Gift Certificate 390 Main Street	31 \$45 Gift Certificate Lux Beauty Bar			

Sen. Collins sits down with Maine astronaut Dr. Jessica Meir



WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Susan Collins met with NASA astronaut Jessica Meir, a native of Caribou, Maine, in her D.C. office. Dr. Meir conducted the first three all-woman spacewalks with fellow astronaut, Christina Koch, which totaled 21 hours and 44 minutes. Yesterday’s visit is Dr. Meir’s first time on Capitol Hill since returning from space in April 2020.

“Dr. Meir’s journey from the halls of Caribou High School to the vastness

of space serves as inspiration for children throughout Maine and across the country that they, too, can achieve their dreams,” said Senator Collins. “Mainers are incredibly proud of the work that Dr. Meir has done to advance humanity, from her scientific experiments, to her historic all-woman spacewalks, and it was a pleasure to meet with her and congratulate her on all of her accomplishments.”

On September 25, 2019, Dr. Meir became the first Maine woman to

travel to space. During her first spaceflight in 2019, Senator Collins spoke with Dr. Meir while she was working onboard the International Space Station. To congratulate Dr. Meir and the first all-woman spacewalk, Senator Collins led a bipartisan resolution to fully integrate women into the astronaut corps and ensure that one of the next humans to walk on the moon will be a woman.

Most recently, Dr. Meir served as a flight engineer on the International Space Station for Expedition 61 and 62, from September 2019 to April 2020. Throughout her time in space, Dr. Meir contributed to hundreds of experiments in biology, Earth science, human research, physical sciences, and technology development. In total, she has spent 205 days in space, that included 3,280 orbits of Earth and a total travel distance of nearly 87 million miles.

In 2016, Senator Collins and Dr. Meir were two of the six inaugural inductees of the Caribou High School Alumni Hall of Fame.

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 Milgram 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 opera-

tions.” 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, Senator Collins renewed her call for federal action.

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WinterKids holds “Welcome to Winter” event tonight!



Learn to Snowshoe - L.L. Bean will be on hand to get our kids fitted and ready to try their hand at one of the easiest ways to get out on the snow!



Learn to XC SKI - NENSA is committed to creating opportunities for kids to get out on XC Skis! They will be on hand to get your kids fitted, and show them just how fun it is to glide on top of the snow!



Go for a story walk

WESTBROOK, ME — WinterKids, the non-profit organization committed to promoting children’s health and activity in winter, is pleased to present their annual “Welcome to Winter” event on December 28, 2023, from 5 pm to 7 pm at Lost Valley Ski Area. This free and open-to-the-public celebration invites families and children to explore outdoor winter activities in a fun community setting.

Originally conceived as a welcome for new Mainers to the winter season, the event has evolved into a community-wide celebration, encouraging all children to engage in active winter pursuits. Lost Valley Ski Area, a gem in the Lewiston/Auburn area, provides an ideal backdrop for an evening of winter

recreation.

Attendees will have the opportunity to try various outdoor activities designed for children. These include snowshoeing (led by L.L. Bean), Nordic skiing (led by NENSA), downhill skiing, and snowboarding (led by Lost Valley). Additionally, even the youngest participants can enjoy snow painting and sculpting, and a StoryWalk sponsored by Evergreen Credit Union.

Alongside these fun winter activities, attendees will enjoy hot chocolate (courtesy of Aroma Joe’s) and s’mores. The event will also feature “out-DOOR” prizes and a special sled giveaway, generously provided by Flexible Flyers.

To ensure the safety and enjoyment of all participants, please be aware

that trails and chairlifts will be closed during the event. Instead, the snowboarding and skiing activities will take place in the magic carpet area, where Lost Valley staff will provide gear fitting and brief group instruction.

WinterKids extends an invitation to the community to join in the “Welcome to Winter” festivities, celebrating the essence of winter and promoting a healthy, active lifestyle for all. This event is an opportunity to embrace the season and create lasting memories with family and friends.

Event Details:
Date: December 28, 2023
Time: 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Location: Lost Valley Ski Area, 200 Lost Valley

Road, Auburn, ME 04210
Admission: Free and open to the public

Website: <https://winterkids.org/welcome-to-winter/>

Welcome to Winter is brought to you by Zachau Construction and Darn Tough.

About WinterKids: WinterKids is a non-profit organization based in Maine that provides children with opportunities to stay active, healthy, and learn outdoors during the winter months. Since its establishment in 1997, WinterKids has been dedicated to ensuring that hundreds of thousands of children embrace the joy of outdoor winter activities while reaping the numerous physical and mental health benefits they provide.

See WinterKids, next page



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WinterKids

Continued from previous page

Through innovative programs, including the WinterKids App, WinterKids Winter Games, Welcome to Winter, License to Chill, WinterKids StoryWalk & Snowshoe Loan Program, WinterKids Learn Outside Guide, WinterKids Peisner Nordic Fund, Mountain Mayhem, WinterKids Downhill 24, and D24 Outdoor Fund, WinterKids helps children develop healthy lifelong habits through fun, outdoor winter activity. To learn more about WinterKids, please visit www.winterkids.org.

WinterKids' Major Community Sponsor is L.L.Bean. Supporting Sponsors are Agren, CMP,



There's always time for s'mores! Lost Valley will have its fire pit ready for you and your family to toast marshmallows and take a quick break from the action for this classic sweet treat!

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Gorham's Chris Newcomb performs one-man show

GORHAM, ME – Gorham's Chris Newcomb is producing a one-person show, "Other," at Footlights theatre in Falmouth, ME from Jan 30th through Feb 4th. 2024. Two year ago, Newcomb performed sold-out shows at Footlights called

"Think You Might Be Wrong." See the video of that show on youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s8XUpwHieA

Republicans urge removal of antisemitic content

THE STATE HOUSE – Representative Nathan Carlow (R-Buxton) led a coalition of 17 Republican legislators in penning a letter to Dr. Darron Collins, President of the College of the Atlantic, urging him to address a series of antisemitic content on the College's official social media.

"The College's decision to embrace this antisemitic content is truly reprehensible. Through these posts, the College has isolated its Jewish scholars from the rest of the student body, and its rhetoric will only embolden violent, Jew-fearing extremists here at home," the letter states. "Consequently, it has either negligently

or maliciously endangered the safety and prosperity of Jewish people everywhere."

In a statement, Representative Carlow expressed dismay that the letter was needed to begin with, "In the aftermath of the morally bankrupt testimony of Ivy League presidents in Washington last week, which failed to condemn genocide against the Jewish people, the College of the Atlantic's antisemitic posturing is made so much more egregious. Rest assured, my colleagues and I in the Maine State Legislature will ensure that Jews are able to live, learn and thrive here in Maine, and we will work to hold institutions

of higher education accountable for antisemitism in their classrooms and on their campuses."

Representative Austin Theriault (R-Fort Kent), a signatory to the letter, expressed his shock and disappointment, "Colleges are embracing anti-Semitism around the country and it's very disappointing to see the College of the Atlantic do the same here in Maine. The Legislature should hold hearings on anti-Semitism in Maine immediately, and College of the Atlantic administrators should testify to explain themselves. Enough is enough."

The letter was signed by 17 Republican lawmakers from across Maine.

Town of Gorham announces 2023 holiday trash collection schedule

GORHAM, ME – The Town of Gorham is announcing the following Christmas week trash collection schedule:

Thursday 12/28-Wednesday collection
Friday 12/29-Thurs- day collection
New Years week

collection schedule:
Monday 1/1-NO COLLECTION
Tuesday 1/2-Mon- day collection
Wednesday 1/3-Tuesday collection
Thursday 1/4-Wednesday collection
Friday 1/5-Thursday collection

Please have tagged trash & recycling curbside by 7AM on your collection day.

If you have any questions regarding proper recycling or trash tag usage please call the office at 222-4950 or email us @ dpw@gorham.me.us

Become a 4-H volunteer in January training

ORONO, ME — University of Maine Cooperative Extension will host a two-part online informational session for adults interested in becoming Maine 4-H volunteers from 6-7 p.m. on Jan. 16 and 23.

"Start Your 4-H Volunteer Journey" will provide participants with information about the UMaine Extension 4-H youth development program through four short e-Learning modules. Attendees will also participate in an experimental educational activity, learn about the key aspects of positive youth development and be introduced to the ages and stages of youth. The two one-hour virtual sessions will wrap up with an outline of next

steps and an introduction to a county staff contact to help with the application process if desired.

A 4-H volunteer is many things: mentor, advisor, friend, teacher, referee, role model, pacesetter and much more. As a 4-H volunteer, participants will have the opportunity to make a positive difference in the lives of children, teach them valuable skills, help them achieve a positive self-image, accomplish personal goals and earn a sense of accomplishment.

The informational sessions are free, registration is required. To sign up, visit the program webpage.

For more information or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact



4-H youth at the Belfast Free Library engage in an after-school program in which they learn about aquaponics. Photo courtesy of University of Maine Cooperative Extension.

Jennifer Lobley, jennifer.lobley@maine.edu; 207.255.3345.

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\$65K grant to establish a halal-certified cooperative

BANGOR, ME – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Maine State Director Rhiannon Hampson today announced that USDA is awarding Cooperative Development Institute (CDI) a Rural Business Development Grant. The nonprofit will use the \$65K grant to help develop a halal meat cooperative in Maine. The new cooperative will serve the growing demand for halal meat from residents across Maine and the region. It will also help make more local meat available in the state, shortening the supply chain for residents.

“This Rural Business Development Grant award is a prime example of the

way we’re using federal dollars to create a multiplier effect,” said Director Hampson. “CDI’s work with Maine food producers will foster sustainable economic development while creating more culturally diverse food options. The Biden-Harris Administration made a promise to hold equitable access to programming at the center of our work. With investments such as this RBDG for CDI, they are delivering on that right here in Maine.”

The new cooperative includes livestock growers and processors who intend to develop a halal meat brand and a halal-certified, USDA-regulated slaughter and processing facility.

Based in Northampton, MA, CDI will use the grant funds to advise and train the members of the cooperative in its early stages. Some of the key assistance CDI will provide to them includes:

- conducting market and feasibility studies.

- performing outreach to confirm state and federal food safety requirements and inspector capacity.

- coaching farmers as they learn to meet processing schedules.

- advising on pricing and capital management.

- helping cooperative members market their products.

- Local Maine livestock producers and Five

Pillars Butchery, an immigrant-owned business based in Unity, Maine, will comprise the new cooperative. According to CDI’s field technician, there are up to 15 farmers who are interested in working as part of this cooperative effort. Six of these farmers are Black, Indigenous, and other people of color, several are beginning farmers, and one farm is operated by a cooperative of Somali women.

Five Pillars Butchery expects to reach full capacity by 2028. Once at capacity, the business estimates that over \$2 million in sales may flow back to farmers in the cooperative. This income will increase the farmers’ ability to rein-

vest in farm infrastructure, hire more employees, and contribute to the sustainability of Maine’s agricultural sector. As State Director Hampson noted, “Through this project, Maine benefits from the inclusion of new farmers, new ideas, and, most importantly, the partnerships that are central to supporting each of these.”

USDA RBDG Program is now open:

Towns, nonprofits, business cooperatives, federally recognized tribes, and other entities may submit RBDG applications. To be eligible for the program, a project must benefit small or emerging businesses. Rural Development announced several

awards recently, including a grant for Island Institute to provide loans to small coastal businesses, one for the Sunrise County Economic Council to offer technical assistance to Washington County businesses, and one for the Poodunk Snowmobile Club to purchase new trail grooming equipment.

USDA accepts applications for the Rural Business Development Grant program for a limited period each year. The program is currently open and accepting applications through February 28, 2024. Visit the Maine RBDG webpage (<https://tinyurl.com/yhufpnam>) or call (207) 990-9127 to learn more.

Brick & Beam invests \$125K in local afterschool programs

PORTLAND, ME -- United Way of Southern Maine’s (UWSM) Brick & Beam Society has invested \$125,400 in four afterschool programs to increase access and help build systemic equity. Brick & Beam Society (B&B) is a giving circle of UWSM that focuses on early childhood learning and STEAM programming for historically underserved communities from birth through 8th grade.

The investments include:

- \$47,400 to Our Place Portland for Youth Mentorship Groups + Family Advocacy Services. The program will engage middle school students as Mentors-in-Training for younger youth with a small stipend and provide afterschool programming that

includes STEAM activities, field trips, meals and snacks. Our Place Portland will also provide advocacy services for caregivers and host events to engage the broader community.

- \$28,000 to Gateway Community Services, Maine for Project STRIVE (Support Toward Refugee and Immigrant Voices and Education), which provides accessible, free, and well-rounded academic support for high-need students in grades 5-8 in Westbrook.

- \$25,000 to Portland Community Squash (PCS)’s Rally Portland. Rally Portland is an afterschool program for students in 6-12th grade that provides squash lessons, food, enrichment, academics, and wellness.

- \$25,000 to Boys &



Girls Clubs of Southern Maine’s South Portland programs to enrich afterschool programming.

“Our continued partnership with United Way’s Brick & Beam Society helps us overcome the big-

gest barriers to afterschool access, including affordability and transportation,” said Barrett Takesin, executive director at PCS. “Thanks to their sustained support, Rally Portland can continue to be one of

the most accessible afterschool programs in the state.”

Out-of-school programs are uniquely positioned to provide impactful learning experiences for youth that blend fun, learning, and social-emotional growth. This is especially important for students who may be struggling with anxiety, depression, trauma, food insecurity, and homelessness. In a recent survey of parents and caregivers conducted by United Way of Southern Maine in partnership with the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce, 44% of respondents expressed a need for increased access to afterschool programming for their children.

Partnerships with out-of-school time organizations are part of a larger

effort by Brick & Beam Society to elevate its focus on literacy and STEAM to build systemic equity that result in positive academic, development, and social outcomes.

Brick & Beam Society investments are funded through member contributions and decided on by member volunteers. Investments support early childhood education with a specific interest in STEAM and literacy programming for kids from historically underserved communities in Southern Maine and are aligned with UWSM’s goal to provide every child in Southern Maine with quality early learning experiences.

To learn more about United Way of Southern Maine and Brick & Beam Society, visit uwsme.org.

Sen. Collins urges action to address border security crisis

WASHINGTON, D.C. – On December 18, there were a record 12,381 encounters with foreign nationals entering the U.S. along the southwest border without authorization.

In response to this ongoing—and worsening crisis—U.S. Senator Susan Collins, Vice Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, delivered remarks on the Senate floor today to call for bipartisan solutions that address the border security crisis

the United States is facing at both the southern and northern borders.

In her remarks, she noted that “so far this fiscal year, we are averaging nearly 8,500 encounters per day, and this month, the average is nearly 10,000 per day. At the current rate, we are on pace for more than three million encounters in fiscal year 2024, which would shatter the previous high set last fiscal year. To put this in perspective, that is more than twice as many

encounters at the southwest border as there are people in the entire State of Maine.”

IMPACT ON MAINE

“In the State of Maine, encounters have increased over 450 percent since fiscal year 2021,” said Senator Collins. “Just recently, the U.S. Border Patrol encountered a group of 20 Romanians illegally crossing into the United States near Houlton, Maine. Two of these

individuals were flagged as Transnational Criminal Organized Crime matches and detained for expedited removal proceedings. The remaining 18 were released into the local community.”

“Communities in Maine and throughout our country are struggling to absorb this influx of people who are being released into the interior. The majority of migrants are released pending an adjudication of their claims, but that is a process that can take

years,” Senator Collins continued. “In Portland, Maine, a city of 68,000 residents, more than 1,600 asylum seekers have arrived since January. Sanford, Maine, which has a population of only 22,000, has had approximately 400 migrants arrive since May. Over the past six months, the City of Sanford has spent 1.3 million to provide food, housing, and other required assistance to asylum seekers and their families.”

FENTANYL CRISIS

“Mexican drug cartels are using the chaos at the southern border to facilitate their trafficking operations. They are sending record amounts of fentanyl into this country – enough to kill every American many times over,” said Senator Collins. “Maine, like so many states, has seen record increases in recent years in the number

of overdose deaths, nearly 80 percent of which were fentanyl related. We lost 513 Mainers in the first 10 months of 2023 to fatal overdoses – 373 of these deaths were fentanyl-related.”

Earlier this year, Senators Collins and Kyrsten Sinema (I-AZ) introduced the Asylum Seeker Work Authorization Act of 2023, which would shorten the waiting period for asylum seekers who come through legal ports of entry to apply for work authorizations.

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Grants awarded to Maine groups working for racial justice, equity

AUGUSTA, ME – The Maine Justice Foundation has awarded grants from its Racial Justice Fund to six Maine groups for 2023. The goal of the Fund is to support Black, Indigenous, and People of Color statewide to forge social, systemic, and economic solutions that will address racism and inequities in our culture, organizations, and systems.

“We are delighted to announce these Racial Justice Fund grants to six inspiring organizations. The grants result from thoughtful consideration and hard work by the Fund’s volunteer Advisory Committee, the Foundation’s Board and staff, and generous donations by many corporate and individual leaders,” said Michelle Draeger, Executive Director of the Foundation. “We believe these projects will meaningfully advance racial justice and equity for BIPOC Mainers.”

The Foundation is issuing six grants between \$5,000 and \$10,000 during this third year of grants, an increase in both organiza-

tions supported and funds distributed from the inaugural year. The grantees and the projects supported are:

\$10,000 Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project: Racial Justice Fellowship Program | A grant to provide a paid fellowship opportunity for law school students who identify as immigrants or have lived immigrant experience.

\$10,000 Ladder to the Moon Network: Expanding Reach through Digital Media | A Grant to expand the reach of Am-jambo Africa, a publication that provides vital information directed toward immigrant, refugee, and asylum-seeking community members, through digital channels including radio, podcast, and videos.

\$10,000 Maine Inside Out: Mountain View Correctional Facility Theatre Production | A grant to engage BIPOC young men incarcerated at Mountain View Correctional Facility in weekly workshops with Maine Inside Out theatre facilitators to create and share two original plays.



\$10,000 Maine Commission on Indigent Legal Services (MCILS): Fighting Racial Justice in the Courtroom | A grant to host a series of DEI trainings for attorneys who provide criminal indigent legal services in Maine.

\$5,000 In Her Presence: Frances Warde Home | A grant to ensure the availability of culturally appropriate and nutritious food at the Frances Warde Home for sheltered asylum seekers in Portland, ME.

\$5,000 Alpha Legal Foundation – Maine Justice Corps: Maine Justice Corps | A grant to support a Maine JusticeCorps pilot program in Androscoggin and Cumberland Counties that will place a minimum of (7) full-time BIPOC AmeriCorps members as legal navigators in court-

houses.

“This is the third cycle of grant awards that the Racial Justice Advisory Committee has reviewed” says Evelyn Silver, Racial Justice Fund Advisory Committee Co-Chair. “Each year, we are gratified to receive many excellent proposals to further the work of racial equity across Maine. The grants announced today reflect the values and goals of the Maine Justice Foundation and the generous donors who have allowed us to further this important work.”

“I am honored to be part of history once again with respect to funding six outstanding local organizations committed to racial justice and equity in Maine,” says Reginald Parson, member of the Ra-

cial Justice Fund Advisory Committee. “I was impressed with the creative projects that were presented and I look forward to seeing how each project develops in the coming year. I have also been blessed to work with a group of dedicated professionals on the Racial Justice Fund Advisory Committee. Everyone is committed to making a difference and this gives me the inspiration to keep moving forward in a time of turmoil and uncertainty in America and the world.”

Since the inaugural grant round, corporations, philanthropic leaders, and individual donors across Maine have given an additional \$290,000 raising the fund to \$815,000 to combat racial injustice and inequity through the Foundation’s Racial Justice Fund. This growth has allowed the Foundation to issue an additional \$50,000 in grants in 2023. The founders of the Fund are:

AARP Maine, Androscoggin Bank, AT&T, Baker Newman Noyes, Bangor Savings Bank, Bernstein

Shur, Central Maine Power, Cross Insurance, Birchbrook, Drummond Woodsum, Eaton Peabody, F.L. Putnam Investment Management Company, Gorham Savings Bank, HM Payson, Hancock Lumber, Hannaford Supermarkets, Harvard Pilgrim, Northern Light Health, Pierce Atwood, Preti Flaherty, RM Davis, Verrill, and the Stephen and Tabitha King Foundation.

The Fund’s Advisory Committee issued a request for proposals and reviewed applications. The current members are co-chairs Dr. Evelyn Silver and Prof. Marcelle Medford, Mary Herman, Reginald Parson, Francys Perkins, Shelly Okere, Bill Harwood, and Janis Cohen.

The Maine Justice Foundation, founded in 1983 as the Maine Bar Foundation, is the state’s leading funder of civil legal aid and is committed to ensuring access to justice for all Mainers. Find us online and support the Racial Justice Fund at www.justicemaine.org.

Maine DHHS: Take advantage of mental health help

AUGUSTA, ME - The Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) encourages Maine people to take advantage of the many resources available to support mental health during this holiday season and at the end of a challenging year for many.

While the holiday season can be a cheerful time, it can also lead to an increase in stress, depression, and other behavioral health challenges including substance misuse. This may be compounded by recent challenges such as the October tragedy in Lewiston and the December 18 storm that directly affected one in four residents and continues to leave some without power,

homes, and jobs.

“The holidays can be a joyful time spent with friends and family as we travel, gather, and reflect on the year behind us. That said, 2023 has been a trying year as people across the state coped with trauma and natural disasters,” said DHHS Commissioner Jeanne Lambrew and Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention Director Dr. Puthiery Va. “We want Maine people to know that a range of supports are available, from crisis intervention to resiliency support, to help all have a safe, healthy, and happy end of the year.”

It is common to feel added stress during the holiday season. There are ways to help address stress

other conditions and improve your mental health, including:

- Paying attention to your feelings
- Practicing self-care
- Connecting with your community and loved ones, and supporting others
- Knowing when to seek help.

Some of the signs that children or adults may be experiencing stress and that mental health may need attention include irritability, nervousness, changes in appetite, fatigue, and difficulty sleeping or concentrating. More serious warning signs may include a sense of hopelessness, withdrawing from loved ones, substance misuse, self-harm,

and feelings, thoughts, or actions of suicide.

Seek help immediately if you or someone you know is talking about self-harm or suicide, feelings of hopelessness or unbearable pain, or about being a burden to others. Know that you are not alone, and here’s how to seek help.

Mental Health and Substance Use Resources:

988: If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health crisis, call or text 988 to reach the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. The 988 Lifeline responds 24 hours a day, seven days a week to calls, chats or texts from anyone who needs support for suicidal, mental health, and/or substance use crisis, and connects those in need with trained crisis counselors. Individuals can also dial 988 if they are worried about a loved one who may need crisis

support.

StrengthenME: StrengthenME is an initiative to help Mainers who are not experiencing a mental health crisis but may need stress management and resiliency resources to promote health and well-being. Services are completely anonymous, free, easy to access, and community focused.

OPTIONS: Maine residents facing opioid use challenges can connect with a local liaison through OPTIONS (Overdose Prevention Through Intensive Outreach, Naloxone and Safety), which sends mobile response teams to connect people directly to recovery services and treatment and distribute naloxone, the lifesaving overdose medication.

The Maine Resiliency Center: The Maine Resiliency Center was established in the wake of

the mass violence event in Lewiston on October 25, 2023. Located at 184 Main Street, it provides free community connection, support, and resources to those impacted by this tragedy.

NAMI Maine’s Teen Text Support Line: This free, confidential resource for youth aged 13-23 is available daily from 2 p.m.-10 p.m. The line is staffed by trained support specialists- aged 18-24. Text (207) 515-8398.

211 Maine: If you or someone you know needs other support and you don’t know who to call, reach out to 211. 211 Maine is a free, confidential information and referral service that connects people of all ages across Maine to local services, including StrengthenME and OPTIONS. 211 Maine is based in Maine and available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



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Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

Jan 3, 24, 31
AUBURN -- Anime & Manga Club from 4 PM - 5 PM - Teen Space, Auburn Public Library

Join us in the Teen Space to watch anime, read manga and share your fanart with fellow fans. While we have plenty of manga in the stacks, feel free to bring some of your own to share with the group!

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 6
GORHAM -- Public Bean Supper at White Rock Community Clubhouse, 34 Wilson Road, Gorham Saturday, January 6, 4:00-5:30pm

Eat in or take out! Homemade baked kidney & navy beans, coleslaw, potato salad, macaroni & cheese, biscuits, hot dogs and dessert. \$10 adults, \$5 under 12 Follow us on Facebook for updates: facebook.com/whiterockcommunityclub

Jan 9
LEWISTON -- LPL TO HOST A TRIVIA

NIGHT

The Lewiston Public Library will host a Disney-themed trivia night on Tuesday, January 9, 2024, from 4:30 to 5:30pm in Callahan Hall. Teams can consist of one to five people. This program is free and open to the public. Pre-registration is encouraged but not required. To pre-register your team please visit The Lewiston Public Library's website's event page. 513-3135; www.LPLonline.org

Jan 9, 16, 23
AUBURN -- from 4 PM - 5 PM - Teen Space, Auburn Public Library

Whether it be crocheting, drawing, origami or something else entirely, The Teen Space Craft Club serves as a time to work on any arts and crafts related projects, share advice and learn something new. Crafters of any experience are welcome!

Jan 17
AUBURN -- Dungeons & Dragons from 3 PM - 5 PM - Teen Space, Auburn Public Library

Come to the Teen Space for a 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.

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

Libertango - Astor Piazzolla

Huapango - José Pablo Moncayo

Old American Songs - Aaron Copland (with Philip Lima, Baritone)

Thunder and Lightning Polka - Johann Strauss, Jr.

Three Songs from Des Knaben Wunderhorn (The Boy's Magic Horn) - Gustav Mahler (with Philip Lima, Baritone)

Symphonic Dances from West Side Story - Leonard Bernstein

Tickets are \$25 in advance for adults; \$30 at the door. All concerts are free for students 18 and under or college students with identification.

A limited number of free tickets for parents accompanying children under 18 are available - call 481-0970 for more details

For more information visit MidcoastSymphony.org, call 207-315-1712, or e-mail info@midcoast-symphony.org

Jan 25
LEWISTON -- THROWBACK THURSDAY MOVIE MATINEE

Our fifth event is Thursday, January 25, 2024, from 4 to 6 p.m. in Callahan Hall and will feature a movie open to all age groups. Come enjoy the sequel to the 90s classic that got us all quacking on ice and rooting for Team USA. Some snacks will be provided but patrons are welcome to bring their favorite movie treats along with them. 513-3135; www.LPLonline.org

Jan 26
AUBURN -- Thinking in the Box: Let's Make Comics! from 3 PM - 4 PM - Teen Space, Auburn Public Library

Have you ever wanted to make your own comic? If you're unsure what to write, not sure how to produce your comic or if you're interested in how comics are made, stop by the Teen Space and get some ideas!

Jan 27
GRAY -- First Congregational Church of Gray Saturday Night Church Supper on Saturday January 27, 2024 @ 5:00 at the Parish House, 5 Brown Street, Gray. Handicapped Accessible

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gled-sized and are \$10.00 each. Please pay at the door. The Menu includes: Variety of Casseroles, & Salads, Baked Pea Beans, Red Hot Dogs, Breads, Assortment of Desserts & Beverages

Feb 5
LEWISTON -- TAROT 101 WORKSHOP AT LPL

The Lewiston Public Library will host a Tarot 101 Workshop on Tuesday, February 6, 2024, from 5 to 6:30 pm in The Jeanne Couture Room. The Tarot 101 Workshop will feature the return of Kate Sheridan, a.k.a The Laundress. This workshop is free and open to both teens and adults. Registration is required and the link to sign up can be found on the Lewiston Public Library's website under events.

Please bring your own 78-card deck and something to take notes with you to the program. 513-3135; www.LPLonline.org

line.org

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

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

GORHAM LITTLE LEAGUE

Field Funding Campaign

The Gorham Youth Baseball & Softball Association is making a large capital investment to provide updates and add fields to accommodate practice and game schedules:

- Develop 2 fields at White Rock
- Purchase seasonal fence for Shaw Park
- Repair dugouts and fencing, build storage centers
- Add infield mix and relevel current fields
- Acquire tarps and field maintenance equipment
- Add scoreboards

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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 Rothschild, 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, Rev-elstoke 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 Water-side 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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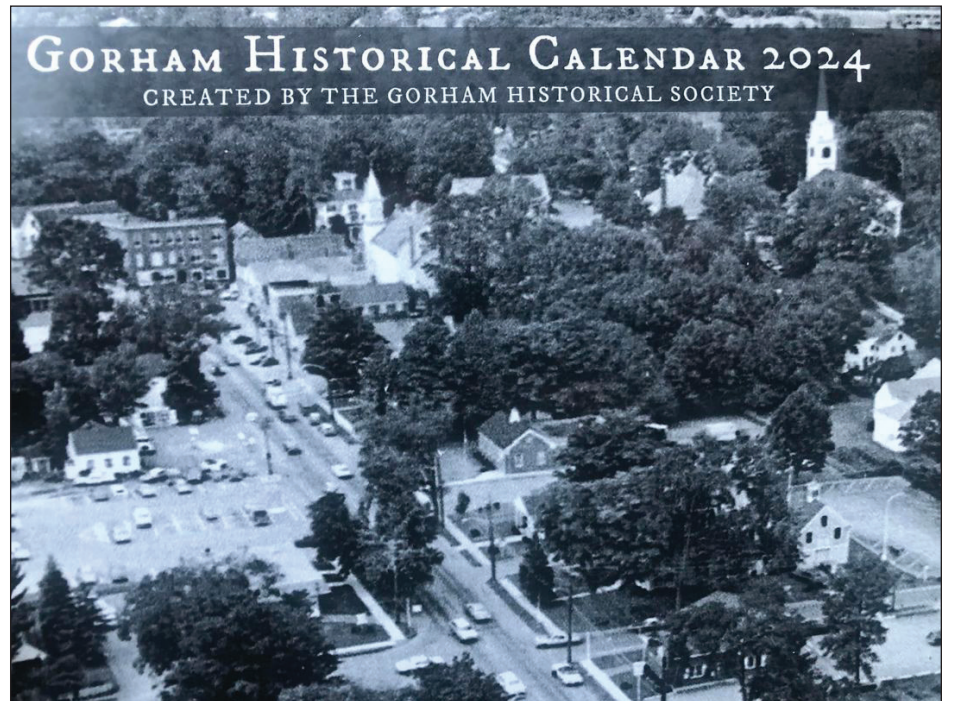
Rachael Billings, Vice President, Senior Trust Officer – Norway Savings Asset Management Group

PORTLAND, ME –Norway Savings Bank is pleased to announce that Rachael Billings has recently accepted the position of Vice President, Senior Trust Officer of the Asset Management Group. In her new position, Billings provides guidance

to individuals, families and organizations to ensure their financial needs and goals are being met. She is also a trusted resource for her clients; assisting with trust and estate planning as well as financial planning for their retirement or other life events.

Billings joins Norway Savings with nineteen years of financial services experience, with the last decade in trust and wealth management. She graduated with a bachelor’s degree in International Affairs and Political Science from the University of Maine Orono in 2004 and obtained her Certified Trust and Fiduciary Advisor (CTFA) designation in 2018. Billings is also an active member of the Maine Estate Planning Council.

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