



# TWIN CITY TIMES

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## Safe Voices plans vigil for Human Trafficking Awareness Month

LEWISTON, ME — January is Human Trafficking Awareness Month, and Safe Voices will be holding a vigil in Lewiston on Monday, Jan. 29 to honor those who have experienced domestic abuse and violence. The vigil is held annually to honor those who have lost their lives or freedom to human trafficking, offer support to those still experiencing this exploitation, and support those who have survived.

The candlelit vigil will start at 2pm

and will be held in Dufresne Plaza at 72 Lisbon Street. It will include speakers, a remembrance ceremony, and all are invited to attend and show their support. While many residents don't know that human trafficking is present in Maine, law enforcement encounter 300-400 cases annually of sex trafficking, which is a form of human trafficking. Domestic abuse and sex trafficking are community issues, representing danger not just to those who live through abuse and ex-

ploitation, but to the community at large. Safe Voices invites friends and neighbors to join together to show that the effort to end human sex trafficking must also be a community one.

For more information about this or other Safe Voices events, please contact Safe Voices at 207-795-6744 or info@safevoices.org.

Safe Voices is the domestic abuse and sex trafficking resource center serving Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford

Counties. Last year, the agency worked with over 2,200 unique survivors in these counties to help them safety plan, access shelter, work with civil and legal advocates, and work through emergent crises as well as the ongoing, long-term effects of domestic abuse and sex trafficking. The agency has been doing this work in Maine since 1977. Those experiencing or impacted by domestic abuse and needing to reach out should call the agency's 24-hour helpline at 1-800-559-2927.

## And Then There Were None opens this weekend at CLT



Seated here from left in a scene from CLT's production of *And Then There Were None* are Phil Vampatella as General Mackenzie, Sarah Duncan as Vera Claythorne, and Andrea Myles-Hunkin as Emily Brent. Standing are Jacob Osborne as Phillip Lombard and Archer Ray Rose as Anthony Marston.

The year is 1939. Europe teeters on the brink of war. Ten strangers are assembled on Soldier Island, an isolated island near the Devon coast. Invited there under a variety of pretenses, they are each mysteriously accused of a terrible crime. 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.

*And Then There Were None*, which opens this weekend at Community Little Theatre (CLT), is Agatha Christie's dramatic adaptation of her best-selling novel. First published in the United Kingdom 1939, the US edition was released in 1940 with the title *And Then There Were None*, taken from the last five words of the song. The book

is the world's best-selling mystery, and with over 100 million copies sold is one of the best-selling books of all time.

This play is one of Agatha Christie's best-known works, says director Danny Gay. "She even touts it as her best piece of writing. It is fun and exciting, and keeps you in suspense until the very end," Gay adds. Gay notes that "one of many reasons I enjoy this show is the sense of intrigue that is generated from a very early point in the story. The story is well crafted, with each line chosen carefully so as not to give away too much. And with this classic trope of throwing a bunch of strangers into an unknown location and having them solve the mystery despite their differences makes this story a lot of fun."

The cast assembled for this show includes CLT veterans and several new

faces. Paul Menezes appears as the manservant Rogers; Roger Philippon plays the role of the retired judge Sir Lawrence Wargrave; Phil Vampatella plays retired General Mackenzie; Sarah Duncan is former governess Vera Claythorne; Tony Roy is ex-police inspector William Blore, and Ray Fletcher is Doctor Armstrong. Newcomers to the CLT stage include Andrea Myles-Hunkin as the self-righteous Emily Brent; Jacob Osborne as the adventurous Captain Phillip Lombard; Elisse Christie as the servant Mrs. Rogers, and Archer Slater plays the roles of Anthony Marston and Fred Narracott.

"This cast had to commit not just to the characters, but to the accents and the time period as well. They have embraced the challenge – and I love the depth it brings to the production," notes CLT veteran actor Roger Philippon.

Gay, who also designed the set and lighting, has been assisted by an experienced crew led by stage manager Sarah Chaloux, producer Sophia Wood, light board operator Rudy Ponder, costumer Jane Mitchell, production assistant Alex Lally, and hair and makeup designer Dana Chabot. Ken Mansur managed properties and Britny Anderson the set décor. Photos for the show were done by DNA Photography.

Gay advises the audience to "expect the unexpected, for Agatha Christie keeps the suspense building throughout the story. There's also a lot of subtlety in the story. Pay close attention and see if you can solve



Elisse Christie as the servant Mrs. Rogers looks down suspiciously at Ray Marston, who plays Dr. Armstrong

the mystery before it is unveiled for you!"

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 are available online at [www.laclt.com/box-office](http://www.laclt.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. Tickets may also be purchased at the door. All performances will be held at CLT on 30 Academy Street in Auburn.



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# Newsmakers, Names & Faces

## Hundreds of MaineCF scholarships available

**PORTLAND & ELLSWORTH, ME** — The Maine Community Foundation (MaineCF) offers more than 700 scholarships available to graduating high school seniors, graduate students and adult learners pursuing myriad areas of study and professional certifications.

In 2023, MaineCF awarded \$3.23 million in scholarships to 1,357 students, including older, non-traditional students who returned to school. MaineCF offers both long-term support for adult learners seeking degrees and short-term scholarships for earning workplace credentials and licenses.

“There is no part of Maine we don’t reach and MaineCF scholarships offer support to students of all backgrounds and from all corners of the



Students at Northern Maine Community College participate in hands-on training in the electrical construction and maintenance program. The Maine Community Foundation (MaineCF) offers hundreds of scholarship opportunities to Maine students, including those entering trades. Photo courtesy Maine Community College System

state,” said Jackie Shannon, MaineCF scholarship manager.

This spring, MaineCF will travel across the state to host workshops during which students and families can get answers to

frequently asked questions and application support.

For more information about MaineCF’s scholarships, to apply for a scholarship or find a workshop near you, visit [www.mainecef.org/scholarships](http://www.mainecef.org/scholarships).

## Maine CASA to hold training on March 11-15, 2024

Interested in advocating for the best interests of a child? The Maine Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program is holding its spring training for volunteer advocates on March 11-15, 2024.

This free, five-day training is designed to prepare attendees for certification as volunteer guardians ad litem (GALs) in Maine child protection cases. Trainees may participate virtually or in person. For those who wish to participate in person, the training will be held in Augusta. Accommodations may be available.

The foundation of a CASA’s work is learning about the case and then advising the court what

the CASA believes is in the child’s best interest. CASAs come from a wide variety of professional and personal backgrounds and are guided throughout the process by CASA program staff. CASAs bring their own unique perspectives to their work as volunteers.

If you are willing to advocate for a child’s best interests, we encourage you to apply to become a CASA volunteer. Those interested in the training must complete an application and, if invited to participate, must also complete criminal and child protection services background checks.

Are you ready to advocate for a child’s best interests? If so, we hope you

can join us for our March 11-15, 2024 training. For more information about becoming a volunteer, please contact Maine CASA at 213-2865 or by e-mail at [casa@courts.maine.gov](mailto:casa@courts.maine.gov).

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## Op Ed: Celebrating National CRNA Week

By Dr. Erin Foley, DNAP, MSNA, CRNA, FAANA Maine Association of Nurse Anesthesiology

Every year across the United States, Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) administer more than 50 million anesthetics to patients. My name is Dr. Erin Foley, I have been practicing in Maine as a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist for the past 14 years, and I am proud to count myself among the more than 61,000 CRNAs in the United States, and 350 CRNAs in Maine, celebrating our profession during National CRNA Week, January 21-27, 2024.

This year’s theme “Trusted Anesthesia Experts,” acknowledges our rich history as part of the nation’s most trusted professions according to Gallup. Nurses have topped Gallup’s Honesty and Ethics list for 20 consecutive years and are ranked in the top 10 of the 2023 U.S. News & World Report’s Best Health Care jobs report. National studies confirm that CRNAs are integral to high-value anesthesia care delivery where quality and safety are emphasized. Our skill and accuracy allow patients to undergo surgery safely, comfortably, and without unnecessary pain.

Each year, CRNAs deliver anesthesia to millions of patients, in traditional hospital surgical suites and obstetrical delivery rooms, critical access hospitals, ambulatory surgical centers, pain management facilities, and in our nation’s military service. Personally, I have practiced in many settings

in the state of Maine. I have worked in Level 1 trauma centers, small critical access hospitals and in nurse anesthesia education, and most recently, caring for the victims of the tragic shooting in Lewiston. These varied experiences allow me to care for patients throughout Maine and to increase access to safe, quality, cost effective anesthesia care throughout the state.

CRNAs are highly educated, highly trained professionals. We complete on average eight to 8.5 years of healthcare and anesthesia education and more than 9,000 hours of clinical training prior to graduating with an advanced degree as an expert in the field of anesthesiology. Graduates of nurse anesthesia educational programs must pass the National Certification Examination given by the National Board of Certification and Recertification for Nurse Anesthetists. And by 2025, all nurse anesthesiology program graduates will receive a doctoral degree.

In rural areas, CRNAs are the predominant providers of anesthesia care, representing more than 80% of the anesthesia providers in rural U.S. counties. CRNAs provide care to patients where they live, forming the backbone of surgical deliveries in these rural communities. We play an essential role for expectant families, allowing first-rate delivery experiences without maternal patients having to travel great distances for obstetrics care.

The American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology (AANA) established

CRNA Week in 2000 to inform the public about anesthesia safety and the benefits of receiving anesthesia care from CRNAs. From saving lives and advancing patient care, to collaborating for transformative wins in healthcare policy, National CRNA Week gives the healthcare community and the greater public alike the opportunity to reflect on the heroic work and unique expertise of CRNAs and nurse anesthesiology residents while recognizing the power and resilience of our community.

As members of one of America’s most trusted professions, CRNAs have always served on the front lines of patient care from the beginning, and we continue to answer the call to help keep patients healthy and safe. Please join me in recognizing Trusted Anesthesia Experts as we celebrate National CRNA Week! Each year the Maine Association of Nurse Anesthesiology (MEANA) members choose a local charity to raise money for during the month of January to help celebrate CRNA Week. This year we are honored to have partnered with Honor Flight Maine. Visit the MEANA website at [www.meana.org](http://www.meana.org) to learn more about our profession and philanthropic endeavors.

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



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# Newsmakers, Names & Faces

## Auburn moves one step closer to new PAL Community Center

**AUBURN, ME** – More than 10 years ago, the Auburn Police Department looked at crime data and found that a significant percentage of crimes committed by youth offenders, crimes against youth, and police calls for service in Auburn took place within an area of less than half a square mile. In an effort to transform these statistics and provide positive, horizon-broadening experiences for at-risk youth, the Auburn Police Department established the Auburn Police Activities League (PAL). In the spring of 2013, the Auburn PAL Center opened at 24 Chestnut Street.

Since its launch, the PAL Center has provided healthy meals and educational and athletic activities for kids after school and during the summer months, not to mention positive interaction with police officers and other trusted adults. The Center currently serves an average of 30 to 50 kids each day, providing snacks and/or meals,

programming, and a safe place to spend time. The city's "Grab & Go" grocery program, which began during the pandemic, is also based at the PAL Center, providing groceries for approximately 250 Auburn households each week.

A successful youth mentorship program also takes place at PAL. It matches community volunteers with at-risk youth to introduce them to meaningful life skills and supportive adults in a welcoming, safe location.

"The Auburn PAL Center has been very successful and has had an overwhelmingly positive impact on the neighborhood," said City Manager Phil Crowell. "But the need for an enhanced, expanded facility has become apparent."

To that end, city leaders and the PAL Board of Directors have secured most of the funding to build an incredible new PAL Community Center. Costs for the new Center are estimated at around \$9 million. The city has



allocated \$3 million from its share of the American Rescue Plan Act toward the project, which has been matched by a federal spending plan secured by U.S. Sen. Susan Collins.

The previous city council approved \$1.5 million in bonds, and also allocated the final \$1.5 million from the city's undesignated fund balance. The PAL Board of Directors hopes to partner with local sponsors to raise additional funding for equipment, furniture, supplies and programming.

The PAL Commu-

nity Center proposal includes the demolition of the existing PAL Center – which is less than 3,000 sq. ft. – and replace it with a 14,651 sq. ft. single-story facility with a basketball court, teen room, multipurpose, meeting, and storage rooms, bathrooms and showers, and a commercial kitchen.

Planned site work will also include utility improvements, transportation, and pedestrian improvements along Chestnut Street (which will be closed to traffic), a playground, parking lot, and community gardens. At

a meeting of the Auburn Planning Board on Tuesday evening, the plans to replace the existing PAL Center were unanimously approved.

"This new PAL Center will be a transformative place for our community, increasing our positive impact on kids and families," added Crowell. "This will be a true community center, with something for everyone at every age."

With groundbreaking planned for May of this year, PAL programming will temporarily relocate to the Auburn

Recreation Department in April. The city hopes to open the new Auburn PAL Community Center in August 2025.

"None of this would be possible without the support and generosity of Senator Susan Collins and our previous city council," said Crowell. "We are grateful that they recognize the vital outreach and impact of Auburn PAL."

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## Let's zoom this winter! L/A Senior College offers films, food and more

**AUBURN, ME** -- Most of the agenda for winter classes at Lewiston/Auburn Senior college 2024 will be on zoom so that folks can tune in whatever the weather and enjoy a variety of topics with no worries about flu or falls. Larry Canepa is back with food from several styles, we'll have discussions about Ted Talks, travel, history, and even family dynamics.

Below is a brief list of classes available. Take note that the film fest will also be offered in person at the Auburn Public Library. The Art Party will be at Schooner estates as well. For all the rest you are welcome to stay in your pajamas.

Membership is \$25 per person for one year; one-day classes are free;

longer classes are \$25. For detailed information please check our website: [lase-niorcollege.org](http://lase-niorcollege.org)

Ted Talk Discussions - Bill Frayer

Foreign Film Fest - free at the Auburn Public Library or on a zoom option

Book Discussion - Home With God by Neil Donald Walsh - Lou Giard

In-laws and Out-laws: Making it Work - Elcha Buckman

Research Questions and Strategies in developing a genealogical plan - Lin Wright

Viva Mexico - Larry Canepa

The Tour de Mont Blanc - Eva Fralick

Weekly Art Class at Schooner with Judy Hierstein - also available on Zoom

Trivial Pursuit - Mary

Jane Beardsley  
Food Glorious Food - Larry Canepa

Legendary Foods of Japan - Larry Canepa

Pictionary - Mary Jane Beardsley

Six Cameras - history through pictures of Androscoggin County 1850-1900 - Lin Wright

English Gardens from Cozy to Colossal - Judy Hierstein

Is this the end of "The American Century?" - Mark Minton

Classes start in early February and continue through March. You might also enjoy the clubs, so be sure to check them out. Are you ready to sign up? See <https://lewiston-auburn-senior-college.coursestorm.com/>

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# Seniors Not Acting Their Age

## Joys of the First Day of Skiing



Skiers hold a snowplow on Prospect Farm Trails



A classic skier glides along on Boggy Brook Trail



The Prospect Farm Wildcat River Trail resembled a Christmas card scene

By Ron Chase

I didn't learn to Nordic ski until I was in my forties. Busy raising a family, there was insufficient time to learn a new sport until my sons grew older.

Thirty years later, I'm no more than a mediocre classic skier. I took a couple of skate skiing lessons in the early 2000s, but in the subsequent eight years my wife, Nancy, and I traveled in warm climates during the winter. I never progressed beyond learning to stay upright, some of the time. Shortly after our winter travels ended, I had my first knee surgery and decided to limit myself to classic skiing. Still, I love

Nordic skiing.

For many years, mountain hiking was my primary winter sport and Nordic skiing a secondary activity. Old age has raised its ugly head. Mountain hiking now puts more stress on my arthritic joints than any other outdoor activity. Thus, Nordic skiing has become my favorite winter sport. I've found the classic skiing kick and glide technique to be almost therapeutic for my hips and knees.

When biking and kayaking wind down in the fall and I've completed a few sometimes physically uncomfortable mountain hikes, I begin contemplating Nordic

skiing. Normally, Rangeley Lakes Trails Center in Dallas Plantation and Jackson Ski Touring in Jackson, New Hampshire, are the first Nordic ski areas to open within striking distance from my home in Topsham for a day-trip. Beginning in mid-November, I started monitoring their websites for positive news.

An early December snowstorm resulted in both ski areas beginning the trail grooming process. Eager to start the ski season, I called them to determine progress. Opening day for the Rangeley Trails was a week away. Fortunately, the high elevation Prospect Farm Trails at

Jackson Ski Touring were ready. I mounted the cargo carrier on the roof rack, gathered skis, boots, and poles and was on my way to New Hampshire.

Jackson Ski Touring has over 100 kilometers of trails. During peak season, there are numerous skiing options. However, at the beginning and end of winter, the Prospect Farm Trails, one thousand feet higher than the trails in Jackson, are often the best or only skiing available. That's no sacrifice for me; I'm a huge fan of the Prospect Farm Trails.

After purchasing a pass at the lodge in Jackson, I drove about five miles up Carter Notch Road to the Prospect Farm Trailhead. A relatively small parking area is a concern, but I was in luck, two parking spots were still available.

The weather was cool, breezy, and sunny when I began skiing in the winter wonderland on Wildcat River Trail. Snow clinging from trees in a mixed hardwood and conifer forest resembled a Christmas card scene. A woman was finishing her ski as I departed. The friendly skier reassured me the trail conditions were excellent. The first segment of Wildcat River Trail is a great warm up as

it begins with a downhill followed by a short climb to Boggy Brook Trail.

I had acquired my ski legs when turning right onto Boggy Brook Trail. Climbing gradually, I enjoyed exceptional views of the mountains in the east. Shortly after crossing Wildcat Brook, two skate skiers gracefully glided past. As I progressed, several returning skiers were met, all smiling.

Angling right, I began a gradual decline to a bridge. The aesthetic benefits of double-poling down a lengthy gradient are immeasurable; I feel young again.

Just beyond the bridge, I stopped to chat with Ken. I don't know his last name but he's loquacious, an excellent skier, and also an old man. We commiserated about old age and skied on. After a steep climb to the highpoint, I lingered to enjoy the view. A kayaking friend, Steve Fortin, arrived shortly after. A youngster in his sixties, we extolled the virtues of skiing and discussed Social Security benefits.

The predominantly downhill ski back to Wildcat River Trail is exceptional. Follow-

ing a short steep ascent on Wildcat River Trail, I began a rollicking ski on the elevated rolling Quail Trail. Approaching the top, I enjoyed partial views of Mount Washington. The exhilarating ski back to the parking area is almost all downhill. On the drive home, I experienced the tired satisfaction that few other activities provide.

My book, *Maine Al Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine* narrates three exceptional Maine ski trips.

*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 [ronchase-outdoors@comcast.net](mailto:ronchase-outdoors@comcast.net)*



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# Sen. King pushes for historical renovations, affordable housing

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Angus King (I-ME) is joining bipartisan legislation to expand affordable housing availability in Maine through redevelopment incentives of historic buildings. The Historic Tax Credit Growth & Opportunity (HTC-GO) Act would create a new 30 percent tax credit for qualified rehabilitation projects that cost less than \$3.75 million while maintaining the existing 20 percent credit. The bill lowers the threshold cost a project must meet to be eligible, bringing the HTC in line with other credits such as the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit.

The legislation further expands the category of eligible renovation projects by decreasing the

rehabilitation investment threshold from 100 percent to 50 percent of the project's expenses. Rehabilitation expenses would only have to exceed half of the project's cost to qualify for the credit, meaning, for example, that a project could include building an addition to an historic building as well as renovating the original structure. It also amends rules for tax-exempt entities – such as health care centers, arts organizations, community services, and workforce training providers – to allow better access to the credit.

“Communities across America are facing a serious affordable housing crisis, while there are large, historical structures nationwide that could be renovated to fight this problem,” said

Senator King. “The Historic Tax Credit Growth & Opportunity (HTC-GO) Act is a commonsense way to expand affordable housing availability by providing tax credits to people rehabilitating and modernizing existing historical structures. There’s no one easy solution to our housing affordability problems, but this bipartisan effort is an important step forward.”

“From Biddeford to Bangor, communities across Maine have benefited from the historic rehabilitation tax credit, whether through housing and job creation, cultural and economic revitalization, or all of the above,” said Tara Kelly, Executive Director of Maine Preservation. “Our 2020 economic impact report found that in the

prior ten-year period alone, these projects generated \$525 million of construction investment; rehabilitated 3.6 million square feet of commercial and residential space; created or preserved 1,911 housing units, of which nearly 1,300 were affordable; and generated between 200-700 full-time-equivalent jobs annually. Moreover, nearly 700 new full-time, year-round jobs were created through building maintenance and occupancy, resulting in \$13 million of income per year for families living in these communities.”

Elimination of the basis adjustment will increase the value of the credit and simplify transaction structures. Under current tax law, a building

owner must subtract the amount of credits received from a building's basis (the amount a property is worth for tax purposes). Eliminating this requirement will bring more value to all HTC projects by increasing the basis of rehabilitated historic buildings for building owners, providing additional depreciation and other tax benefits, and attracting more capital from tax credit investors.

U.S. Senators Susan Collins (R-ME), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Bill Cassidy, M.D. (R-LA), Maria Cantwell (D-WA), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-MS), Roger Wicker (R-MS), Bob Casey (D-PA), Peter Welch (D-VT), Jerry Moran (R-KS), and Sherrod Brown (D-OH)

are also cosponsors on this legislation.

Senator King has long been committed to ensuring Maine people across the state can access safe and affordable housing. He recently introduced the bipartisan Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act to create nearly two million new affordable homes across the country – including thousands in Maine. He also worked with his Republican colleagues to improve affordability of rural homes and farms through the Access to Credit for our Rural Economy (ACRE) Act of 2023. Additionally, he has worked to expand affordable workforce housing on Mount Desert Island to support the economic development surrounding Acadia National Park.

# Get ready for adventure this winter at Pine Tree Camp

ROME, ME - Pine Tree Camp's unique Adventure Day Pass provides an accessible way for Maine people with disabilities and their families to be engaged and active outdoors this winter through barrier-free day use of camp's 285-acre fully accessible campus on North Pond.

“Whether it’s snowshoeing for the first time or experiencing the thrill of ice fishing, keeping people connected is the very essence of what we do,” said Pine Tree Camp Director, Dawn Willard-Robinson. “Adventure Day Pass is a way to bring our community together outdoors to experience the freedom of trying something new this



Pine Tree Camp Counsellors Kiara Warren from Waterville and Tina Hall from Freedom show Gracie Harper from Sangerville how to slide. Pine Tree Camp Adventure Day Pass brings Maine people with disabilities and their families together for winter day use of camp's 285-acre fully accessible campus on the shores of North Pond in Rome. Photo courtesy of Pine Tree Camp.

winter. It's a way for families to spend time together outdoors, have fun and meet new friends.”

Pine Tree Camp Adventure Day Pass will be offered four times this winter. Pre-registration is

required and full financial assistance is available.

- Activities include:
- New: Approach adaptive cross country skis
  - Snowshoeing
  - Ice fishing
  - Outdoor fire stations with s'mores
  - Indoor crafts
  - Warming hut
  - Plenty of surprises

“Our new adaptive Approach skis work with any boot the person is wearing and offer an exciting new way to explore our trails,” continued Dawn. “We’re outfitted with kids and adult size skis and can’t wait for people to come try them out.”

What: Pine Tree Camp Adventure Day Pass  
When: Saturday, January 20  
Saturday, February 17  
Saturday, March 23  
Saturday, April 20  
10:00am – 4:00pm

Where: Pine Tree Camp, 114 Pine Tree Camp Road, Rome, Maine  
How: Space is limited and pre-registration is required. Full financial assistance available. Register at this link: <https://pinetreesociety.org/camp-minder-info/>

# Mainly Character opens 2024 scholarship applications

Mainly Character is now accepting applications for scholarships for Maine High School seniors graduating in 2024 and attending post-secondary schools. The goal is to award 12

scholarships at \$5000 each in 2024.

Mainly Character awards scholarships to seniors who demonstrate courage, integrity, responsibility, and concern for

others. We focus solely on these 4 areas of character when determining awardees.

Businesses and organizations throughout Maine have generous-

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# Arts & Entertainment

## Great Falls Comedy Club heats up the laughs this week

AUBURN, ME – Make laughter a priority this week at Great Falls Comedy Club on January 20, with local, funny, on-the-spot improv comedy.

Great Falls Comedy Club in-house improv team of Greg Lambert, Nate White, Amanda Kinsey, Julie Poulin, and Leonard Kimble will be taking your suggestions and making it up as they go for an evening of hilarious back-and-forth.

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

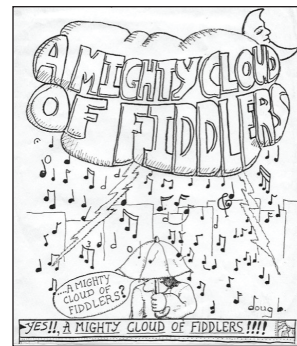


der the red awning. For more information contact the club at [info@greatfallscomedyclub.com](mailto:info@greatfallscomedyclub.com) or by phone at 207-200-5366.

## Fiddlers to perform at fundraiser for Habitat for Humanity

LEWISTON, ME -- A benefit contradance for Habitat for Humanity is scheduled for Friday, January 26th at 7:30 PM at Trinity Commons in Lewiston. Music will be provided by the Mighty Cloud of Fiddlers with John McIntire teaching and calling accessible dances.

The Mighty Cloud of Fiddlers is a gathering of professional and amateur fiddlers from around Maine who play for the joy of making music together, for dancing, and for raising money for others in need. "We first gathered," says founding member Greg Boardman, "in Portland back in 1986,



to fundraise for Habitat for Humanity. We had about thirty of us musicians, and with the dancers we all agreed that it created a very special energy that bears repeating!" Boardman has put out the call and urges any fiddler who "catches wind of it" to come and join the fun.

John McIntire is one of Maine's favorite contradance callers, having practiced for several decades. John found his calling, as it were, back in the early 90s. Now he calls New England contra, square, and circle dances at venues around Maine. His crisp, steady voice and clear teaching style make every dance a pleasure for novice and expert alike.

Admission to the dance is \$10, with larger donations gladly accepted. Children and youth under 17 are admitted for free. Trinity Commons is located at 247 Bates Street in Lewiston. For more information call 344-3106.

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## Lewiston-Auburn Area Response Fund applications now open

PORTLAND & ELLSWORTH — The Maine Community Foundation's (MaineCF) Lewiston-Auburn Area Response Fund is now accepting applications from victims and families impacted by the tragic Oct. 25, 2023, shootings in Lewiston.

There are three tiers of fund eligibility: heirs of victims killed, injured victims and those present during the shootings

who experienced trauma. The applications and instructions are available at MaineCF's website. The deadline to submit applications is 5 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 30.

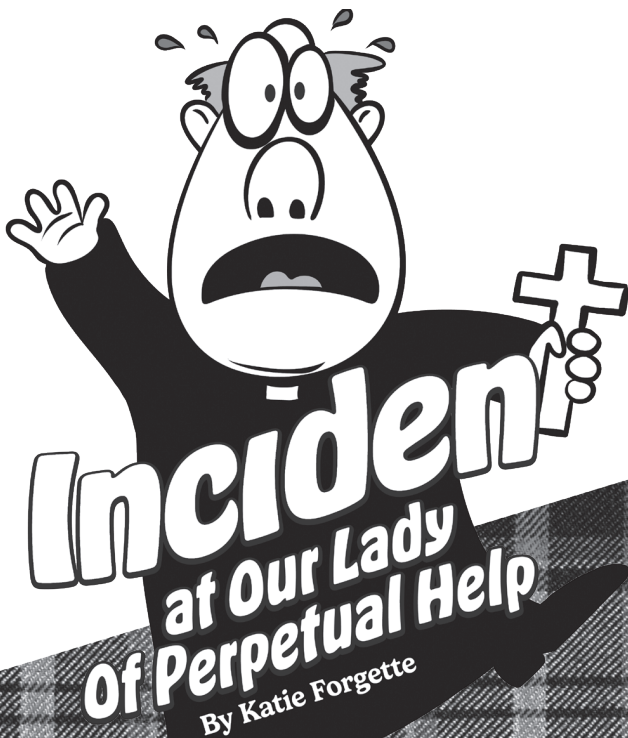
The Broad Recovery Efforts & Organizations Fund of the Lewiston-Auburn Area Response Fund will open for applications in early February. There will be more information in the coming weeks about

the steering committee and how nonprofit organizations supporting the broader recovery effort can apply for those funds.

MaineCF will continue to accept contributions to the Victims & Families Fund and the Broad Recovery Efforts & Organizations Fund of the Lewiston-Auburn Area Response Fund until Tuesday, Feb 20. Visit [www.maine.cf.org/donate](http://www.maine.cf.org/donate) to contribute.

For more information, please contact [lewis-ton@mainecf.org](mailto:lewis-ton@mainecf.org).

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# Red Cross: Blood shortage may delay medical procedures

**PORTLAND, ME** — The American Red Cross is experiencing an emergency blood shortage as the nation faces the lowest number of people giving blood in 20 years. The Red Cross blood supply has fallen to critically low levels across the country, and blood and platelet donors are urged to make a donation appointment to help alleviate the shortage and help ensure lifesaving medical procedures are not put on hold.

Over the last 20 years, the number of people donating blood to the Red Cross has fallen by about 40%. When fewer people donate blood, even small disruptions to blood donations — such as the

nearly 7,000-unit shortfall in blood donations the Red Cross experienced between Christmas and New Year's Day alone — can have a huge impact on the availability of blood products and dramatic consequences for those in need of emergency blood transfusion. Blood products are currently going to hospitals faster than blood donations are coming in, and in recent weeks, the Red Cross has had to limit distributions of type O blood products — among the most transfused blood types — to hospitals.

“Small changes in blood donor turnout can have a huge impact on the availability of blood products and dramatic conse-

quences for those in need of an emergency blood transfusion,” said Dr. Eric Gehrie, executive physician director for the Red Cross. “More challenges may lie ahead as the potential for severe winter weather and seasonal illness may compound the dire blood supply situation. Donors of all types — especially those with type O blood and those giving platelets — are urged to give now.”

Don't wait — to make an appointment, download the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visit [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

The Red Cross and the National Football League (NFL) are partner-

ing this January, during National Blood Donor Month, to urge individuals to give blood or platelets and help tackle the emergency blood shortage. Those who come to give blood, platelets or plasma in January will automatically be entered for a chance to win a trip for two to Super Bowl LVIII in Las Vegas. For details, visit [RedCrossBlood.org/SuperBowl](http://RedCrossBlood.org/SuperBowl).

Upcoming blood donation opportunities Jan. 8-31:

- Androscoggin  
Auburn  
1/27/2024: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Fairview Elementary School, 397 Minot Ave.
- Wales  
1/31/2024: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., Oak Hill HS, 56

- School Rd  
Cumberland  
Brunswick  
1/19/2024: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., American Legion Post 20, 1 Columbus Drive
- 1/24/2024: 12 p.m. - 5 p.m., Elks Lodge, 179 Park Row
- 1/30/2024: 12 p.m. - 5 p.m., Brunswick Hotel and Tavern, 4 Noble St
- Cape Elizabeth  
1/25/2024: 12 p.m. - 5 p.m., Saint Bartholomew Church, 8 Two Lights Rd
- Freeport  
1/30/2024: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Hilton Garden Inn Freeport, 5 Park Street
- Harpswell  
1/27/2024: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Elijah Kellogg

- Church, 917 Harpswell Neck Road
- Portland  
1/31/2024: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Canopy Hotel, 9 Center St
- Scarborough  
1/30/2024: 12 p.m. - 5 p.m., Saint Maximilian Church, 150 Black Point Rd
- South Portland  
1/31/2024: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Eastpoint Christian Church, 345 Clarks Pond Pkwy
- Westbrook  
1/26/2024: 12 p.m. - 5 p.m., Westbrook Community Center, 426 Bridge Street
- Yarmouth  
1/26/2024: 12 p.m. - 5 p.m., American Legion Post 91, 196 Main St

# Scholarships open for adults pursuing certificates, credentials

**PORTLAND & ELLSWORTH** — Adults considering career changes or advancement in their field could be eligible for scholarships from the Maine Community Foundation (MaineCF).

Short-term scholarships are available for adult learners pursuing career changes or earning

workplace credentials for programs including Certified Nursing Assistant, phlebotomy, coding, cosmetology, and commercial drivers' licenses. Scholarship amounts are determined based on individual need up to \$1,500.

“These short-term awards are a great way for adults who are pur-



suing career changes or want to earn credentials in their workplace,” said Jackie Shannon, MaineCF scholarship manager. “We

encourage adult learners to take advantage of these scholarships.”

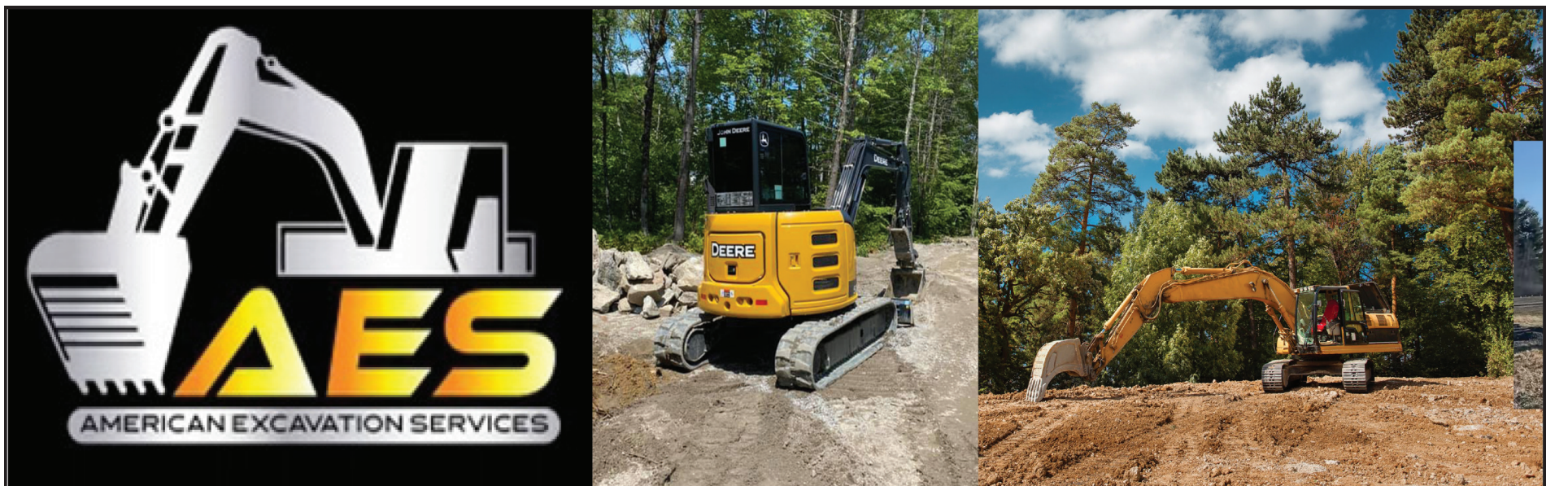
Scholarships are available to adult learners

including including new Mainers, students either returning to educational programs or enrolling for the first time, and those who are residents of the state corrections facilities.

Applicants are eligible for a short-term award if the program lasts less than a full semester and will earn a certificate or

credential at the end of the program, not a degree. Short-term scholarship applications are accepted on a rolling basis and considered as they are received. Decisions are typically made within three weeks of submission.

Visit [www.maine.cf.org/scholarships](http://www.maine.cf.org/scholarships) for more information and to apply.



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# Trinity Jubilee Center to expand community service facility

**LEWISTON, ME** – The Trinity Jubilee Center in Lewiston, Maine has served the local community since 1991 where thousands of Mainers come to receive shelter, food, employment services and refugee integration services. After the Covid pandemic exacerbated the needs of many in Maine that lack food security and housing, the need for a larger space became apparent in order to continue the life changing work their volunteers provided on a weekly basis. “We serve over 1,000 Mainers every week in the basement of the Trinity Episcopal Church,” said Erin Reed, executive director of the Trinity Jubilee Center. “Our communities deserve spaces that provide a dignified way of empowering each other through

life’s challenges. We hope to solve that problem by creating a new facility for the Lewiston-Auburn community.”

The new, expanded facility will include twice the square footage of the current space at 53 Bruce Street.

It will provide a shower and laundry for shelter services, more storage and space for the soup kitchen and food pantry, meeting rooms for mental health services and additional workstations where community members can receive one-on-one help with employment resources such as resume writing and job applications. The Bangor Savings Bank Foundation recently granted the Trinity Jubilee Center \$25,000 (\$12,500 over two years) to support the



**Pictured left to right: Steven Stout, Central Maine Regional Market Manager, Bangor Savings Bank; Erin Reed, Executive Director, Trinity Jubilee Center; Donny Hinkley, Commercial Relationship Manager, Bangor Savings Bank.**

construction of the new facility.

The groundbreaking is scheduled for this summer with a target opening in the summer of 2025. The architect is designed by Platz Associates and the

construction will be completed by Hebert Construction, both local partners. Those interested in learning more about the Trinity Jubilee Center and can visit <https://www.trinityjubileecenter.org/>



**Preliminary rendering of the Trinity Jubilee Center's new office space with guests receiving help with employment-related needs.**



**Preliminary rendering of the Trinity Jubilee Center's new soup kitchen serving counter with guests lined up to receive meals.**

# Cloutier introduces bill to expand physician assistant workforce

**AUGUSTA, ME** – Rep. Kristen Cloutier, D-Lewiston, introduced legislation Tuesday that would add Maine to the Compact for Licensing Physician Assistants (PAs), which would allow licensed PAs to practice in member states without hav-

ing to obtain a new license for each state.

“By joining the compact, we are welcoming qualified PAs to move to Maine and more easily practice here,” said Cloutier. “Our state’s health care workforce crisis is currently worsening. I brought

LD 2043 forward because I recognize the potential that Maine has in being one of the first seven states to join, which would give us the opportunity to build systems and structures that effectively meet our unique needs as a rural state and better serve our communi-

ties.”

Similar interstate compact legislation has been passed in Delaware, Utah and Wisconsin, and is pending in Washington, Nebraska, Michigan, Ohio, New York, Vermont and New Hampshire. Once seven states have enacted this

legislation, the compact will take effect, allowing PAs a path forward to practice more independently.

The Legislature’s Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services will hold a work session on the bill in the

coming weeks.

Cloutier is the Assistant House Majority Leader and is currently serving her third consecutive term in the Maine House of Representatives. She represents House District 94, which includes part of Lewiston, her hometown.

# Lewiston Adult Education wins EMDC Community Service Award

**LEWISTON, ME** – Eastern Maine Development Corporation awarded Lewiston Adult Education its 2023 Community Partner award during its annual meeting in December.

Patti Saarinen, direc-

tor of Workforce Services for EMDC, presented Lewiston Adult Education with the award recognizing a person or organization that has made an impact in the community.

“Not only do they

provide excellent academic and occupational skills training, but they were one of the first adult education programs to embrace workforce services. It was in collaboration with them that we developed

our first cohort training to meet the needs of five construction companies. With their input and expertise, we created a model for employer-driven training that we’re still using today offering students opportunities in fields such as culinary, office skills and health care,” Saarinen said.

Lewiston Adult Education was also a leader in designing programs and work readiness training for new Mainers, she said. One example was the Healthcare Pathways program in which students begin in a foundations class learning the terminology related to health care professions before learning specific job



**Lewiston Adult Education staff with Patti Saarinen (middle) of Eastern Maine Development Corporation celebrate receiving the Community Service award on Dec. 7. Pictured in the front row are Director Jen Tiner and Assistant Director Razell Ward. Josee Castonguay, Fatma Saad, and Gerry Gibson of Lewiston Adult Education stand in the second row.**

skills. The model helped the state’s 14 apprentice-Lewiston receive one of See EMDC, next page



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# Elton & Billy Joel tribute coming to Franco Center Jan. 26

**LEWISTON, ME—**Piano Men: The Music of Elton and Billy tribute band will perform at 7 p.m. Friday, Jan. 26, at the Franco Center. The concert is a tribute to the amazing songs of Billy Joel and Elton John. Rarely have these songs been heard performed live in this way as Elton and Billy have only on a few occasions performed with orchestras, according to the band.

Members of the band include Joe Boucher (piano, lead vocals), Christopher Eastburn (bass guitar, vocals), Gary Backstrom (guitar, vocals), Steve Hodgkin (drums), Matt Kennedy (saxophone), and Nick Pires (audio engineer). At times the band is joined by musicians playing violins, viola, and cello; and a female vocalist.

Joseph Boucher grew up in the quaint seaside village of Biddeford, Maine. He is a singer and songwriter who has fronted the power pop band Frotus Caper. They recorded and released four critically acclaimed albums. He has worked as a studio session musician, playing piano and arranging pop, rock and folk songs for

many artists.

Boucher is an on-air host and producer at Maine Public Classical Radio. For 16 seasons he was the concert manager for The Portland Symphony Orchestra. Prior to that, he spent seven years touring internationally as stage manager. For more information visit [www.pianomenmusic.com](http://www.pianomenmusic.com)

Chris Eastburn is an arranger, orchestrator and award-winning composer. His music has been performed to acclaim from New York's Carnegie Hall to the Getty Center in Los Angeles. Commissions include a ballet score for Island Moving Co. called "Newport Stories," a string orchestra and chorus score for the theatre production "Moses Brown and the Voyage of the Slave Ship Sally" and a score for Caitlin Corbett Dance Co. called "Tom's Wealth."

Eastburn's string quartet/vocal quartet score "Consent to Gravity" choreographed by Daniel McCusker was hailed as "one of the most successful new musical works for dance I've heard in ages" by Debra Cash, dance critic for NPR's Here and Now. His



**Joe Boucher, pianist and vocalist for Piano Men: The Music of Elton and Billy, will be performing at the Franco Center with the tribute band at 7 p.m. Friday, Jan. 26. Tickets available at 207-689-2000 or [www.francocenter.org/shows](http://www.francocenter.org/shows). The Franco Center is at 46 Cedar Street, Lewiston. Submitted photo.**

arrangement and orchestration of "Jazzy Old St. Nick, a hip swing version of a Christmas favorite" is now available from the Hal Leonard choral music catalog. Learn more about his music at [www.eastburnmusic.com](http://www.eastburnmusic.com)

Gary Backstrom has been playing for the last 20 years touring the country with his award-winning jam band Jiggle the Handle and as the Gary Backstrom Band. He has opened for such acts as Little Feat, Spin Doctors, Rat Dog, The Samples, South Side John-

ny, The Allman Brothers, Warren Haynes, and Blues Traveler. He has shared the stage with Dereck Trucks, AOD, and members of Todd Rundgren's Band. Check out more details at [www.garybackstrom.com](http://www.garybackstrom.com)

Steve Hodgkin had an active schedule as a working drummer in a variety of rock bands before making a switch to singer/songwriter in 2000 when he fronted Portland-based original rock band The Reedlings. Hodgkin returned to the drums in 2004 to perform and record with Joe Bouch-

er in Frotus Caper and has been working with Boucher ever since.

Nick Pires was an active member of both the jazz and concert bands in high school while also gigging frequently in the local music scene. After graduating, Pires put his musical aspirations aside to attend Full Sail University in pursuit of a career as a live sound engineer. Despite not playing for several years, he continued to maintain an interest in music and networking with musicians through his work in concert production and eventually found his way back to the drums.

Matt Kennedy spent the last 30-plus years as a professional saxophonist starting in his hometown of Denver, Colorado and later as a fixture in the blues and roots scenes of Portland, Oregon, Vermont, New Hampshire, Baltimore, MD, and Washington DC before settling in Portland, Maine. Over the years, he has backed a wide range of artists, including Terry Adams (NRBQ), Daniel Johnston, John Popper (Blues Traveler), Luther "Guitar Junior" Johnson, and Peter

Tork (The Monkees). He is currently an active freelance saxophonist in Portland, Maine and is a member of the soul/funk band Mamas Boomshack ([www.mamasboomshack.com](http://www.mamasboomshack.com)).

Piano Men music videos can be viewed at <https://www.theirsongs.com/piano-men>

Doors and cash bar open at 6 p.m. Concert starts at 7 p.m. Tickets can be purchased online at [www.francocenter.org/shows](http://www.francocenter.org/shows) or by phone at 207-689-2000. Tickets can also be purchased in person at our box office between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Tickets are \$30 in advance and \$35 at the door day of show.

Season Underwriter is Maple Way Dental Care; Media Sponsors are Sun Journal, Turner Publishing, Uncle Andy's, Bennett Radio Group. Show sponsors are Champoux Insurance and Maine Community Bank.

The Franco Center is at 46 Cedar St., Lewiston. Parking is available in the mill lot. The building is handicap accessible on the Lincoln St. Alley side.

## EMDC

*Continued from previous page*  
ship grants.

"As the WIOA Service Provider in central/western Maine, EMDC is very appreciative of Lewiston Adult Education's assistance with CASAS assessments, referrals, collaboration on mutual

customer outcomes, and willingness to explore new opportunities. We are grateful to have such a wonderful group of people to work with and are proud to present the whole team with our Community Partner of the Year award," Saarinen said.

EMDC is a nonprofit organization that helps

to develop public-private partnerships to encourage economic growth. Lewiston Adult Education provides academic programs from basic skills to preparing for college, digital skill building and workforce training. Programs are open to all adults from Lewiston and the surrounding area.

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# \$10M in literacy grants for Maine schools

**AUGUSTA, ME—** The Mills Administration announced a \$10 million literacy grant opportunity for schools to support the development, expansion, and enhancement of evidence-based core literacy instruction and targeted interventions for Maine students. These literacy grants through the Maine Department of Education (DOE) are intended to build the capacity of year-long, core literacy instruction for all students and support core literacy instructional components, including phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Grant funds can be used by schools to compensate educators for participating in evidence-based literacy professional learning opportunities and internal instruction and program review processes, for professional learning opportunities on evidence-based literacy practices, to train instructional coaches, and to purchase evidence-based literacy materials.

“Literacy is a foundational skill that enables students to thrive in school, work, life, and as citizens in our democracy. This investment in literacy will help schools and educators provide all

students in Maine with evidence-based core literacy instruction and interventions. It’s an investment in the future of our state,” said Maine Education Commissioner Pender Makin.

The grants were developed following the work by a Maine DOE workgroup of literacy specialists to analyze early literacy programs in Maine to understand better which assessment measures, programs, resources, evidence-based practices, and educator supports have yielded strong student growth. The Maine DOE workgroup created recommendations, which were provided to the Maine Legislature in December 2022. This \$10 million grant initiative was designed out of LD 1526, which was passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor, to increase student reading proficiency in Maine.

“The literacy grant the DOE is providing is giving schools the opportunity to participate in the much needed and requested professional development around the science of reading. These funds will allow us to provide vital training in this area and the opportunity to purchase classroom materials

for literacy instruction. In RSU14, this means we can train more staff than we budgeted for using local funds. We are grateful to have this opportunity to support our staff,” said Christine Hesler, Director of Curriculum for RSU14.

“The Maine DOE literacy grant is a great opportunity for many districts to reach their goal of all students becoming readers. Through providing professional development, purchasing additional resources and materials that are focused on research-based literacy strategies, this goal is attainable. These funds will supplement the financial investment districts already commit to literacy instruction,” said Deb McIntyre, Executive Director of the Maine Curriculum Leaders Association.

The grants also build off extensive efforts by the Mills Administration to strengthen child literacy skills in Maine, including investing \$10 million through the Governor’s Maine Jobs and Recovery Plan to create and expand pre-k programs across Maine. In 2022, the Maine DOE released, Literacy for ME 2.0, a revamped state literacy plan grounded in research-based literacy practices and organized around key components

central to building comprehensive literacy programs.

Recognizing the vital importance of foundational literacy development and in response to school system inquiries related to early literacy program development, the Maine DOE and a team of Maine educators and educational partners, developed guidance to support School Administrative Units in designing and implementing systematic and explicit early literacy instruction. This guidance is designed as a supportive tool for early elementary educators, administrators, and literacy leadership teams to reflect on current practices and to potentially adjust educational design to support high-quality and evidence-based early literacy learning for all PreK to Grade 3 students. The Maine DOE also provides interdisciplinary instructional programming and resources around literacy for pre-K, kindergarten, and first grade.

The Maine DOE has obtained a preschool development grant through the federal government to support professional learning in birth through grade three literacy practices grounded in science and the Department is working to secure access to on-demand literacy modules that

cover a wide variety of literacy content grounded in science for elementary educators, including content related to brain development, instructional practices connected to the essential components of reading and writing, dyslexia, and multilingual learners.

Last month, the Mills administration expanded the state’s partnership with Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library, with 4,500 eligible Maine children currently receiving free, high-quality, age-appropriate books through the program. The Maine DOE recently announced a partnership with I’m Your Neighbor Books to provide Welcoming Libraries to 16 schools across Maine, with each library containing 60 books featuring stories of immigrant families and the diversity of America. The Maine DOE also hosts the Read to ME Challenge every February to encourage adults to read aloud to children and Read to Ride Summer, a contest that qualifies students who read at least 500 minutes over the summer a chance to win one of 48 donated bikes and helmets.

The DOE has also created several literacy-related educator groups, for educators and education organizations across Maine to share and devel-

op resources and guide the state’s literacy work, including the State Literacy Team, Maine Association for Improving Literacy (MAIL) Network, State Dyslexia Advisory Group, Screening Project & Dyslexia Plan, and the Higher Education Pre-Service Literacy Faculty Group. These groups also share information, facilitate text studies, and offer training related to dyslexia awareness, the Science of Reading, the neuroscience of the reading brain, systematic and evidence-based Tier I instruction to lower special education referral rates, support for striving readers, alignment and collaboration between general and special education for IDEA, and inclusive literacy instruction for students identified as having specific learning disabilities.

Literacy grants will be allocated to school administrative units (SAUs) and Education in Unorganized Territory (EUT) schools based on a formula model and the Maine DOE will be contacting SAUs & EUT directly through the Grants4ME platform with more information about their participation in the literacy grant program. Federal emergency relief funding was used to support these grants.

## E-bike rebate pilot launches with limited scope and funding

**PORTLAND, ME --** The Efficiency Maine Trust released the details on a new electric bike (e-bike) rebate pilot program yesterday. This program is in response to a bill passed last year by the Maine legislature to include e-bikes in the Efficiency Maine rebate program. The intent of the bill is to lower the barrier for purchasing e-bikes for lower income persons by providing a rebate on their purchase similar to the incentive for electric cars currently provided by Efficiency Maine.

The Bicycle Coalition of Maine (BCM)

is glad to see Efficiency Maine launch the program and appreciates the hard work that went into developing it. However, we are disappointed by the limited scope and funding of the program and the missed opportunity to provide more people in the state with access to this form of alternative transportation.

The use of electric-assist bicycles, commonly known as “e-bikes,” is one of the fastest growing transportation trends in the world today. Limited to a top speed of 20-28 mph, e-bikes provide effective, reliable transportation

within a 5-10 mile range, which is what 75% of trips in Maine fall within. Cargo e-bicycles permit groceries, goods, and children to be easily transported, and commuter specific models provide a great workforce option.

The bill (LD 256) stipulated that e-bike rebates should be made available to “recipients who are low-income and moderate-income individuals and to entities that serve those individuals.” The BCM has argued since the conception of this bill that the rebates should be available to individuals, similar to

the successful and very popular programs managed in Maine by South Portland, Portland and Freeport, as well as programs in Denver, CO, Vermont, and others around the country.

Efficiency Maine chose to only make the rebate available to “public housing agencies/authorities, community action agencies, or nonprofit organizations serving low- to moderate-income individuals” and only as pilot projects. Furthermore, the funding of the pilot is limited to \$50,000, which greatly limits the number of eligible groups. We en-

courage any entities who meet those requirements to review the call for proposals and apply to the program by the March 7, 2024 deadline.

The limited nature of this program denies individuals who meet the income eligibility criteria from accessing a lower cost transportation option (including those living in rural Maine) compared to gas-powered or electric vehicles. E-bikes provide a reliable form of active transportation to get to work, visit a doctor or pharmacy, run errands, and more, especially for

those who are unable to afford a car or have limited transit options. They also help Maine achieve its Climate Action Plan goals by reducing reliance on gas-powered cars, lowering vehicle miles traveled, and improve the health and quality of life of many Mainers by providing an alternative to automobiles.

We look forward to learning more about the uptake on this program and will continue to work with Efficiency Maine and others on implementing an individual rebate so more people can access e-bikes in Maine.

## Agriculture education scholarship available

**PORTLAND & ELLSWORTH —** Graduating seniors from Maine high schools who are Na-

tional FFA Organization (Future Farmers of America) members and interested in pursuing a career

in farming, agriculture or natural resources are invited to apply for a Ronald P. Guerrette FFA Schol-

arship through the Maine Community Foundation (MaineCF).

The Guerrette FFA

Scholarship Fund provides one, \$1,000 scholarship per year. The application deadline is March 15. To learn more and to apply, visit [www.mainecef.org/scholarships](http://www.mainecef.org/scholarships).

The fund was created in 1998 by friends and family of Ronald P. Guerrette of Caribou to honor his life and work.

The Maine Community Foundation brings people and resources together to build a better Maine through strategic

giving, community leadership, personalized service, local expertise and strong investments. To learn more about the foundation, visit [www.mainecef.org](http://www.mainecef.org).

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

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# \$15M grant for Maine EV charging network development

WASHINGTON, ME – The Biden-Harris Administration today announced a \$15 million grant to the Maine Department of Transportation to fund the installation of 62 DC Fast Charger ports and 520 Level 2 charging ports in more than 70 cities and towns statewide. The award is one of 47 projects in 22 states and Puerto Rico selected to receive a total of \$623 million in funding to help build out an electric vehicle (EV) charging network under the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Discretionary Grant Program. This means EV drivers in Maine and across the country can charge their electric vehicles where they live, work, and shop.

The grants are a critical part of the Biden Administration’s goal of building out a convenient, affordable, reliable and made-in-America national network of EV chargers, including at least 500,000 publicly available chargers by 2030 ensuring that EV’s are made in America with American workers.

Under President Biden’s leadership, EV

sales have more than quadrupled, the number of publicly available charging ports has grown by nearly 70 percent, and more than 4 million EV’s are now on the road. Spurred by the President’s historic investments, private companies have announced more than \$155 billion in the EV and battery supply chain under the Biden-Harris Administration. EV’s are critical to our rapid and equitable transition to clean transportation systems, producing zero tailpipe emissions, reducing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions – major contributors to climate change and key contributors to respiratory ailments.

“America led the arrival of the automotive era, and now we have a chance to lead the world in the EV revolution—securing jobs, savings, and benefits for Americans in the process,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg. “This funding will help ensure that EV chargers are accessible, reliable, and convenient for American drivers, while creating jobs in charger manufacturing, installation, and maintenance for American work-

ers.”

The grants being announced today are made possible by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law’s \$2.5 billion Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Discretionary Grant Program, a competitive funding program, that includes construction of approximately 7,500 EV charging ports. The CFI program complements the \$5 billion National Electric Vehicle (NEVI) Formula Program to build the “backbone” of high-speed EV chargers along our nation’s highways. Thanks to the NEVI program, new charging stations in Ohio and New York have opened, and states like Pennsylvania and Maine have broken ground.

“Every community across the nation deserves access to convenient and reliable clean transportation,” said U.S. Secretary of Energy Jennifer M. Granholm. “The Biden-Harris Administration is bringing an accessible, made-in-America charging network into thousands of communities while cutting the carbon pollution that is driving the climate crisis.”

In Maine, the \$15

million grant will be used to fund the installation of 62 DC Fast Charger ports and 520 Level 2 charging ports in more than 70 cities and towns statewide. The project will serve urban and rural areas and encompasses disadvantaged communities.

“From my time working at the local level, I know that finding electric vehicle charging in a community is different from finding charging along highways,” said U.S. Transportation Deputy Secretary Polly Trottenberg. “USDOT is proud to make an investment that will provide Americans with convenient, straightforward charging options in their communities.”

“The Federal Highway Administration is pleased to announce this grant in Maine that will bring EV charging to people and communities all across the nation,” said Federal Highway Administrator Shailen Bhatt. “These investments through the CFI Program will grow our national EV charging network, support President Biden’s goals of achieving net-zero emissions for the nation by

2050 and promote opportunity for all Americans to enjoy the benefits of EV charging.”

As part of today’s announcements, the Federal Highway Administration is awarding \$311 million in funding to 36 “community” projects, including two Indian Tribes in Alaska and Arizona. These projects invest in EV charging and hydrogen fueling infrastructure in urban and rural communities, including at convenient and high-use locations like schools, parks, libraries, multi-family housing, and more.

Another \$312 million in funding will go to 11 “corridor” recipients whose projects are located along roadways designated as Alternative Fuel Corridors (AFCs). These projects will fill gaps in the core national charging and alternative-fueling network.

The CFI Program advances President Biden’s Justice40 Initiative, which set a goal that 40% of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.

More than 70% of the CFI funding announced today will support project sites in disadvantaged communities.

To provide a consistent charging experience for users that ensures a convenient, affordable, and reliable national charging network, EV chargers constructed with CFI funds must adhere to the same minimum standards established for NEVI-funded chargers. FHWA is working closely with the Joint Office of Energy and Transportation, which provides technical assistance on planning and implementation of a national network of electric vehicle chargers and zero-emission fueling infrastructure.

For a full list of grant recipients, visit: [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/cfi/grant\\_recipients/](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/cfi/grant_recipients/)

For more information on President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and investments in electric vehicles, please visit FHWA’s BIL web site.

Information on technical assistance from the Joint Office is available at [DriveElectric.gov](https://www.driveelectric.gov).

## Northeast Delta Dental strives to improve oral care

LEWISTON, ME -- Northeast Delta Dental will officially present a gift of \$665,000 to University of Maine at Augusta (UMA) to expand the dental workforce in Maine. The award will enable UMA to expand the current UMA Lewiston Center Dental Clinic and increase the enrollment size of dental assisting and expanded functions dental assisting (EFDA) students

and provide dental hygiene students with additional rotations. Entitled Expanding The Dental Workforce Throughout Maine: An Educational, Rotating Dental Clinic, the initiative’s goal is to address the shortage of dental auxiliaries in Maine and extend the benefits of dental care to address disparities in oral health, providing quality oral health care for people

who are low-income, uninsured, and/or members of racial/ethnic minority, immigrant, or rural populations. Specifically, the funding will cover:

The addition of state-of-the-art dental units to UMA’s Lewiston Center Dental Clinic, including equipment and construction costs; A scholarship program; Support for necessary staffing additions.

## Legislative leaders welcome Sen. Mark Daly of Ireland



Left to right: Rep. Kristen Cloutier, Sen. Mark Daly of Ireland, Rep. Mo Terry and House Speaker Rachel Talbot Ross.

Majority Leader Mo Terry, D-Gorham, Assistant Majority Leader Kristen Cloutier, D-Lewiston, and Speaker of the House Ra-

chel Talbot Ross, D-Portland, welcomed Senate Chair Mark Daly of Ireland to the State House on Thursday. Daly presented members of

the American Irish State Legislators Caucus with a certificate recognizing the continuing relationship between the United States and Ireland.

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# Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

**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 23**

AUBURN -- from 4 PM - 5 PM - Teen Space, Auburn Public Library

Whether it be cro-

cheting, 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 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.

**Jan 27**

LISBON FALLS -- Dine In/Take Out Bean Supper Saturday, January 27th from 4:30pm - 5:30pm or SOLD OUT at Lisbon United Methodist Church, 14 School Street, Lisbon Falls, ME. Sponsored by the Methodist Women;

Adults \$9.00. Menu: Pea Beans, Hot Dogs, Potato Salad, Cole Slaw, dinner roll and a slice of pie!

FMI-Gwen Rioux 353-6814

**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.

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Registration is required and the link to sign up can be found on the Lewiston Public Library's website under events.

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

**Every 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> 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](mailto:info.513-3133), [LPLKids@lewistonmaine.gov](mailto:LPLKids@lewistonmaine.gov)



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**APRIL 11 – 19, 2024 – THE FRENCH RIVIERA** – Trip includes 9 days, 7 Breakfasts, 2 Lunches and 3 dinners. Lodging for 7 nights in the same hotel. Highlights are Nice, Food Tour & Tasting, Nice Flower Market, Monaco, Monte Carlo, Grasse, Cannes, Saint-Honorat Island & Wine Tasting, Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild, St. Paul de Vence and much more.

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

when signing up. Price is \$1,245.00 pp double occupancy which includes all entrance fees, meal tips and bus driver tip.

**JUNE 15 – 23, 2024 - WESTERN CANADA'S ROCKIES, LAKES & WINE COUNTRY** - This trip includes 9 days and 8 breakfasts, 2 lunches and 3 dinners. Highlights of this trip are Calgary, Albertan BBQ, Banff, Bow Falls, Lake Louise, Revelstoke Railway Museum, Okanagan Valley, Vineyard Dinner and Wine Tasting, Stanley Park, Granville Island and much more. Call Claire or Cindy for more information.

**OCTOBER 6 – 14, 2024 - NOVA SCOTIA, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND & NEW BRUNSWICK** – Trip includes 8 nights lodging, 8 breakfasts, 1 lunch, and 6 dinners. You will have a guided tour of Acadia National Park, Halifax, Peggy's Cove & Lunenburg. We will visit King's Landing Historical Settlement and have a guided tour of Prince Edward Island including Anne of Green Gable's Home. We will have admission to the Hopewell Rocks and you will visit the Water-side Town of Saint John, New Brunswick and much

more. A \$75.00 deposit is due when signing up. Price is \$1,639.00 per person double occupancy and this includes all entrance fees, meal tips and bus driver tip.

If interested in any of these trips or upcoming trips, please contact Claire Bilodeau at 784-0302 or 576-8604 or Cindy Boyd at 345-9569. If we are not available, please leave a message and we will call you as soon as we can.

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# Auburn Concert Band invites new members

AUBURN, ME – The Auburn Community Concert Band has announced that rehearsals resumed on Wednesday, January 10th, in preparation for the group’s 2024 summer concert season. This is an ideal opportunity for former high school and college band members to again experience the enjoyment of making music and performing in front of large audiences.

Interested musicians have until January 24th to join the band during this semi-annual “Open Membership” period. The band has a particular need for clarinet, trumpet and tuba players, and for an additional drum set player.

Membership is open to all wind instrument players and percussionists

who can read music, but requires a commitment to the group’s weekly schedule of Wednesday evening rehearsals and concerts. Band members must have their own instruments and music stands.

Weekly rehearsals take place every Wednesday evening, from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. at the High Street Congregational Church, located between High and Pleasant Streets, in Auburn. Starting in late June, the band will resume its annual weekly Wednesday evening concerts at Festival Plaza in downtown Auburn, weather permitting. A different program of music will be performed each week through mid-August, with songs appealing to audiences both young and



old.

According to Band Director Milt Simon, it is not unusual for prospective members to feel a bit reluctant about joining the group. “We understand that, for some, it may have

been 20 or more years since they last touched their instrument.” Simon stated. “Most people regain their musical skills relatively quickly. It’s like riding a bicycle. Once you have learned to play, you never

forget. You just may have to do some extra practicing.” Simon added that the opportunity to perform in front of large audiences, numbering 200 to 300 people on a weekly basis, is typically quite appealing

to amateur and experienced musicians alike.

This summer will mark the organization’s 43rd anniversary season since being formed by Simon back in 1981.

Currently, the ACCB has 46 members, ranging in age from late-teens to early eighties. These members collectively represent some 16 central, southern and western Maine towns.

Additional information about the group is posted on the band’s web site: [www.auburncommunityband.com](http://www.auburncommunityband.com).

Interested musicians are asked to email their intentions to Director Simon at [auburncommunityband@gmail.com](mailto:auburncommunityband@gmail.com) prior to attending their first rehearsal.

# Winter Mindfulness: A stress reduction series

AUBURN, ME -- Are you looking to decrease stress and improve your ability to focus in a clear, calm, and connected way?

Join Tisha Bremner from Insightful Workplace Solutions, a National-Board Certified Health and Well-Being Coach and Mindfulness Trainer for this practice-based educational series. Learn how applying the techniques

and attitudinal qualities of mindfulness can enable you to make positive lifestyle changes and feel more centered.

This evidence-based program will help you to incorporate MBSR in your life by engaging in simple practices with intention and ease. Feel calmer, think more clearly, and enjoy life in a more present way.

Program topics will

include:

1. Introduction to simple awareness;
2. attention and the brain;
3. Dealing with Thoughts
4. Dealing with Stress
5. Dealing with Difficult Emotions
6. Mindful Movement and Yoga
7. Mindful Listening and Communication

8. Developing an Ongoing Practice

Tisha is a transformational leadership trainer and corporate well-being coach. She works with organizations throughout the country to develop motivating leadership practices, improve management critical people skills, build collaborative teams, and enhance workplace well-being. She offers educational training,

individual coaching, and motivational talks. Your trusted people partner in engaging employees and building a thriving workplace culture.

Presented by the Auburn Public Library, this program will take place over 8 weeks on Mondays, from January 22 through March 11, and will run from 6:30-7:30 p.m. Please plan to attend all 8 sessions. Sessions will take place

via Zoom and registration is required. The Zoom link will be emailed on the date of the first session, January 22. (Note: There will be no class on Monday, February 19, Presidents’ Day.)

For more information about this or other programs or to register, visit Auburn Public Library’s website at [www.auburnpubliclibrary.org](http://www.auburnpubliclibrary.org), or call the Reference Desk at 207-333-6640, ext. 4.

# SeniorsPlus announces new members to the Board of Directors

LEWISTON, ME -- SeniorsPlus, the designated Area Agency on Aging serving Androscoggin, Franklin, and Ox-

ford counties, announces the election of three new members to its Board of Directors.

Joining the Board are

Nancy Ligertwood Allen of Wilton, Colleen Fournier of Leeds, and Judy Rawlings of Chesterville. Allen is a retired educator

who was the Director of Franklin County Adult and Community Education.

Fournier is a commercial loan officer at Androscoggin Bank. A retired non-

profit professional, Rawlings is the former director of SAVES in Farmington.

## CENTURY 21 Advantage welcomes Dakarai Smith-Jenkins

LEWISTON, ME -- CENTURY 21 Advantage is pleased to announce Dakarai Smith-Jenkins has joined its firm as a sales associate. He will specialize in Residential property sales in the Androscoggin County area.

“We are thrilled to have Dakarai join our team,” said Jamie White of Century 21 Advantage. “It’s an exciting time to be with the CENTURY 21

System as we increase our market presence in Androscoggin County.”

Smith-Jenkins just successfully completed extensive training and licensing through The Real Estate Learning Group.

White added, “We believe training supports growth and professional excellence in the real estate industry. Performance-based training is necessary to assure that

CENTURY 21 associates maintain their competitive edge and offer the best service possible to their clients.”

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

Send all items for Names & Faces to the editor. Deadline is Friday by five pm.

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