



# TWIN CITY TIMES

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## Rogue Life Maine announces \$213K Lewiston Strong fundraiser

LEWISTON, ME – People in every state in the country and as far away as France, Germany, and Japan saw an easy way to help those most impacted by the Lewiston mass shootings by purchasing a Lewiston Strong hat or t-shirt from a fundraiser started by Lewiston business Rogue Life Maine.

Owner Mark Rodrigue began the Lewiston Strong fundraiser less than 24 hours after the Oct. 25 tragedies to support survivors and families of the victims. On Friday Rodrigue announced that \$213,472 will be given to the Lewiston-Auburn Area Response Fund with all the money dedicated to the Victims & Families Fund within the response fund.

“With the help of thousands of people from our community, across the state, nation, and worldwide, we’re humbled by the outpouring of support for our Lewiston Strong families,” Rodrigue commented. “Today’s donation is a testament of the spirit of human kindness and our ability to



Members of the Rodrigue family, left, pose with Rogue Life Maine employees in Lewiston Friday before announcing the fundraising total for their Lewiston Strong fundraiser. Credit: Rinck Advertising

come together in times of tragedy.”

More than 8,500 Lewiston Strong

orders were fulfilled from the period of Oct. 26 through Dec. 10 by the Rogue Life Maine staff and community volunteers. Lewiston Strong shirts were also featured during games of the New England Patriots and the Maine Celtics, and worn by many high school sports teams and businesses across the state.

In addition to the fundraiser, Rodrigue will be launching the Rogue Life Foundation, a nonprofit that will continue to support the Lewiston/Auburn community and the people of Maine. “This foundation will be a way for Rogue Life Maine to continue its philanthropic efforts. We feel a Maine company should represent what Maine people do - we take care of each other,” Rodrigue remarked.

Rogue Life Maine is a family-owned Lewiston company in operation since 1969. The company makes canvas tote bags, backpacks, hats and other apparel. For more information, visit [roguelife-maine.com](http://roguelife-maine.com).

## Deadline extension to apply for Lewiston boards and committees

LEWISTON, ME -- The City of Lewiston has extended the deadline for resident volunteers to submit an application to serve on some of the City’s boards and committees.

“Several of these boards are technical in nature or have a very specific focus regarding professional knowledge in the given area, and as such, we did not receive applications for some of these more

specialized committees. We have reopened the application window hoping to receive additional applicants who are interested in doing this important work for the community,” said City Clerk Kathy Montejo.

Current openings: Board of Assessment Review, Airport Committee, Complete Streets Committee, Historic Preservation Review Board, Housing/Urban

Renewal Authority tenant representative, and Lewiston & Auburn Railroad Company Board.

Lewiston residents may contact the City Clerk’s Department to complete an application. The application is also available on the City’s website at [www.lewistonmaine.gov/service](http://www.lewistonmaine.gov/service)

Committee descriptions, meeting times and other information about com-

mittee service are also on the website. Applications can be submitted at any time and will be accepted until the positions are filled.

Residents are welcome to contact the City Clerk’s Department at 513-3124 with any questions. Completed applications shall be submitted to the City Clerk’s Department for processing. Office hours are Monday - Friday, 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM.

## WHA announces latest paintings on display, for purchase



“Celebration” by Judy Haas

LEWISTON, ME -- The Woman’s Hospital Association (WHA) Rotating Art Gallery at Central Maine Medical Center in Lewiston is proud to display the paintings of Judy Haas and Michael Everett during the months of January and February.

Haas is a neurodivergent, self-taught

abstract watercolor/mixed media artist based in Richmond, Maine. She has been working with watercolor since 2022 the same year that she received her cancer diagnosis. During recovery from her surgeries and treatment, watercolor was a means to work through the emotions and struggles that came with it. Watercolor has since become a means by which to process the world around her and at the same time be a catalyst for change. It made complete sense to show her work at CMMC since her team at the hospital is the reason for her successful surgery and treatment. “I could not have done it without them”.

Everett, a member of the Western Maine Art Group and a frequent exhibitor at its Matolcsy Art Center in Norway, took up oil painting to capture his impressions of remote and wild places of northern

Maine. Many of his paintings are scenes from the Allagash and Saint John Rivers. As his interest and skill have progressed, he has become more intrigued with the simple enjoyment of painting, especially in seeking vitality in his use of color. He paints (mostly) landscapes of (mostly) familiar places, and often can be found painting outdoors in his North Auburn neighborhood. During the centennial celebration of Thorncrag Nature Center in Lewiston last year, he coordinated an exhibition by local artists of images of Thorncrag.

The works on display may be purchased through the WHA Gift Shop located adjacent to the main lobby at Central Maine Medical Center. A percentage of sale proceeds benefits patients of CMMC.



“A Marsh on the Androscoggin” by Michael Everett



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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](http://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

## Budget Document Technology chosen as 2023 Elite Dealer

**LEWISTON, ME—** ENX Magazine announced that Budget Document Technology is among the 118 companies chosen this year as a 2023 Elite Dealer. This is the fourth time that Budget Document Technology has been chosen among the nation's top office technology dealerships.

Budget Document Technology has been an independently owned, New England based office technology and equipment dealer since 1989. They provide customized, customer-focused office solutions for businesses and organizations across the country, resulting in workplace efficiency, reduced

costs, and reliable service. "We're honored to be recognized once again as an Elite Dealer," said Steve Ouellette, CFO at Budget Document Technology. "While post-pandemic challenges continue, our team has adapted through their ingenuity, resourcefulness, and resilience so that we may prosper.

Yet again they have gone above and beyond to provide outstanding service to our clients and business partners. Thank you to the BDT team for this achievement." Each year, ENX Magazine judges Elite Dealer applicants on a number of criteria, from technical service excellence to mar-

keting proficiency, growth initiatives, technology leadership, industry accolades and philanthropy. Those dealers chosen are profiled in the December issue of ENX Magazine. "It is clear that this year's cast of Elite Dealers signifies a strong return to prosperity for the office technology reseller

community," said Susan Neimes, publisher and managing editor of ENX Magazine. "Annual revenues are up virtually across the board, and this is a testament to dealers relentlessly proffering managed services and ancillary technologies that go far beyond the multifunction printer."

## New Executive Director takes the reigns at The Public Theatre

**LEWISTON, ME** -- The Board of Directors of The Public Theatre recently announced that the Theatre's longtime, beloved Executive/Co-Artistic Director Christopher Schario would be retiring in 2024. In a message sent to the Theatre's patrons, donors, corporate sponsors and friends, the Board celebrated and thanked Schario for his incredible tenure -- 30 years of artistic excellence and commitment to the Lewiston Auburn community. Many celebrations of Schario are to come in 2024. He is currently helping to facilitate the transition to new executive leadership.

Lewiston native Ray Dumont will be stepping

into Schario's shoes as Executive Director, and artistic continuity will be maintained as current Co-Artistic Director Janet Mitchko assumes the role as the sole Artistic Director for the Theatre.

"I am overjoyed to be coming back to my hometown as Executive Director of The Public Theatre. I grew up in Lewiston and was educated in Lewiston Schools. It's a tremendous privilege to come back and to be able to give back to this wonderful community," said Dumont who has been working in professional theatre for 30 years. "Christopher has really set a high standard here at the Public, and I know I'll rely on his valuable experience



**Ray Dumont, Executive Director & Janet Mitchko, Artistic Director**

as we transition into this new leadership model."

A graduate of Boston University School of Management, Dumont holds degrees in finance and marketing. Throughout his

decades in theatre, he has been a performer, educator, director, choreographer, and administrator. He enjoyed more than 20 seasons at Maine State Music Theatre in Brunswick, includ-

ing four years as Managing Director. Dumont has worked in theatres all over the country as well as local organizations like The Ogunquit Playhouse, The Huntington Theatre Co., The Children's Theatre of Maine, Mad Horse Theatre, and the aforementioned Maine State Music Theatre. He is a well-known and well-loved member of Maine's theatre community and a proud member of Actors' Equity Association.

In his role as Executive Director of The Public Theatre, Dumont will provide vision and leadership to the Theatre's small but mighty full-time staff of five, managing finances and fundraising, marketing, audience development, and

supporting the artistic vision and standards for excellence.

Outgoing Executive/Artistic Director happily welcomes Ray Dumont in his new role as Executive Director of The Public Theatre. Schario says, "I believe that the new partnership of Janet Mitchko as Artistic Director and Ray Dumont as Executive Director will lead the theatre into a stronger and more sustainable future. Janet's role as Artistic Director will guarantee that the theatre's high artistic standards will be maintained and even surpassed. Ray's years of experience in every area of the business will be a priceless asset as the theatre re-structures for the future."

## Norway Savings Bank receives "Outstanding" rating

**NORWAY, ME** -- Norway Savings Bank is proud to announce that it received an "Outstanding" rating on its latest Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) evaluation administered by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC). This is the third consecutive examination cycle that Norway Savings has achieved this Outstanding rating.

Norway Savings achieved this rating because of its demonstrated leadership and excellent responsiveness to the credit needs of individuals of all income levels and small businesses, including those located in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods. The Bank was deemed Outstanding in making significant investments in affordable housing and economic



development, particularly those that are not routinely provided by private investors, and is a leader in community development lending. The FDIC examiners noted that Norway Savings extensively uses innovative lending practices.

Norway's employees are strongly engaged in the community, volunteering their skills at local nonprofits and its banking services are deemed highly accessible to people of all income levels.

"Receiving an 'Outstanding' rating from the FDIC for the third consecutive evaluation is a grat-

ifying recognition. With only 10% of banks nationwide being designated as 'Outstanding,' Norway Savings Bank is in a class with few others," said Dan Walsh, President and CEO of Norway Savings Bank.

"Norway Savings Bank's management and staff members are highly committed to the goals of the Community Reinvestment Act. The latest FDIC 'Outstanding' rating confirms our determination to meet our responsibilities under the Act," said Janice de Lima, CRA

Officer for Norway Savings Bank.

The time period examined was September 15, 2020 to September 14, 2023.

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## Seniors Not Acting Their Age

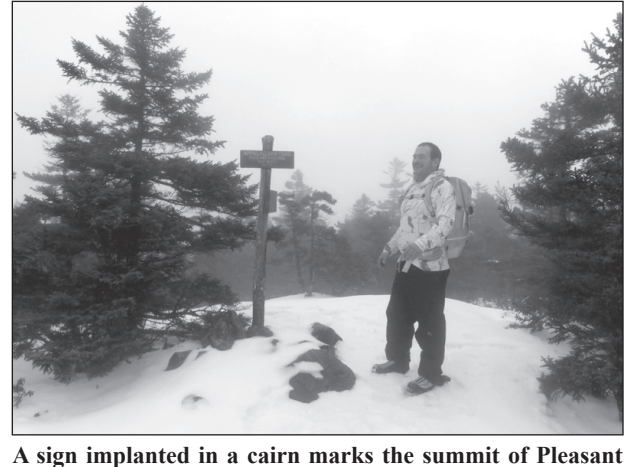
# Hiking the Other Pleasant Mountain



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](http://www.northcountrypress.com/maine-al-fresco) or in bookstores and through online retailers. His previous books are "The Great Mars Hill Bank Robbery" and "Mountains for Mortals – New England." Visit his website at [www.ronchase-outdoors.com](http://www.ronchase-outdoors.com) or he can be reached at [ronchaseoutdoors@comcast.net](mailto:ronchaseoutdoors@comcast.net)

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# 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](http://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](mailto: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](http://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

## APL offers programs leading up to 2024 Camden Conference



Dr. Anita Charles

**AUBURN, ME--** The Camden Conference was founded in 1987 as a nonprofit, non-partisan educational organization whose mission is to foster informed discourse on world issues. Each year, they host a conference, with participating librar-

ies offering community events related to their theme. The 2024 Camden Conference, scheduled for February 16-18 is entitled "India: Rising Ambitions, Challenges at Home" and will take place in person, in Camden, Maine.

This year's topic focuses on India, which is closing in on the world's largest population and the second-largest economy. At the same time, it is also becoming a unique democracy, widely involved in global affairs. Programs will bring to light several questions regarding its younger generation and its leadership in the Indo-Pacific region.

The Auburn Public Library is pleased to participate as one of the hosting libraries. Leading up to this year's Conference, the Library will host three events.

### Film Screening & Discussion – Leaving Home: Traditional Marriage in India

Thursday, January 25, 2024 – 3:00-5:00 pm

In person – Androscoggin Community Room

On Thursday, January 25, 2024, the Auburn Public Library will be showing the documentary

"Leaving Home: Traditional Marriage in India"

"Most of India's 1.2 billion people inhabit villages. Teenager Renu and her upper caste family live in Rankhandi, one of these villages (100 miles north of Delhi). LEAVING HOME is their story. Renu wants to become a big-city teacher. Instead, after a traditional marriage Renu must move to her husband's village and hope her daughter's dreams eventually will be fulfilled. Leaving Home is about rural life, castes, weddings, marriage, sex, abuse, family—and change. As the film unfolds, restrictions on the rights of village girls and women may shock the Western viewer. Many in our culture may consider Renu's way of life one step removed from slavery. But all of this is 'normal' in Rankhandi." (from Kanopy.com)

This program will

take place in person, in the Androscoggin Community Room, and registration is required.

### Reading & Discussion – Midnight's Borders: A People's History of Modern India

Thursday, February 8, 2024 – 4:00-5:00 p.m.

In person – Conference Room (ground floor)

Join the Camden Conference and the Auburn Public Library for a book discussion on Suchitra Vijayan's "Midnight's Borders".

"Sharing borders with six countries and spanning a geography that extends from Pakistan to Myanmar, India is the world's largest democracy and second-most populous country. It is also the site of the world's biggest crisis of statelessness, as it strips citizenship from hundreds of thousands of its people – especially those living in disputed border regions. ... In this

stunning work of narrative reportage ... we hear from those whose stories are never told..." (from book jacket)

This discussion will take place in the Conference Room on the ground floor, and registration is required. Books will be available on or after January 3 and can be picked up at the Reference Desk on the 2nd floor. Thanks to funding provided by the Camden Conference, the copy of the book is yours to keep.

To register for any of these events, please visit the Library website -- [www.auburnpubliclibrary.org](http://www.auburnpubliclibrary.org) -- or call the Reference Desk at 207-333-6640, ext. 4.

For more details on the 2024 Camden Conference, including participating speakers, membership, or other pre-Conference events, visit their website at [camdenconference.org](http://camdenconference.org).

## Agatha Christie murder mystery rehearsals at CLT



Rehearsals are well underway for the upcoming Community Little Theatre (CLT) production of the murder mystery *And Then There Were None*, Agatha Christie's dramatic adaptation of her best-selling novel.

A group of ten people, invited under a variety of pretenses, gather at a mansion on Soldier Island, just off the coast of Devon. Before the party gets under way, a recording plays that accuses each guest of mur-

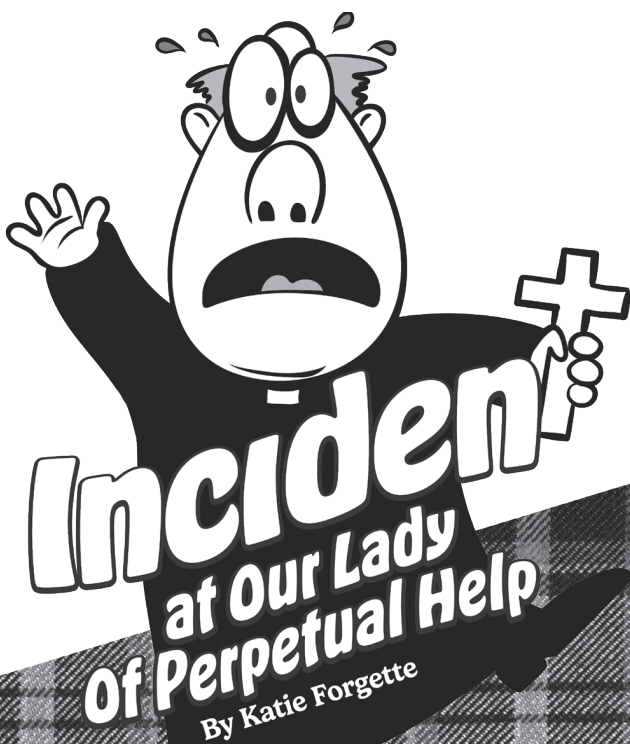
der. Baffled, these strangers realize that they have no idea who their host is, and when the first guest is murdered, they understand that they have been brought to the island by a maniac who intends to dispense his own perverted form of justice.

Seated in the photo from left in a scene from the show are Phil Vampattella as General Mackenzie, Sarah Duncan as Very Claythorne, and Andrea Myles-Hunkin as Emily Brent. Standing are Jacob

Osborne as Phillip Lombard and Archer Ray Rose as Anthony Marston.

Performances will be held at 7:30 p.m. on January 19, 20, 25, and 26, and at 2:00 p.m. on January 21, 27, and 28. Tickets and subscriptions are available online at [www.lact.com/box-office](http://www.lact.com/box-office) or by calling 783-0958. Ticket prices (including all fees) are \$25.00 for adults, \$22.00 for seniors and students, and \$17.00 for children ages 13 and under.

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# 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](http://www.norway-savings.bank).



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# Sen. Rotundo seeks to honor victims of Lewiston shooting



Stanley Larson of Paramedic United; Mark Caron, Lewiston Fire Chief; Sen. Rotundo; David St. Pierre, Lewiston Chief of Police; and Ryan McGee, Lisbon Chief of Police.

Sen. Peggy Rotundo, Rep. Kristen Cloutier and Rep. Michel Lajoie with Lewiston High School Choral Music Teacher Moll Brown (far left) and the Lewiston High School Chamber Singers

Rep. Cloutier, Sen. Rotundo, Rev. Sarah Gillespie and Rep. Lajoie.

**AUGUSTA, ME** — On Wednesday, January 3, Sen. Peggy Rotundo, D-Lewiston, introduced a Joint Resolution to honor the 18 people killed in the mass shooting that took place in Lewiston on October 25. Wednesday was

the first day of the second session of the 131st Legislature.

“I offer this Joint Resolution on behalf of the Legislature, to honor the memories of the eighteen Mainers killed in the Lewiston mass shooting,”

said Sen. Rotundo. “This Resolution represents our shared grief and compassion for our Maine neighbors who with broken hearts and lives must now manage the new absences in their lives. It is my hope that this resolution also represents our com-

mitment to ensure this tragedy is not forgotten, remembering that we truly honor those we have lost by coming together and making a difference in the world.”

Sen. Rotundo also welcomed the Lewiston High School chorus to

sing the National Anthem to begin the session. The opening invocation was given by Reverend Sarah Gillespie of Androscoggin Home Healthcare and Hospice in Lewiston. Many Lewiston First Responders were also on

hand to accept the thanks and best wishes of the Legislature.

A Joint Resolution is an expression of the will of the Legislature to express special recognition or opinion. It does not have the effect of law.

## Events with Androscoggin Valley Soil & Water Conservation

### Landscaping for Biodiversity and Water Quality

February 2nd  
4pm-6pm  
St Mary's Nutrition Center, Lewiston

Join Ecologist Deborah Perkins from First Light Wildlife Habitats for a presentation on native planting and landscaping practices to promote biodiversity and protect water quality. Deb will also cover how to build bird and pollinator habitats, and will present eco-friendly and low maintenance lawn alternatives as well. We ALL live in a water-

shed and its important to recognize that the work that you do in your yards and gardens can have a positive impact on the entire local ecosystem! Join us at St Mary's Nutrition Center for snacks and refreshments and information about sign ups for community garden plots.

This event is promotion for AVSWCD's new program – the Conservation Landscape Certification program-- a free checklist available to help landowners improve their properties for wildlife and pollinator habitat, water and soil quality and over-



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all ecosystem support.

This event is funded by a grant from the Davis Foundation.

### Snow and Ice Science

Tuesday, February 20th  
10am-12pm  
Auburn Public Library

Every winter snow and ice descends across

our Maine landscape but how much do we really know about it? Join AVSWCD Project Director Emma Lorusso for an investigation of snow and ice! How does snow help to keep animals warm during the winter? Have you ever seen a bubble shatter when it pops? How many different ways can ice form? Through games and activities we'll learn about how snow and ice is formed, and why its important! Unlock more mysteries to explore in winter during this special snow program!

### Pruning Forgotten Old Apple Trees

Sunday, February 25th  
9:30am-12pm  
Valley View Farm, Auburn

Old, neglected apple trees are a staple across the Maine landscape. Did you know that you can restore them to their former glory and have local fresh apples in your backyard? Join us for this hands-on workshop to learn how to prune your favorite fruit trees, led by apple tree enthusiast Joe Dembeck. We will cover tools and methods used to prune fruit trees to increase their viability and production. After a brief overview, participants will get to test their skills pruning apple trees.

Basic/Advanced

### Erosion Control Training

Thursday, February 29th  
8am-4pm  
USDA Field Office, Lewiston

The course is of primary interest to contractors but could also be helpful to municipal code enforcement officers, consultants, engineers, public works employees and anyone interested in implementing appropriate erosion control measures during a construction project. Participants will learn principles of erosion and sedimentation, why erosion control practices are important, how to properly install and maintain Erosion & Sedimentation Control ('ESC') Best Management Practices (BMPs) and more.



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# Health Affiliates Maine announces promotion of Michelle Elwell



**Michelle Elwell, Director of Human Resources at Health Affiliates Maine**

AUBURN, ME – Health Affiliates Maine (HAM) is proud to announce the promotion of

Michelle Elwell to Director of Human Resources. Michelle has been a dedicated and influential team member at HAM for five years, first as the HR Manager and then as Assistant Director of Human Resources. She earned her international bachelor's degree in Applied Human Sciences from Concordia University in Montreal. Her breadth of HR experience across the labor, hospitality, and healthcare industries has been an asset to the statewide behavioral health or-

ganization.

Michelle shared, "It's amazing to look back on the growth that we have been able to accomplish in our Human Resources department over the last five years, and through a pandemic. This department was originally a team of two; now it is a team of five. Growing this area of our agency has ultimately enhanced the amount and quality of resources we are able to provide to employees and affiliates. I am so grateful for the dedicated

and hardworking employees on this team. It is because of their professionalism, collaboration and continued contributions that this has been possible."

Through her hard work and strategic vision, Michelle played a pivotal role in fostering a positive and inclusive workplace culture, essential to the success of the agency. Her outstanding contributions led to this recognition and promotion.

"Michelle has been instrumental in securing em-

ployee benefits, advocating for employee needs, and ensuring the agency maintains regulatory compliance with state and federal agencies. The leadership team welcomes her enthusiastically and looks forward to all she will contribute to our team and organization as HAM continues to pursue agency excellence!" said Andrea Conley, Executive Director.

As the newest member of HAM's leadership team, Michelle will oversee and lead all aspects of HR operations. Her extensive

experience, coupled with her deep understanding of HAM's values and goals, makes her the ideal candidate to guide the team through the next phase of growth.

Michelle's promotion reflects Health Affiliates Maine's commitment to nurturing talent from within the organization. The agency looks forward to the positive impact of Michelle's leadership on the HR department and the overall success of the agency.

# Waterville Opera House prepares for 2024 season

WATERVILLE, ME —The Waterville Opera House (WOH) is delighted to announce its 2024 theatrical season. Two amazing musicals and two entertaining plays will reignite the stage of the historic 121-year-old theatre in downtown Waterville.

"I'm excited to bring this amazing selection of theatrical productions to life for our community. From laugh-a-minute comedy, suspense filled mystery, to full-on musical spectacle, there truly is something for everyone to enjoy! Our 2023 season offerings resulted in record-breaking attendance, with over 40% of ticket purchasers being first-time visitors to the Waterville Opera House. Our reputation for top-notch storytelling has created a more robust audience base for our outstanding com-

munity theatre performers to dazzle with their talents. I hope to tempt our theatre patrons back to the Waterville Opera House in record numbers by offering a 2024 Season Pass to catch all four of these crowd-pleasing offerings at a 20% discount," states WOH Executive Director, Michelle Sweet.

Opening the 2024 season is Drinking Habits (Feb 2–11). Accusations, mistaken identities, and romances run wild in this traditional, laugh-out-loud farce. Two nuns at the Sisters of Perpetual Sewing have been secretly making wine to keep the convent's doors open, but Paul and Sally, reporters and former fiancées, are hot on their trail. They go undercover as a nun and priest, but their presence, combined with the addition of a new nun, spurs paranoia throughout the

convent that spies have been sent from Rome to shut them down.

Just in time for spring is Head Over Heels (April 26–May 5). A jukebox musical comedy, Head Over Heels fuses together the world of Shakespeare with the iconic music of The Go-Go's! It follows the escapades of a royal family who set out on a journey to save their beloved kingdom from extinction. A modern-day fairy tale, this musical is a romantic, gender-bending, hilarious good time.

Next, we revisit a popular mystery with Miss Holmes Returns. The sequel to 2020's Miss Holmes, this stand-alone story finds Miss Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Dorothy Watson back on the case! After a string of successes assisting Scotland Yard, a seemingly clear-cut mur-

der case finds itself at the detectives' feet. The powers that be are certain the murderer was a young woman of immigrant heritage, but Holmes and Watson aren't as sure. Can they find the truth before the authorities catch and convict their suspect?

Finally, ringing in the holiday season, we'll have The SpongeBob Musical (November 22–December 1). When the citizens of Bikini Bottom discover that a volcano will soon erupt and destroy their humble home, SpongeBob and his friends must come together to save the fate of their undersea world. With lives hanging in the balance and all hope lost, a most unexpected hero rises, proving that the power of optimism really

can save the world!

Tickets for all four shows will go on sale to Waterville Creates members on Monday, October 23 and to the general public on Monday, Octo-

ber 30. Season Passes are available, giving a 20% discount when purchasing tickets for all four shows.

For more information, visit [operahouse.org](http://operahouse.org) or call 207-873-7000.

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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](http://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](http://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](http://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.

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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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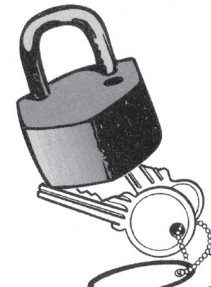
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# Calendar

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](http://MidcoastSymphony.org), call 207-315-1712, or e-mail [info@midcoastsymphony.org](mailto: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](http://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](http://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

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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](mailto:LPLKids@lewistonmaine.gov)



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# Sabattus Rec Running Club holds Jingle Jog

**SABATTUS, ME** - The Sabattus Rec Running Club held its annual Jingle Jog on Saturday, Dec. 16. This year was marked the largest turnout for the event, as more than 35 participants ran, jogged, and walked in the Sabattus Village area to spread some holiday

cheer. Santa and Mrs. Claus, and several versions of "elves" were on hand with festive clothing, lights, and bells.

The group also had a very successful toy drive again this year to support Loaves and Fishes in its efforts to help needy families in the area.

The running group holds free weekly group run/walks year 'round, beginning at 6 p.m. each Wednesday night, unless the weather is bad. FMI, check out the group's Sabattus Rec Club Running Program Facebook page, or email [running@sabattusrec.com](mailto:running@sabattusrec.com)



## Rinck earns silver in International Creative Awards

**LEWISTON, ME** - Rinck Advertising, a full-service integrated marketing and advertising agency, is proud to announce that it has been honored with a Silver Davey Award in the 19th Annual Davey Awards for its redesign of the Maine Cancer Foundation's Tri for a Cure logo.

Each year, over a thousand women gather in South Portland to participate in Tri for a Cure, Maine's only all-women's triathlon, involving swimming, biking, and running. Rinck took on the task of updating the Tri for a Cure logo and delivered a simple, modern aesthetic to the established symbolism of the pink ribbon, creating a more self-contained and stand-alone icon.

The Maine Cancer Foundation's decision to redesign the Tri for a Cure logo was driven by a strategic imperative to modernize its visual identity and enhance versatility across mediums. Recognizing the significance of Tri for a Cure, the Foundation wanted a logo that reflected the enduring spirit of the triathlon with a contemporary aesthetic that could be integrated into diverse applications, including apparel and media placements.

"Over the last 17 years, the Tri for a Cure has meant so much to so many that considering a major logo redesign was intimidating," said Ray Ruby, Executive Director of the Maine Cancer Foundation. "But there is no one we trust more than Rinck Advertising. Through our longstanding partnership, Rinck understands Maine Cancer Foundation's mission and the special place Tri for a Cure holds in many hearts. With this, they created an image that Maine's largest fundraiser deserves, as we ALL continue to TRI and defeat this disease that still impacts too many."

Rinck has partnered with the Maine Cancer Foundation for more than 12 years, fostering a collaborative relationship focused on a range of

projects spanning website development to public relations initiatives. This enduring partnership underscores Rinck's commitment to supporting the Foundation's mission in the fight against cancer. When the opportunity arose, the agency was honored to create a modern, versatile logo for the Tri for a Cure event.

"I'm really proud of the new logo design for Tri for a Cure. I feel it strongly represents the courageous women who compete in the triathlon," said Melissa Berube, Art Director at Rinck Advertising. "It's been well-received by everyone involved in the race. The new merch sold out at the Expo this year and didn't even make it to race day! Winning a Silver Davey Award is the cherry on top of this accomplished work."

The Davey Awards Program is an international competition focused on honoring outstanding creative work from the best small shops globally. The 19th Annual Davey Awards received over 2,000 entries from ad agencies, digital agencies, production firms, in-house creative professionals, graphic designers, design firms, and public relations firms. The program is sanctioned and judged by the Academy of Interactive and Visual Arts, an invitation-only body consisting of top-tier professionals from acclaimed brand and media, interactive, advertising, and marketing firms, including Spotify, Majestyk, Big Spaceship, Nissan, Tinder, Conde Nast, Disney, Microsoft, GE Digital, JP Morgan, PGA Tour, Wired, and more.



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