

Gorham, check out backyard maple sugaring workshop

STANDISH, ME — University of Maine Cooperative Extension will offer an in-person maple syrup production workshop for beginners and enthusiasts interested in making it in their own backyard from 9 a.m.–3 p.m. Feb. 3.

Participants in the hands-on “Backyard Maple Sugaring” program will first meet from 9-11:30 a.m. at Standish Town Hall, 175 Northeast Road; and then finish from 12:30-3 p.m. at Dunn Family Maple, 419 Chicopee Road, Buxton. Snow date is Feb. 17.

During the workshop, participants will learn how to identify and tap trees; collect and boil sap; and filter, grade and can syrup. Participants will also learn the logistics of installing and maintaining a



Photo courtesy University of Maine Cooperative Extension.

sap collection system that uses tubing. The workshop will be led by UMaine Extension maple industry educator Jason Lilley; Richard Morrill, owner of Nash Valley Farm in Windham; and Scott Dunn, owner of Dunn Family Maple.

Registration is required, as space is limited. The workshop fee is \$18 per person and includes the textbook “Backyard Sugarin’: A Complete How-To Guide” by Rink Mann. Visit the program webpage to register. This program is sponsored and co-taught by the Southern Maine Maple Sugarmakers Association.

For more information or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact Jason Lilley, 207.781.6099; jason.lilley@maine.edu.

Gorham’s Emily Ham Guerette joins Fontaine Family team



Fontaine Family - The Real Estate Leader is thrilled to announce Emily Ham Guerette as the newest addition to their growing Scarborough team. As a dynamic sales agent in the bustling real estate market of Maine, Emily brings a unique blend of compassion, professionalism, and diverse experience to her role. Hailing from the vibrant city of Portland, ME, Emily’s journey is a testament to her adaptability and dedication to community service.

Emily’s educational foundation was laid at Deering High School in Portland, setting the stage for her pursuit of higher education at Southern Maine Community College (SMCC). At SMCC, Emily carved her path in healthcare, graduating as a registered nurse. Using her robust back-

ground in nursing and prior experience in the restaurant industry, Emily seamlessly translates her interpersonal skills and efficiency into the competitive world of real estate. Her ability to connect with clients on a personal level, coupled with a keen understanding of their needs, sets her apart in a market where relationships are paramount.

Owning multiple properties in the region has also given Emily the opportunity to gain experience as a property manager with an eye on investment properties. She leverages these professional experiences in order to deeply connect with clients while efficiently serving their needs in a competitive market. You can count on Emily to be an honest, hard-working advocate in assisting you to meet your goals in any real estate transaction.

Currently residing in Gorham with her husband, son, and daughter, Emily is not only a devoted real estate professional but also a family-oriented individual. Her love for spending quality time with loved ones is evident in her active involvement in the community. From walks in the scenic neighborhoods to quiet reading sessions, Emily values the importance of a well-balanced lifestyle.

Emily prides herself on responsiveness, relationship-building and an extensive knowledge of the local real estate market, making each transaction as smooth and stress-free as possible with the help of the Fontaine Team. Contact Emi-

ly today at guerette.emily@gmail.com or 207-899-8180.

Fontaine Family – The Real Estate Leader is a highly skilled real estate team of licensed professionals dedicated to focusing on the client. Fontaine was awarded 2019 Maine Family-Owned Business of the Year, voted Best Real Estate Company in the Greater Lewiston/Auburn Area and Greater Portland Area year after year, recognized by Real Trends as America’s Top 250 Real Estate Team and published in the Wall Street Journal in the Top 250 Real Estate Professionals ranking in the top ½ of 1% of Realtors outperforming 99.9% of the nation’s Realtors.

The Fontaine Family Team serves 8 counties – Androscoggin, Cumberland, York, Sagadahoc, Oxford, Kennebec, Franklin and Somerset – in two locations, 336 Center Street in Auburn and 432 US Route One in Scarborough. For more information visit FontaineTeam.com, download their free home search mobile app “Fontaine Family Real Estate” or call (207)784-3800 or (207)289-3830.

Citizen volunteers needed for Gorham boards & committees

GORHAM, ME -- The Town Council Appointments Committee is seeking citizen volunteers for various boards and committees to serve a 3 year term. The board and committee vacancies available are as follows:

PLANNING BOARD - 2

GORHAM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION- 3

CONSERVATION COMMISSION - 2

BOARD OF APPEALS - 1

BOARD OF TRUSTEES - BAXTER MEMORIAL LIBRARY - 2

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION - 2

FAIR HEARING BOARD - 1

BOARD OF ASSESSMENT REVIEW - 1

REVOLVING LOAN FUND COMMITTEE - 2

BOARD OF HEALTH - 1

If you are interested in applying to serve on any of Town board and/or committee, or for more information, please visit the Town Clerk’s Office. To apply, please complete and submit a Committee Volunteer Application available online. You may also contact the Town Clerk’s Office at 222-1670 or email the Town Clerk Laurie Nordfors at lnordfors@gorham.me.us. Applications will be accepted through January 26, 2024. The Appointments Committee will schedule short informal interviews with applicants starting in February and the Town Council will appoint applicants at their March meeting.

Applications will be accepted until January 26, 2024.

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

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

New Ventures Maine announces Mini-Grant Competition winners

AUGUSTA, ME—New Ventures Maine (NVME) has announced the winners of the statewide Fall 2023 Marketing Mini-Grant Competition.

Six winners in six regions across Maine have received cash grants of \$1,000 awarded through a competitive application process. Winners for each region were named as follows:

The Whole Almond

(Southern Maine) produces plant-based dairy products, nut butters, and baked goods using sustainable and zero-waste practices.

Remo (Western Maine) is a web-based application that empowers educators and students in grades 4-12 around reading.

Tandem Glass (Mid-coast Maine) is a glass-blowing studio and gallery in Dresden featuring



unique, contemporary hand-blown glassware and lighting.

Martin Woods Farm (Central Maine) is a family-friendly farm featuring

horseback riding, farm-raised and value-added foods, agritourism, mobile vending, and musical events.

Axe Women Loggers

of Maine (North Central/Downeast Maine) is a team of professional timber sports athletes that competes, performs, and teaches logging sports at expos and festivals.

The Shamrock Café (Northern Maine) is a restaurant offering breakfast and lunch, party platters, and take-and-bake meals.

Mini-grants support new or expanded business

marketing and promotion. Contest criteria for small business applicants included: 1) Five or fewer full-time equivalent employees; 2) sales in the current calendar year; and 3) gross annual sales of no more than \$150,000 from the previous calendar year.

The competition was sponsored in part by Katahdin Trust Company, Norway Savings Bank, and Kennebec Savings Bank.

Land for Maine’s Future seeking proposals

AUGUSTA, ME - The Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry’s Land for Maine’s Future Program (LMF) announced its next call for Conservation and Recreation proposals. The latest requests are for Projects of Statewide Significance and Community Conservation Projects.

LMF is the State’s primary method of conserving land for its natural and recreational value. The Program was established in 1987 when Maine citizens approved a \$35 million bond to fund land purchases and easements. The Program’s priority is to conserve more of Maine’s

landscape, recognizing that permanently protecting lands with exceptional natural or recreational value is critical to maintaining our quality of life.

Since its inception, LMF has successfully conserved an expanse of over 626,000 acres. The scope of LMF’s impact encompasses creating 73 water access sites, offering 67 miles of protected shoreline along rivers, lakes, and ponds. The program has safeguarded 41 farms, securing 9,884 acres of farmland. Additionally, LMF has been instrumental in conserving 30 working waterfront properties and repurposing 158 miles of

former railroad corridors into recreational trails. This multifaceted approach extends to creating over 65 miles of coastal access, enhancing public enjoyment of Maine’s coastal landscapes.

Since Governor Mills proposed and the Legislature overwhelmingly approved \$40 million to reinvigorate LMF, the LMF Board has approved 56 new projects, totaling \$22.7 million. These projects are expected to leverage an additional \$52.6 million in private and Federal funds.

Important LMF Proposal Dates

January 19, 2024 - Inquiry Forms are due by

5:00 p.m.

March 22, 2024 - Final Proposals are due by 5:00 p.m.

Projects of Statewide Significance include lands with one or more resources that are rare and exceptional in Maine based on a published report, database, or credible testimony, or the recreational activity associated with the parcel will frequently and routinely attract users.

Community Conservation Projects are projects of local or regional significance that promote public outdoor recreational access to land and waters, including for underserved populations; public health; con-

nection between conserved lands and population centers; local or regional agriculture; conservation of cultural and historical resources on undeveloped lands; protection of lakes, rivers or streams; conservation of fish or wildlife habitat; protection of public drinking water supplies; conservation of community forests; local economic development; opportunities for environmental learning; and nonmotorized transportation options.

Eligible LMF applicants include nonprofit land conservation organizations, cities, towns, state agencies, or other eligible holders of conservation

easements under Title 33 MRSA, Section 476(2). An application must include full knowledge and agreement from the landowner that their project is up for consideration for LMF funding.

A copy of the LMF Workbook, which contains all the information necessary to apply for LMF funds, is now available on the LMF web page.

Note that LMF’s Public Access to Maine’s Waters Fund operates on a continuous submission basis.

For more information about the LMF program and the conservation projects, please visit maine.gov/dacf/lmf.

WinterKids kicks off Winter Games in elementary schools

The 7th annual WinterKids Winter Games will kick off this month with 16 schools (comprised of 3300+ students and 380+ teachers) statewide who have applied for and been selected to compete for a total of nearly \$20,000 in cash prizes for their schools as part of the Competitive Track. The winning Competitive Track school will receive \$5,000, second will receive \$3,000 and third place will receive

\$1,500 in school-wide prize ceremonies. All competitive schools will receive a cash prize based on how they finish.

In addition, over 6,000 additional students and 400 additional teachers will participate in the Winter Games as part of a Play-Along Track, which was born during the pandemic to reach children even though they were not in school. This non-competitive edition of the Games offers all the

same fun activities and lessons without the structure of earning weekly points or meeting deadlines. Teams (classrooms, rec departments, individual students) will move, learn, and explore with this go-at-your-own-pace track. All participating students have received comprehensive toolkits and weekly incentives that will allow them to take their learning outside for the full 4 weeks of daily challenges.

The Games will kick off with an outdoor Opening Ceremony event at the Williams-Cone School in Topsham on Monday, January 8, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. Press is welcome and encouraged to attend.

“This initiative goes beyond the competition; it’s about fostering a love for outdoor exploration and promoting a healthy, active lifestyle. The Winter Games not only bring joy and excitement but also serve as a remind-

er of the transformative power of outdoor education,” said Julie Mulkern, WinterKids’ Executive Director. “WinterKids is proud to be a catalyst for bringing joy, movement, and a sense of community to classrooms statewide.”

Embracing outdoor learning helps to counteract the negative effects of excessive screen time – particularly for those in elementary school. WinterKids provides resources for both teachers and

parents to get their kids outside and active. Learn more at <https://winterkids.org>.

The 7th Annual WinterKids Winter Games are made possible thanks to Hannaford Snack Pals, Weekly sponsors Aroma Joe’s, Backyard Farms, and Wyman’s, and contributing sponsors Kittery Trading Post, Stockhouse Restaurant, and MMG Insurance.

Let the Games begin!



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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Kristen Miller appointed President of SMCC

AUGUSTA, ME — The Board of Trustees of the Maine Community College System (MCCS) has confirmed the recommendation of MCCS President David Daigler and appointed Dr. Kristen Miller as the next president of Southern Maine Community College (SMCC). She will begin in February. Miller was most recently the vice president of academic affairs at White Mountains Community College in New Hampshire, where she has worked since 2014. She previously served as associate vice president of academic affairs and as an admissions counselor there.

“Dr. Miller is the right person at the right time to lead SMCC,” Daigler said. “Her proven leadership as an innovative administrator, classroom instructor, and experience in implementing Guided Pathways and workforce training make her an outstanding choice who is well prepared to

continue the strong forward momentum at Southern Maine Community College.”

While at White Mountains Community College, Miller played key leadership roles in several initiatives that are also underway at SMCC, including organizing academic offerings around Pathways, and proactively working with local businesses to ensure students get the education and training needed to meet current and future workplace needs in high-demand jobs.

“It is an honor and a privilege to join this remarkable institution, and I am truly humbled by the trust placed in me by President Daigler and the Board of Trustees,” Miller said. “I want to express my deepest appreciation to all those involved in this selection process. Your confidence in my abilities is both inspiring and motivating. I assure you that I am fully committed to

upholding the values of academic excellence, inclusivity, and innovation that define this college.”

Miller also has experience as an educator: She has been a lecturer in education at Plymouth State University in New Hampshire since 2020, and previously worked as an adjunct professor of English at White Mountains Community College, and as a high school English teacher at Kennett High School in North Conway, New Hampshire.

“I am very pleased to welcome Kristen Miller as the new president of Southern Maine Community College,” Board Chairwoman Joyce Maker said. “She embodies the core values and goals that have brought so much success to SMCC, making her an excellent choice to lead SMCC now and into the future.”

Miller has a doctorate in higher education leadership from Capella University in Minnesota,

a master’s degree in education and education leadership from the University of New England in Maine, and a bachelor’s degree in communications and English from Sonoma State University in California.

Miller serves on the board of trustees for Starting Point Services for Victims of Domestic and Sexual Violence, and on the board of directors for New Hampshire’s Jobs for America’s Graduates. She is also a member of the Educational Justice Institute of New England Board of Higher Education, and the Mount Washington Valley Career and Technical Center Advisory Board.

Miller was selected from an initial field of more than 50 candidates following a national search. She succeeds Joe Cassidy, who left in August 2023 to become president of Saint Joseph’s College of Maine. SMCC Dean of Administration Tiffanie Bentley has served as interim president.



Southern Maine County Community College is the system’s oldest, largest, and most diverse college, with more than 6,000 students and offering 40-plus programs of study at the Portland and Brunswick campuses, online, and at satellite locations across southern Maine. The college also offers robust Early College and short-term workforce training programs. It is one of seven colleges in the Maine Community College System.

Gorham Fiscal Sustainability Committee looking for volunteers

GORHAM, ME — The Town Council Appearances Committee is seeking citizen volunteers (one community member and one business owner) to make up the new Fiscal Sustainability Committee.

How to Apply

Please complete the application on the Town’s website and send to Town Clerk Laurie Nordfors at lnordfors@gorham.me.us. For assistance with questions, please email or call Mrs. Nordfors at 222-1670.

Committee Purpose

To understand the existing financial landscape for the Town of Gorham and the Gorham School Department; to evaluate

the future financial landscape, and to use this knowledge to make recommendations for how to maintain sustainable taxes while continuing to manage the present and future growth of our community over the next five to 10 years.

Member Expectation/Time Commitment

Monthly or every other month meetings of 1.5 hours each, with initial meeting tentatively scheduled for February 2024.

Reading/research between meetings.

Membership

The committee will consist of 18 members plus one facilitator. Visit

the committee page here to view the committee make-up.

Deliverables

Development of a series of recommendations to the Town Council and School Committee for how to reduce costs (or mitigate continued cost increases) through efficiencies.

Development of a series of recommendations to the Town Council and School Committee for how to increase revenues that will offset direct taxpayer expenses at both the municipal and school levels.

Development of a series of recommendations to the Town Council and School Committee for

how to improve communications between various stakeholder groups within the community of Gorham to aid in understanding current and future financial

limitations moving forward.

Timeline

The work of this committee will begin in February of 2024 and will

be targeted to start impacting the development of the Fiscal Year 2026 budgets at both the municipal and school levels in Gorham.

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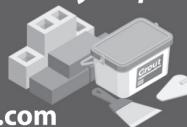
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Seniors Not Acting Their Age

Hiking the Other Pleasant Mountain



Much of the trail was snow and ice covered



A steep sloping ledge turned out to be a false summit



A sign implanted in a cairn marks the summit of Pleasant Mountain

By Ron Chase
Stormy weather negatively impacted our plans for a western Maine mountain hike. My son, Adam, and I intended to climb lofty Number 5 Mountain in a remote wilderness area southwest of Jackman.

When we met in West Forks on a gray, foggy morning with a threat of light rain or snow showers, several inches of new snow had fallen. To reach Number 5 Trailhead required motoring slick dirt roads for about twenty miles, the last section likely unplowed. Number 5 was written off.

Instead, we decided to attempt Williams Mountain another excellent peak positioned southeast of Jackman with better

road access than Number 5. Most of the drive was on plowed paved roads. However, when we arrived at the rough unpaved Williams Mountain Road problems were encountered. Although the road was previously plowed, additional snow had accumulated. An icy undercoat made it unsafe to navigate. A search for another mountain hike ensued.

After studying our Maine Atlas while parked at the snow-filled entrance to Williams Mountain Road, we decided to climb Pleasant Mountain. Our choice was the "other" Pleasant Mountain situated east of the village of Caratunk as opposed to the very popular Pleasant Mountain hike in the southwestern

part of the state.

Located about ten miles south of West Forks, hiking access to Pleasant Mountain is via the Appalachian Trail (AT). From Route 201, we drove through Caratunk on Pleasant Pond and North Shore Roads to an intersection a short distance from the AT. The last portion of North Shore Road was icy but manageable.

We hiked down the ice and snow-covered access road to a sign for the AT. Initially, the trail travels through wet low lying terrain. The recent storm left the surface partially covered with ice and snow, and very muddy. Although discouraged, we persevered through the moisture saturated landscape and

past side trails to Pleasant Pond and a lean-to.

Our spirits improved when we gained higher drier ground and progressed steeply upwards on a carpet of snow and ice in a sparse conifer forest. Several weaving precipitous sections required careful maneuvering and walls of ice on two steep inclines had to be skirted by bushwhacking.

After advancing to the upper reaches of the mountain, the gradient moderated as the trail circles around the north side of the peak. Many years have transpired since either of us has climbed Pleasant Mountain. Neither of us recalled this essentially flat circuitous sector of trail and speculated the path has been rerouted in the interim.

The lengthy almost level segment of pathway allowed for virtually effortless hiking. Shortly after, the trail angles southeasterly and we began ascending steadily in stunted conifer growth. A massive snow-capped boulder marked a dramatic change in the character of the trail and required care-

ful maneuvering on an icy surface along the less vertical right side. We then scrambled up a steep sloping ledge that appeared to be the mountaintop.

The rounded barren prominence turned out to be a false summit. Exposed ledges continued in an easterly direction. We hiked easily in a few inches of wet snow through a sparse wooded area and climbed another bald peak to the true summit marked by a sign implanted in a cairn.

Alas, thickening fog concealed what would have been spectacular views. Swirling clouds and fog-enveloped alpine environments have their own special appeal. We embraced the moment. Parkas were donned as we paused to enjoy a late lunch and a much needed break.

We had completed the climb without using micro spikes. However, descending on snow and ice is much more hazardous so we opted to wear them on our return. A good decision as they permitted traveling down the often slippery trail with

confidence and minimal difficulty.

The spikes were removed when we arrived at the low elevation wetlands. The remainder of our trek was relegated to trudging through a messy mixture of mud, snow, and soft ice. However, given the inauspicious beginning to the day, we were consoled by the realization that what began as a lemon had turned into lemonade.

My book, *Maine Al Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine* narrates nine more mountain hikes around the state, including several winter 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.ronchase-outdoors.com or he can be reached at ronchaseoutdoors@comcast.net

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Celebrity guests to attend Dysart's Snowmobile Ride-In Weekend

HERMON, ME – On Saturday, February 3rd, spectators at Dysart's on Coldbrook Road in Hermon will welcome a parade of legendary Pine Tree Camp Egg Riders at the 51st Dysart's Snowmobile Ride-In for Pine Tree Camp.

The famous Pine Tree Camp Egg Ride continues the over 50-year tradition of Celebrity Egg Riders stuffing raw eggs down their snowmobile suits before the ride. Each egg represents a \$50 pledge in support of Pine Tree Camp and its mission to serve Maine people with disabilities.

This year's celebrities include:

- John Gibbs, Ski-Doo Ambassador
- Kris MacCabe, Maine Game Warden
- Meredith Steele, TikTok Babiesofsteele
- Jared "Jedi" Baker, Maine Cabin Master
- Matt "Dixie" Dixon, Maine Cabin Master
- Al Swett, Maine Snowmobile Association
- Ethan Levesque, Tik-

Tok TheMainahMan
 Jake Warn, SledTRX
 Austin Witham, Penobscot Snowmobile Club
 Jenna Lawrence, SledME

JR Mitchell, Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce

Timber Tina Scheer, "Survivor" Castaway and Great Maine Lumberjack Show

Sandy Patrick, Go Northeast Snowmobiling
 Tim Davis and K-9 Marek, TikTok K9 Deputy Marek

Lauren Gasaway, Portland Sea Dogs
 Mary Dysart Hartt, Dysart's

Dawn Willard-Robinson, Pine Tree Camp

Bradley Thibodeau, Lifelong Pine Tree Camper
 Ian Stuart and James Theberge, "Welcome to Maine"

This year's Ride-in Weekend also includes: a live WABI-TV5 telethon, fundraising auction, poker run and radar run organized and hosted by the Penobscot Snowmobile Club. All proceeds from



Amy Simpson, Dysart's employee and parent of a lifelong Pine Tree Camper, kicked off the 2022 Dysart's Snowmobile Ride-in and Pine Tree Camp Egg Ride. This year's ride will be held Saturday, February 3 as part of a full weekend of events in Hermon including a fundraising auction, poker run and radar run at the Penobscot Snowmobile Club. Photo courtesy of Pine Tree Camp.

the Dysart's Snowmobile Ride-in and Pine Tree Camp Egg Ride directly benefit Pine Tree Camp's Open Door Fund. Since

1945, Pine Tree Camp has welcomed all who could benefit, regardless of their ability to pay.

Schedule:

Thursday, February 1: Live WABI-TV5 Telethon & Dysart's Spaghetti Dinner
 5:00pm at Dysart's Restaurant & Truck Stop, 530 Coldbrook Rd, Hermon, ME

Friday, February 2: Live and Silent Auction
 6:00pm at Morgan Hill Event Center, 82 Morgan Hill Lane, Hermon, ME

Saturday, February 3: Pine Tree Camp Celebrity Egg Ride and Poker Run
 9:30am at Dysart's Restaurant & Truck Stop, 530 Coldbrook Rd, Hermon, ME

Sunday, February 4: Penobscot Snowmobile Club Radar Run

Noon at the Penobscot Snowmobile Club, 795 Bog Rd, Hermon, ME

Egg Ride / Poker Run Check Points on Saturday, February 3:

10:00am – Start: Dysart's (530 Coldbrook Road, Hermon)

10:45am – Stop 1: Levant Hungry Hollow 76'ers Snowmobile Club (34 Hodgson Road, Le-

vant) 11:30am – Stop 2: Carmel Snowmobile Club (210 Hampden Road, Carmel)

12:15pm – Stop 3: Penobscot Snowmobile Club (795 Bog Road, Hermon)

Note: Egg Riders stuff eggs into snowmobile suits here

12:45pm – Finish: Dysart's (530 Coldbrook Road, Hermon)

Note: Egg Riders de-egg here

For more information: <https://www.pinetreesociety.org/events/snowmobile-ride-in/>

This year's sponsors include: Dysart's, Quirk Auto Group, WABI-TV5, Sappi, Bangor Tire Company, Carmel Electric, Bangor Truck & Trailer Sales, HUB, Norway Savings Bank, Danforth's Down Home Supermarket, Chase Toys, BDS Waste Disposal, Inc., 201 Power Sports, Morgan Hill Event Center, Signography Graphics, Machias Savings Bank and Moosehead Trail Powersports.

DACF announces Wilderness Waterway Visiting Artist Program

AUGUSTA, ME - The Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF) today announced the start of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway (AWW) Visiting Artist Program application period. Geared towards visual artists seeking inspiration in the heart of nature, the AWW Visiting Artist Program invites applications for an immersive two-week residency amidst the remote wilderness of Maine.

The AWW has long been a source of inspiration for Indigenous people, rusticators, artisans, and the public alike. Its landscapes and setting have sparked creativity for centuries, evident in the many stories, drawings, photography, and music crafted by those captivated by its allure. Henry David Thoreau found inspiration during his mid-1800s journey to Pillsbury Island on Eagle Lake, chronicling his adventure in The

Maine Woods.

Honoring this rich history, the DACF Bureau of Parks and Lands proudly continues the Visiting Artist Program, aiming to immerse a visual artist in the AWW wilderness, encouraging them to interpret and share their unique experience through their art.

The selected visual artist will enjoy a host of benefits, including:

Rustic cabin lodging on the Waterway for two

weeks in August

Orientation to the Waterway by AWW rangers

Ranger safety check-ins, coordination of AWW transportation, open studio access, and participation in public program(s)

Opportunity to invite one guest to join them, free of charge

Extensive media coverage through Department press releases, social media posts, and the DACF Bureau of Parks and Lands

newsletter, both before, during, and after their Allagash stay.

The online application period closes on February 6, 2024. Interested visual artists are encouraged to visit maine.gov/dacf/aww-artist for complete details, examine previous AWW Visiting Artists' works, and submit their applications.

For further information, please contact AWW Superintendent Mark Deroche at (207) 557-1372

or by email at mark.deroche@maine.gov.

Established by the Maine State Legislature in 1966 and designated by the U.S. Department of the Interior in 1970 as the first state-administered National Wild and Scenic River System component, the AWW spans 92 miles of remote wilderness. Explore the Allagash at maine.gov/allagash, discover the AWW Foundation, and order a copy of the Allagash Explorer.

Veterans Resource Fair to answer questions, offer resources

SABATTUS, ME -- The Sabattus American Legion, Post#135, Sabattus will be hosting a Veterans

Resource Fair on Saturday, 20 January from 09:00-15:00(3pm) at 40 Island Rd., Sabattus.

The Veterans Resource Fair will feature Veterans organizations for HealthCare, Paws for Vets, Hire A Vet,

Vet Center/Big Truck, L/A Veterans Council, Legion Riders, Operation Reboot and more.

Have you ever had a question about your military benefits and keeping putting it off? Then come over to the

Resource Fair, grab yourself a FREE "Cup of Joe", and get your answers! Questions, call Jim at 207-576-2920.

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Arts & Entertainment

Mingle & Jingle raises critical funds for Dempsey Center

STANDISH, ME – The second annual Mingle & Jingle holiday fundraising event raised over \$25,000 with proceeds to benefit the Dempsey Center.

The Mingle & Jingle event, which took place on Saturday, December 16 at Randall Orchards in Standish, featured live entertainment from Henry Lowery and popular band 12-OC. Guests bid on auction items and raffles to raise funds for the Dempsey Center.

Mingle & Jingle started in 2022 by event organizers Meredith Bickford-Thurston and Becky Curtis, who were inspired to give back upon the cancer diagnoses of close family members. Meredith's brother, Nathan Bradley, was diagnosed with Stage 4 Glioblastoma in September 2021, followed by Becky's mother, Connie Loughran, who was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in April of 2022.

"Cancer does not dis-

criminate and everyone has been affected by it in one capacity or another," says Meredith Bickford-Thurston. "Becky and I host this event to help support the efforts being made by the Dempsey Center to support all of those affected by cancer."

The Dempsey Center was founded by actor Patrick Dempsey in 2008. After his mother's cancer diagnosis and subsequent journey, Patrick and his family set out to provide a haven of support for people impacted by cancer in his hometown of Lewiston.

Today, the Dempsey Center has grown to two locations in Lewiston and South Portland, Maine, a hospitality home in Portland, Maine, and has adapted to providing robust support virtually via Dempsey Connects. Programs provide a wide range of holistic support that address the physical, functional, social, and emotional well-being of people impacted by can-



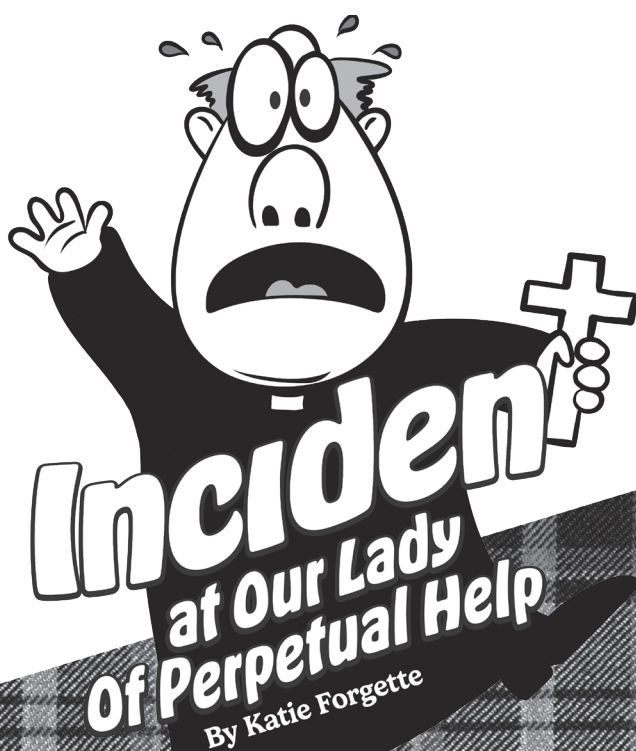
Event organizers Meredith Bickford-Thurston and Becky Curtis address the crowd at the 2nd annual Mingle & Jingle fundraiser to benefit the Dempsey Center.

cer. All services are provided at no cost to cancer patients, survivors, care partners, family members, and friends.

Event organizers wish to thank event sponsors for their support: Bronze sponsors Classic Flooring, Gray Village Hardware, Storey Brothers Excavating, Shaw Brothers Construction; Supporter sponsor Michelle Raber with State Farm Insurance; Table sponsors Affordable Builders Inc., Frame Strategies, Gorham Sand & Gravel, Great Falls Construction, Horace Mann Insurance, Moody's Collision, Party Time Rentals, Thirsty Turf Irrigation, Shamos Paving & Seal Coating, Shaw Earthworks and Willis Real Estate. Facility sponsors include Chaps Saloon and Randall Orchards. And thank you to Rustlers Steakhouse for providing a gift basket donation.

Learn more about the Dempsey Center by visiting DempseyCenter.org.

It's 1973 and a hilarious Catholic family must outwit their parish priest in this nostalgic NEW COMEDY



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Deadline is Friday by five pm.

ART HOUR FOR ADULTS

Come learn how to weave on Thursday January 11th from 5:30-6:30pm



This class is for folks 18 and older. No artistic experience is required. Supplies will be provided by the library.

New Year's resolution: Get a memory screening

NEW YORK -- With a new year upon us, the Alzheimer's Foundation of America (AFA) is encouraging individuals to make a new year's resolution to get a memory screening. Regular memory screenings are an important early detection tool of potential memory problems and should be part of everyone's health and wellness routine. AFA's National Memory Screening Program offers free, confidential memory screenings every weekday through secure videoconference technology, with no minimum age or insurance prerequisites. Appointments can be scheduled by calling AFA at 866-232-8484 or online.

"Memory screenings are important for everyone, even if they are not currently experiencing memory problems. Just as with other facets of your health, early detection of potential memory issues is critically important," said Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr., AFA's President & CEO. "Start off 2024 by making, and keeping, a new year's resolution to get a check-up from the neck up today."

Memory screenings

are simple, quick, and non-invasive, and consist of a series of questions to gauge memory and other cognitive functions. Memory screenings are similar to other routine health screenings, such as those for blood pressure, cholesterol, and skin checks. Results are not a diagnosis of any particular condition, but a memory screening can suggest if someone should see a physician for a full evaluation.

Early detection of memory impairments is extremely important. Many different conditions can cause memory issues, including treatable or curable conditions such as vitamin deficiencies, thyroid disorders, urinary tract infections, sleep apnea, stress, anxiety, and depression.

Even in the case of a dementia-related illness such as Alzheimer's, early detection can provide greater opportunity to begin treatments that can help slow the symptoms of the disease, as well as taking part in a clinical trial. In addition, it affords the person the chance to take advantage of community services, such as support groups and therapeutic pro-

gramming, which can help maximize quality of life, as well as have a greater say in making legal, financial and health care decisions.

"Memory screenings empower people to be proactive about their brain health. You are never too young or too old to get a memory screening," said Donna de Levante Raphael, PhD, Director of AFA's National Memory Screening Program.

AFA's National Memory Screening Program provides free, confidential memory screenings every weekday through secure videoconference technology; a smartphone, tablet, computer, or any other device with an internet connection is all that's needed. Screenings can be provided in English or Spanish. Memory screenings are also covered by Medicare as part of the Medicare Wellness Program.

Individuals wishing to schedule a free memory screening appointment through AFA's National Memory Screening Program or learn more about memory screening can call AFA at 866-232-8484 or visit AFA's website.

Norway Savings Bank donates \$1M to nonprofits in 2023

NORWAY, ME – To help nonprofits fulfill their missions and help those in need, Norway Savings Bank awarded \$1,055,500 to 355 nonprofits in 2023. \$750,000 was paid out this year, while another \$305,500 will be distributed in the form of multi-year grants.

In December, the bank made 19 surprise "Helping Hands gifts" to deserving organizations, totaling \$20,000. These nonprofits provide much-needed resources in Oxford, Androscoggin, Cumberland, York and Sagadahoc counties.

"At this time of year, members of our communities may struggle with the high costs of food, heating oil and other essentials," said Dan Walsh, President and CEO of Norway Savings Bank. "These Helping Hands gifts are our way of providing some assistance to nonprofits focusing on addressing those immediate needs."

The organizations provide a wide range of offerings – nutrition, fuel, clothing, school supplies, housing, job training and more.



Amy Lehigh, NSB VP, Gorham & Standish Market Manager, presents Tim Goodwin from the Standish Food Pantry with a Helping Hands donation along with non-perishable food that was collected in the branch for the food pantry.

The non-profit organizations receiving Helping Hands gifts are:

- Adoptive & Foster Families of Maine
- Bethel Food Pantry
- Biddeford Food Pantry
- Bridgton Community Center
- The Brown Church Food Pantry, Conway, NH
- Community Outreach Services, Kennebunk
- Furniture Friends, Portland
- Gorham Food Pantry
- Harrison Food Bank
- Maine Recovery Fund, Portland
- North Fryeburg Community Chapel Food

- Pantry
- Oxford Hills Food Pantry, Norway
- Preble Street Resource Center and Food Pantry, Portland
- The Progress Center, Oxford
- Ruth's Reusable Resources, Portland
- Servants Heart Food Pantry, Peru
- Standish Food Pantry
- Tedford Housing, Brunswick
- Windham Neighbors Helping Neighbors
- Learn more about Norway Savings Bank's community giving programs at www.norway-savings.bank.



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Concerts for a Cause presents KindKids Music

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Brunswick UU Church

Calling all Parents, Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles, and Friends of Kids!

Enjoy a special day out with the favorite children in your life. Watch them dance and sing, and make friends with adorable puppets.

Help them learn tools for emotional resilience, kindness, and wellness **while making music and having FUN!**

Tickets: \$5 Child, \$10 Adult, \$30 max per Family
Available in the church office,
Gulf of Maine Books, or
www.ticketstripe.com/kindkids



Proceeds benefit Midcoast New Mainers Group and Oasis Free Clinics



goodhearted family music.

KindKids Music is a dynamic duo with original music, puppets, and a highly interactive performance for all ages. Rob Duquette and Amanda Panda share tools for emotional resilience, foster kindness, and encourage wellness, all while making music and having FUN!

Amanda “Panda” Duquette is a professional early childhood music director, teacher, and performer, dancer, songwriter, and the creator of Music and Magic, an organization that provides musical instruments and creative opportunities to Kids and Families in Maine and beyond.

Rob Duquette, M.A.

is a multi-instrumentalist and songwriter and has been performing for children of all ages for over 20 years. He has worked with legendary artist Jonathan Edwards and Maine’s favorite children’s musician Rick Charette. His KindKids Music program has been nationally recognized and is widely requested at libraries and schools all over the country. He currently works as a world music professor in the University of Maine system.

Tickets:
Adults \$10, Children \$5, Family \$30
Available at the church office, Gulf of Maine Books, or online at <https://ticketstripe.com/kindkids>



BRUNSWICK, ME -- UUCB Concerts for a Cause will host a children’s concert on Sunday, January 28, 2024 at 3 pm at the Unitarian Universalist Church at 1 Middle Street, Brunswick. All proceeds from the concert will be donated to Mid Coast

New Mainers Group and Oasis Free Clinics.

Bring the whole family and enjoy a wonderful winter concert that will feature songs, puppets, silliness, and a whole lot of fun. The show is best for kids up to eight years old, or anyone who enjoys

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!



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Cumberland Co. discusses funding for underserved Maine farmers

CUMBERLAND COUNTY, ME – On Friday, January 5, in partnership with the Cumberland County Food Security Council and Maine Speaker Ra-

chel Talbot Ross, White House Senior Advisor and Director of the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs Tom Perez hosted a roundtable to highlight the impor-

tance of state and local partnership to ensure underserved agricultural communities realize the full potential of available federal support.

In 2022, Cum-

berland County Food Security Council received a \$599K grant through the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the American Rescue Plan to support Afro indigenous,

Black, and other limited resource producers in owning and operating agricultural enterprises. The funding helped increase the presence of fresh, local food in com-

munities with limited access, and elevated the voices of people from marginalized communities to develop a healthier and more accessible meat system.

Gorham public Pre-K program applications are open

GORHAM, ME -- Applications for the Gorham's Pre-K Program will open on Monday, January 1st. Gorham families with children who will be 4 years old by October 15, 2024 are encouraged to apply for FREE half-day

Pre-K!

Our Pre-K program is conducted at Narragansett School and is open to all Pre-K-aged students in Gorham. (If you reside in the Great Falls or Village district, your student will attend Narragansett

for Pre-K.) Transportation will be provided for students enrolled in the program. Please contact Theresa Connolly at 222-1295 if you have any questions or need assistance completing the application.

**GORHAM SCHOOL DEPARTMENT
PUBLIC PRE-K
NOW ENROLLING FOR THE
24/25 SCHOOL YEAR**

Gorham families with children who will be 4 years old by October 15, 2024 are encouraged to apply for **FREE** half-day Pre-K!

- Our Pre-K program is conducted at Narragansett School and is open to all Pre-K aged students in Gorham. (If you reside in the Great Falls or Village district, your student will attend Narragansett for Pre-K.)
- Transportation will be provided for students enrolled in the program.

3 EASY STEPS TO APPLY

1. **COMPLETE THE PRE-K APPLICATION**
◦ (SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW OR FOLLOW THE LINK)
2. **SIGN UP FOR A SCREENING APPOINTMENT AT THE END OF THE APPLICATION.**
3. **ATTEND SCREENING ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14TH.**

Click the link or scan the barcode to apply.
Please call 222-1295 if you need assistance completing the application.

PRE-K APPLICATION LINK




Haddock supper buffet to be held in Buxton

BUXTON, ME -- Try our delicious Haddock Supper Buffet - Saturday, January 27, 2024 - 5:00 pm at Living Waters Church, Parker Farm Road, Buxton. Sug-

gested donation: \$10 Adult, \$5 Child, \$20 Family.

Please note: We will offer the option of takeout containers for those who do not want to come inside

for seating.

Wearing of face masks for those who wish is optional.

Hand sanitizer is available for those who wish to use it.

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email Kim Turner at kmtturner@maine.edu with questions

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New Year resolutions: How to finally quit smoking, vaping

PORTSMOUTH, NH – This time of year, millions of people across Maine and New Hampshire make resolutions to take on personal challenges, accomplish a significant goal or improve their life for the new year. This year, the American Lung Association in the Northeast is encouraging everyone who smokes, vapes or uses other tobacco products to begin their quit journey in 2024, and provides tips and resources at Lung.org/Quit-Smoking.

Tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable death and disease here in Maine and New Hampshire where smoking kills 4,330 people each year. Nationally, 16 million Americans live with a tobacco-related disease. While it's best to quit as early as possible, quitting smoking at any age will enhance the length and quality of your life.

"In New Hampshire, 12.3% of adults smoke and 30.3% of high school students use a tobacco product. In Maine, the numbers are similar with 15.6% of adults smoking and a whopping 33% of high school students using tobacco products. We know that breaking the addiction to nicotine is extremely difficult. For most people, it takes multiple attempts to quit tobacco for good. Each quit attempt brings a person closer to reaching their goal," said Lance Boucher, director of advocacy with the American Lung Association in Maine and New Hampshire. "Some tobacco products, like menthol cigarettes and e-cigarettes, make quitting even more difficult, so it is critical that people who are ready speak with their healthcare provider about Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved tobacco treatment medica-



tions, coupling them with proven effective cessation programs to quit."

Currently, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is in the process of finalizing rules to end the sale of menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars in the U.S. Menthol is a chemical compound extracted from peppermint or corn mint plants that makes cigarettes easier to start smoking and harder to quit. Flavored cigars often look similar to cigarettes, attract kids and addict them to tobacco products for a lifetime.

According to the 2023 National Youth Tobacco Survey, 2.1 million high school and middle

school students use e-cigarettes. E-cigarettes deliver a high level of nicotine very quickly, and many e-cigarettes contain as much nicotine as a pack of cigarettes. This makes them very difficult to quit. While much remains to be determined about the lasting health consequences of these products, the Lung Association is very troubled by what we see so far. The inhalation of harmful chemicals can cause lung damage and lung diseases.

Here are some of the tips and resources the American Lung Association recommends to successfully quit tobacco:

Lung Helpline: Not

sure where to start? Call the Lung Association's free Lung Helpline and Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-LUNGUSA, which is staffed with licensed registered nurses, respiratory therapists and certified tobacco treatment specialists.

Talk to your Healthcare Provider: Talking to a healthcare provider about your plan to quit smoking is an important step. With your doctor's help, you can include cessation medication into your tobacco treatment plan, which can double your chances of quitting successfully. There are seven FDA-approved medications that are proven to help you quit. Most insurance covers these medications without cost-sharing.

Get Help from a Proven Resource: The American Lung Association offers resources to help adults and teens to quit all tobacco products,

including Freedom From Smoking® to help adults quit, and Not-On-Tobacco® (N-O-T), which is specially designed for teens who are ready to quit.

Quit. Don't Switch. E-cigarettes are tobacco products, and the FDA has not found any e-cigarette to be safe and effective in helping smokers quit. Switching to e-cigarettes does not mean quitting. Quitting means ending your addiction to nicotine.

For more information about quitting tobacco, visit the American Lung Association website at Lung.org or call the Lung Helpline at 1-800-LUNGUSA (1-800-586-4872). Most health insurance covers medications and counseling to help you quit. If you don't have insurance, you can enroll until January 15 in most states. For more information, visit www.lung.org/openenrollment.

Honor Maine teachers: Teacher of the Year nominations open

Statewide, ME – The Maine Department of Education (DOE) and Educate Maine announced that nominations are now open for the 2024 County Teachers of the Year and 2025 State Teacher of the Year. Maine's County and State Teachers of the Year serve as advocates for teachers, students, and public education in Maine.

"Maine is home to amazing teachers who educate, inspire, innovate, nurture, and go above and beyond each and every day for their students, schools, and communities. The Maine Teacher of the Year program recognizes the extraordinary contributions of educators across our state and gives them a megaphone to share the great things happening in Maine public schools. Please nominate an outstanding teacher in your life today," said Maine Education Commissioner Pender Makin.

Nominations can be made through a form on the Maine Teacher of the Year Website now through 5:00 pm on January 31, 2021. Nominations will be accepted from students, parents, caregivers, community members, school administrators, colleagues, college faculty members, and associations/organizations (self-nominations, and nominations from family members are not accepted).

Requirements:

Hold the appropriate professional certification for their teaching position;

Be a certified, in good standing, PK-12 teacher in a state-accredited public school, including a career and technical education and adult education center, a public charter school, or a publicly supported secondary school (a private school that enrolls 60 percent or more publicly funded students, sometimes referred

to as "town academies");

Be actively teaching students at least fifty percent of the workday at the time of nomination and during their year of recognition.

Maintain their teaching position and remain in the county for which they are selected throughout the year of recognition.

Have a minimum of five years of teaching – three of which are in Maine.

Beyond serving as advocates for education, Maine's County and State Teachers serve as advisors to the Maine DOE and state-level education stakeholders across Maine. Additionally, County and State Teachers of the Year join a cohort of teacher leaders who actively work together for the betterment of education in Maine. They also receive ongoing professional learning and participate in many state and county leadership op-

portunities.

The 2024 County Teachers of the Year will be announced in May. The 2025 Maine Teacher of the Year will be selected from the 16 county honorees. Through a selection process designed by educators, the field will be narrowed to semi-finalists and then state finalists before the Maine Teacher of the Year is announced by Maine's Education Commissioner at a school assembly in the fall. Each year, State and County Teachers of the Year are honored at the annual Teacher of the Year Gala also held in the fall.

On behalf of, and in partnership with Maine Department of Education, the Maine Teacher of the Year program is administered by Educate Maine, a business-led organization whose mission is to champion college, career readiness, and increased educational attainment. Funding

is provided by Bangor Savings Bank, Dead River Co., Geiger, Hannaford, the Maine Lottery, the Silvernail Family, and Unum, with support from the State Board of Education and the Maine State and County Teacher of the Year Association.

"Educate Maine is proud to administer the Maine Teacher of the Year program in partnership with the Maine Department of Education," said Dr. Jason Judd, Educate Maine Executive Director. "Our County and State Teachers of the Year represent the outstanding work taking place in classrooms across our state. This program is dedicated to celebrating educators, enhancing their recognition, cultivating a network of teacher leaders, and amplifying their voices to strengthen the teaching profession in Maine."

The Maine Teacher of the Year program is

committed to a nomination and selection process that ensures people of all backgrounds are represented. Educate Maine and the Maine Department of Education champion that commitment by encouraging the nomination of educators from all culturally diverse experiences and backgrounds.

Through the generous support of Maine businesses, there is no cost to the local district when the Teacher of the Year is out of the classroom on their official duties, which includes representing educators state-wide and nationally through safely distanced in-person and virtual events that highlight the important work of Maine schools, communities, and educators.

For more information about the Maine Teacher of the Year program, visit the Maine Teacher of the Year website.

Welcome 2024 Maine REALTORS President

AUGUSTA, ME – Paul McKee, REALTOR® begins his term as President of the Maine Association of REALTORS® for 2024.

Paul has held a Maine real estate license since 2003 and is a lead buyer specialist of The Hatcher Group with Keller Williams Realty

in Portland. He served as the Maine Association of REALTORS® President Elect and First Vice President and currently serves on the Board of Directors

for the Maine Real Estate Information System, Inc. dba Maine Listings and also serves as a Director and a member of the Major Investor Council for

the National Association of REALTORS®.

Paul serves his clients and the real estate industry at the highest level and is deeply involved with MAR's advocacy efforts.

The Maine Association of REALTORS® represents 6,400 REALTORS® statewide involved in all aspects of residential and commercial real estate and 450 affiliated professionals involved in real estate transactions such as lenders, closing agents, title

agents, appraisers, building inspectors, and surveyors. In 2022, Maine's real estate industry accounted for \$15.7 billion or 18.6% of Maine's Gross State Product.

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Talking Brook, Big Falls secure permanent protection



Talking Brook. Courtesy Trust for Public Land



Talking Brook. Courtesy Trust for Public Land



Talking Brook Public Land Map

Falls Preserve, which the Royal River Conservation Trust is donating. Creating this public land is realizing the property owners' long-term vision. The Fralich family has long been committed to making their property accessible to the community by creating an extensive trail network. According to Michael Fralich, "The creation of this public land assures that the citizens of Maine will continue to have access to and enjoy this very special place. We hope it will bring joy to others for years to come."

The properties, spanning Auburn (Androscoggin County) and New Gloucester (Cumberland County), encompass stretches of both Talking Brook and Meadow Brook, tributaries of the Royal River. The project aligns with the Town of New Gloucester's Comprehensive Plan Goals of "preserving open space for public recreational use." The collaborative effort between the land owners, BPL, RRCT, and TPL establishes the land as a unit within the Maine Public Lands system and was funded by the Land for Maine's Future Program, the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund,

AUGUSTA, ME — The Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry's Bureau of Parks and Lands (BPL), along with Royal River Conservation Trust (RRCT) and Trust for Public Land (TPL), is pleased to announce the conservation of 200 acres in New Gloucester and Auburn, Maine. The protected properties, which feature scenic brooks, waterfalls, and an extensive trail network,

have been permanently protected for outdoor recreation and to conserve these special woodland, wetland, and wildlife habitats. Talking Brook Big Falls The conservation project, now called Talking Brook Public Land, consists of a 156-acre parcel, which has been managed by private land owners and open to the public for years, and a 44-acre parcel, formerly known as the Big

and private individuals and foundations.

Bill Patterson, Deputy Director at the BPL, highlighted the proximity of the newly conserved land to Maine's population centers in communities like Lewiston and Auburn, stating, "The Bureau manages more than 630,000 acres of Public Reserved Lands across the state of Maine including some of the most spectacular recreation destinations and wildlife habitats such as the Tumbledown Mountain and Cutler Coast units. Talking Brook protects accessible land in Maine's more populated and developed southern region and significantly benefits the people of Maine."

Alan Stearns, Executive Director of RRCT, commended BPL leadership, stating, "As the population of our communities surges and thrives, we must do more – working together – to conserve the most treasured forests and open spaces of communities before it's too late. The Talking Brook project balances the demand for

human respite with exceptional wildlife and clean water."

Betsy Cook, Maine State Director for the Trust for Public Land, celebrated the importance of this effort, stating, "Talking Brook has long been an ideal natural showcase for the best of southern Maine, blending deep forests and clear streams with an easily accessed trail system. While a key driver of this effort has certainly been the needs of a rising population of residents and users of Maine's public lands, it has also been a forward-looking initiative that ensures this community asset delivers environmental and economic benefits long into the future."

The Talking Brook Public Land will be owned by BPL and managed cooperatively with RRCT. This partnership ensures a sustainable and community-oriented approach to the stewardship of this natural treasure. Residents of New Gloucester, Auburn, and surrounding areas are encouraged to explore the scenic trails, waterfalls, and

natural beauty of Talking Brook Public Land.

TPL spearheaded the land acquisition, and RRCT will collaborate with BPL in the day-to-day management. New Gloucester residents participated in public meetings during the winter and spring of 2022 and added resounding support for the acquisition. BPL's subsequent management planning process will also include ongoing public participation.

The BPL will lead a public process to integrate Talking Brook Public Land into the existing Pineland Public Lands Management Plan. An existing community advisory committee, including representation from New Gloucester, will assist with the plan's development, which will address the property's natural resources, wildlife habitats, water quality, rare species, and ecological processes. The resulting ten-year management plan will outline goals for protecting natural habitats, outdoor recreation, timber management potential, and overall property management.

Agriculture Secretary Vilsack visits Maine

WASHINGTON, D.C. — On Monday, January 8, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack traveled to Portland, Maine, where he joined Congresswoman

Chellie Pingree and held a roundtable conversation with local leaders and agricultural stakeholders to discuss the impact of recent storms on the state's farms, as well as USDA's efforts to help farmers and ranchers recover from losses and damages.

Secretary Vilsack highlighted how USDA is helping to bolster the resilience of Maine producers' operations and communities to extreme weather events that are becoming more common because of climate change.

Through significant funding from President Biden's Investing in America Agenda, USDA has made available historic resources in clean energy and conservation programs to encourage new economic opportunities in rural areas and to help producers lower energy costs, reduce greenhouse emissions, and generate new economic opportunities.

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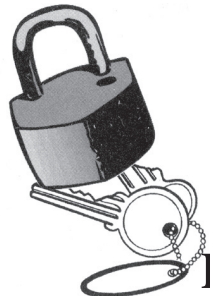
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Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

Jan 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@midcoastsymphony.org

Jan 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 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

Meals are Single-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

Jan 27
BUXTON -- Try our delicious Haddock Supper Buffet - Saturday, January 27, 2024 - 5:00 pm at Living Waters Church, Parker Farm Road, Buxton. Suggested donation: \$10 Adult, \$5 Child, \$20 Family.

Please note: We will offer the option of takeout containers for those who do not want to come inside for seating. Wearing of face masks for those who wish is optional. Hand sanitizer is available for those who wish to use it.

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.

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

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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

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

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

Every 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Monday
LEWISTON -- PRO-

GRAMS 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

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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Donate your Christmas trees, help local wildlife

LIMINGTON, ME -- Saco River Wildlife Center is seeking Christmas tree donations for our over-winter patients. Please help us make sure they are ready and safe for our patients by removing any and all tinsel, decorations, lights, etc. Thank you in advance. You can drop them off anytime between 9 am - 5 pm any day of the week at our center!

We are located at 238 River Rd, Limington, 04049. Thank you in advance for spreading some Holiday cheer to our patients. Interested in supporting our organization in another way? Donate today to help us save lives! Give-Butter.com/sacoriverwildlifecenter
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wildlifecenter
Amazon wishlist: <https://a.co/6M8iezG>
Saco River Wildlife Center is a 501(c)(3) non profit organization whose mission is to provide rehabilitative care to Maine's ill, injured, or orphaned wildlife and to promote compassion and awareness through educational resources and programs.
Find us on Tiktok and

Instagram: @sacoriverwildlifecenter
Want more info? Check out our website: sacoriverwildlifecenter.org

Send all items for Arts & Entertainment to the Editor. Deadline is Friday by five.

MaineCare eligibility expanded for children and young adults

MAINE -- Effective October 1, 2023, the Maine Department of Health and Human

Services (DHHS) has expanded MaineCare eligibility for children and young adults un-

der 21 in Maine to include family incomes up to 300% of the federal poverty level. That trans-

lates to an annual salary of about \$59,000 for a family of two and \$90,000 for a family of

four. Additionally, the Maine DHHS eliminated most premiums for children's coverage, effective

March 1, 2023. See <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oms> for more information.

Give your Christmas tree a second life and new use at Popham Beach



POPHAM BEACH -- Last winter, the protective sand dunes along Popham Beach State Park were flattened by high water levels and large, erosive waves. The dunes are a front-line defense to protect adjacent upland pitch-pine habitat and park infrastructure. Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry is teaming up with the Maine Geological Survey for this pilot project using recycled Christmas trees to rebuild the dunes.

Why Christmas

trees? Undecorated Christmas trees are perfect for this purpose, as their multiple branches and needles quickly catch windblown sand and have been used successfully in many other coastal states to help rebuild eroded sand dunes. And Popham Beach, with its exposure to daily onshore and side-shore winds, is the perfect location to use trees to trap sand.

How does it work? The Christmas trees will be placed in several


rows along the upper portion of the beach to strategically trap windblown sand into multiple dune ridges. Over time, these ridges will stabilize further as dune grass regrows and expands, trapping even more sand. The pilot project, once permitted, will hopefully be constructed in February 2024.

Undecorated Christmas trees are needed to battle dune erosion. Take a stance, and turn your tree into a chance! Deliver your tree(s) to Popham Beach daily through Janu-

ary, from 9 AM - sunset, to the drop-off spot near the West bath house, located on the right side of the parking lot. You will see signage as you enter the park. Imagine your tree resting in the salty air. It's a symbol of love beyond compare.

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

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