

## Town of Gorham awards local businesses with matching grants



**GORHAM, ME** - On January 2, 2024, the Gorham Town Council voted unanimously in support of grant funding awarded to local businesses as part of a new Capital Expenditure Matching Grant program. Eight local businesses were awarded a total of \$45,000 in matching grant funds as part of a competitive application process.

In support of the program, Gorham Savings Bank awarded three grantee businesses a total of \$10,000 in additional funding as a "Hometown Match" for their projects. The Capital Expenditure Matching Grant program provides 50% reimbursement of a capital item, service or site expansion project, up to a maximum award of \$15,000. The Town prioritized allocating grant funds to businesses in three sectors, specifically agriculture; manufacturing & skilled trades; and retail & food service. The program intends to accelerate growth of local businesses and farms by enabling the purchase of a capi-

tal item or service. These single, one-time procurements will help grantees accelerate plans for growth, and create opportunities for expansion, entrepreneurship, and job creation in Gorham.

"This is the type of grant program our business community has been asking for," said Gorham Town Councilor Lee Pratt. "The goal is to provide the type of funding they need to make their own decisions on what's best for growing and expanding their business in Gorham."

"Local businesses are the core of our communities," stated Becky Winslow, SVP, Director of Community Relations & Development. "Initiatives such as this are essential to supporting their growth and we are very pleased to provide additional grants to Azul Tequila Restaurant, Orchard Ridge Farm and Rustic Farm Holdings, LLC for their upcoming projects, particularly in our hometown of Gorham."

Eligible uses for grant funding under the program include a single, non-recurring procurement of \$5,000 or more for durable goods, IT needs or related services, and upgrades to buildings or property that directly benefit business operations. Grant awards went to businesses of various sizes and across sectors in support

of a broad host of capital items. Examples include the purchase of new machinery for both established Gorham manufacturing companies and start-up family businesses, as well as construction of new barns and greenhouses that will boost production and expand program offerings for the local community.

"In the past, we have hosted field trips for schools, retirement community outings, and special needs groups," said Erica Gottschalk, co-owner of Orchard Ridge Farm. "This grant will help us elevate the experience by offering an interactive and centralized location for the animals. We are so grateful and can't wait to get started."

"It's a blessing as it provides us the opportunity to purchase machinery made only in Brazil that will allow us to expand our services into the catering sector," said Claudia Katz, owner of Iaia Brazil eatery. "This is something we have intended to do but found it very difficult to manage without the proper equipment."

"Delivery times of industrial controls have become very important in the last decade. The old metal lathe we currently use has caused a bottleneck in our manufacturing process," said Russ Hall,

Chief Executive Officer for The Montalvo Corporation. "Improved quality and delivery times with this new lathe will help us grow our customer base and provide more jobs with better benefits to those in our community."

The grant program expands upon the services already available to local businesses in Gorham. The Town established a façade and leasehold improvement grant program last spring, and its Revolving Loan Fund program provides loans to businesses up to \$150,000 with competitive rates and flexible terms. In addition, recent hires in Planning and Economic Development have increased the capacity for Town staff to work closely with business owners to ensure projects move through the approval process in a timely manner.

"As a Town, we continue to seek ways to better support our local business community, based on the needs expressed by the business owners themselves," said Kevin Jensen, Economic Development Director for Gorham. "This program builds on our approach to developing and sustaining a vibrant local economy, and we are excited to watch these businesses grow, innovate and expand."

## Gorham public Pre-K program applications are open

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

Our Pre-K program is conducted at Narragansett School and is open to all

Pre-K-aged students in Gorham. (If you reside in the Great Falls or Village district, your student will attend Narragansett for Pre-K.) Transportation will be provided for students enrolled in the program. Please contact Theresa Connolly at 222-1295 if you have any questions or need assistance completing the application.

## Town of Gorham announces primary election, voting info

**GORHAM, ME** -- A State Presidential Primary Election will take place on Tuesday, March 5, 2024 in which voters will have an opportunity to vote on who will be placed on the ballot in November for President.

You can request an absentee ballot by going to the Town's website. Your ballot will be mailed to you once we receive them in early February.

**IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES**

February 4, 2024 - Anticipated date on which absentee ballots will become available.

February 13, 2024 - Last day for the Town Clerk's Office to receive voter registration applications by mail.

February 14, 2024 - Closed period begins. All voter registration applications must be submitted in person.

February 20, 2024 - Last day to change political parties prior to the primary.

February 29, 2024 - Last day for absentee voting.

March 5, 2024 - Election Day. Polls open from 7am - 8pm.

**IMPORTANT ENROLLMENT INFORMATION**

Effective January 1, 2024, Maine

will be transitioning from a closed primary system to a semi-open primary. Unenrolled voters will now be able to participate in primaries including the March 5, 2024 Presidential Primary and the June 11, 2024 State Primary.

Unenrolled Voters - Voters who are not enrolled in a party may choose to vote in one party's primary.

Voters enrolled in a party Democrat or Republican- may only vote in that party's primary.

The Democratic and Republican parties are the only parties that will hold primaries on March 5th.

The Green Independent, No Labels, Forward, People's and Libertarian Parties will not be participating.

For helpful website links and FAQs, see the Town of Gorham's website.

**Absentee Voting**

Absentee ballot requests are now available. You can request an absentee ballot by calling the Clerks office or by visiting the Town's website. Ballots will be mailed out the first week of February once the Town Clerk's Office receives them.

The last day to obtain an absentee ballot will be Thursday, February 29 at 5pm.

See Election, page 14

### GORHAM SCHOOL DEPARTMENT PUBLIC PRE-K

NOW ENROLLING FOR THE  
24/25 SCHOOL YEAR

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

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

#### 3 EASY STEPS TO APPLY

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

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

[PRE-K APPLICATION LINK](#)



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# Newsmakers, Names & Faces

## CoverME.gov finishes open enrollment

**AUGUSTA, ME**—The Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Office of the Health Insurance Marketplace (OHIM) announced today that more than 62,500 Maine people signed up for affordable health coverage in 2024 through CoverME.gov, Maine's health insurance marketplace, during the open enrollment period that concluded last week. Maine's marketplace contributed to the record-breaking 21.3 million people signed up through Affordable Care Act marketplaces nationwide.

Open enrollment through CoverME.gov -- the only place where Maine residents can shop for plans that meet Affordable Care Act quality coverage standards and find financial savings to help pay monthly premiums -- ran from November 1, 2023 to January 16, 2024. For plan year 2024, more than four out of five Mainers who selected a plan during open enrollment qualified for financial help.

Of the 62,533 consumers who selected a health plan, 10,243 were new consumers who didn't have a marketplace plan at the beginning of open enrollment, topping the number of new consumers who signed up for 2023 coverage. The remainder were returning consumers who actively re-enrolled or were automatically re-enrolled in a plan. Another

7,950 consumers selected standalone dental plans.

Maine is one of 19 states that fully run their own Health Insurance Marketplaces, with the Federal government running the rest through HealthCare.gov. Maine expanded Medicaid, or MaineCare, for children in families with income below 300 percent of the federal poverty level in October 2023, shifting financial assistance for and enrollment of children from CoverME.gov to MaineCare.

"Having health care saves lives," said Governor Janet Mills. "I am glad to see that thousands of Maine people can now see a doctor, afford their medications, and receive high-quality preventative care because they signed up for affordable health coverage through CoverME.gov."

"Health coverage can prevent an accident or illness from devastating an individual's or family's finances," said Health and Human Services Commissioner Jeanne Lambrew. "CoverME.gov is contributing to more Maine residents having the peace of mind of health care when they need it."

"We're thrilled to welcome so many new consumers into coverage in 2024," said Hilary Schneider, Director of the DHHS Office of the Health Insurance Marketplace, which runs CoverME.gov. "Our enhanced mar-

keting and outreach plans and strong partnerships with community organizations, brokers, and health insurance carriers helped Mainers in need of health coverage to find meaningful, affordable health plans."

"We are pleased so many Mainers were able to enroll in coverage that works for them," said Ann Woloson, executive director of Consumers for Affordable Health Care. "People were able to connect to a real person when calling CoverME.gov for help enrolling in a plan. These resources have helped people to enroll in Marketplace coverage. Other important policy initiatives, like increasing children's eligibility for MaineCare, means more Maine families have affordable options."

"I signed up for coverage this year as I was switching jobs and found an affordable plan that pays for my medications and I was even able to keep my primary care doctor," said Jay Miller, a CoverME.gov consumer and freelance photographer from Newcastle. "With help from Consumers for Affordable Health Care, I found a plan that works for me and means I can make sure I have coverage myself."

"I turned 26 and could no longer be on my parents' plan. Looking at the costs of plans before I filled out the financial aid application, I thought I'd never be able to get afford-

able insurance," said Sarah Rinaldi, who first enrolled in coverage as a full-time nursing student in Portland. "I found out I qualify for financial assistance which means I can pay for it out of pocket as a full-time student. Now I pay \$60 a month for my insurance but it's normally a \$300-plus plan. The fact that I was able to pay for my insurance without having to have a full-time job while in school as well was really a relief for me."

"As a tree-climbing arborist, I need health insurance," said Asher Huntington, a self-employed arborist in Lincoln County. "I am so pleased with the affordability and ease of use on the health care marketplace. Thanks, CoverME.gov for the good coverage!"

A number of changing health coverage dynamics affected CoverME.gov enrollment for 2024, including:

Expanded financial savings helped shield eligible CoverME.gov consumers from premium increases: While average premiums set by insurance companies rose in Maine and many other states in 2024, premiums paid by consumers qualifying for financial assistance increased by less than \$33 per month, thanks to extra financial assistance from the federal government.

Consumers with financial assistance chose comprehensive coverage

with lower out-of-pocket costs: Fifty-six percent of those who qualify for financial assistance to pay monthly premiums enrolled in a plan that covers at least 70 percent of out-of-pocket costs, compared to 44 percent of those who do not receive premium assistance who chose plans with relatively higher deductibles and copays.

With expanded eligibility for MaineCare, fewer children are enrolled in CoverME.gov: As expected, the marketplace saw a decrease in enrollment of consumers aged 20 and younger as a result of the Maine Legislature passing a law to expand eligibility of MaineCare (Medicaid) coverage for children under age 21, which took effect in October 2023. Eligibility increased to 300 percent of the federal poverty level, or \$90,000 annually for a family of four. This translated to 13 percent fewer individuals aged 20 and under enrolling in health coverage through CoverME.gov during open enrollment for 2024 compared to 2023.

Marketing and outreach to support awareness of Open Enrollment was a significant focus for CoverME.gov between November 1, 2023, and January 16, 2024. Advertising ran in markets across the state through traditional media including TV, radio, and on buses, and through digital and social media, as well as direct outreach to

consumers through thousands of mailed notices and emails. This translated into significant use of the CoverME.gov website, which saw 146,394 visitors between November 1, 2023, and January 16, 2024. In addition, 41,199 people used the Plan Compare Tool, which allows users to compare plans side-by-side with regard to plan features, benefits, provider networks, prescription drug coverage, and total out-of-pocket costs, including premiums, deductibles, and estimated costs for services. Increased awareness also resulted in record call volume for the CoverME.gov's Consumer Assistance Center, up 12 percent from 2023. CoverME.gov answered 544 calls per day on average and anyone requesting a call back received it in same business day to help ensure anyone who wanted coverage could get enrolled.

The next CoverME.gov open enrollment will start on November 1, 2024. In the meantime, Maine residents who experience a life event such as getting married or divorced, having or adopting a baby, or losing employer-sponsored coverage or MaineCare, can enroll in coverage using a Special Enrollment Period. Visit CoverME.gov for more details.

Individuals eligible for MaineCare may enroll in MaineCare at any time of year.

## Anchour continues growing, wins Best Place to Work, twice

**LEWISTON, ME**--Anchour, a Lewiston-based branding and marketing agency, expanded its team by welcoming ten new members in 2023, bringing its team to 30 people. Anchour

also achieved significant recognition, securing the #3 position on Ad Age's "Best Places to Work 2024" list among Marketing Agencies in the US with fewer than 200 employees, and was award-



ed the #2 spot from Best Places to Work in Maine in 2023.

"We work hard to foster a culture that rewards people's creativity and individuality," said Stephen Gilbert,

CEO. "Good work, good people, and a good culture combine to attract the right talent. It all results in a cohesive team environment that results in incredible work."



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# Newsmakers, Names & Faces

## Gorham's Cressey Road Christian Church invites you to Game Day!

**GORHAM, ME** -- In anticipation of our February GAME DAY, I'll let you in on what you missed at the January GAME DAY. A good time was had by all with a few challenging group games before we broke into smaller groups

to play board games. We started with a challenge game: Name what you would need to survive in space. As we went around our circle, very imaginative answers popped right up. Then it became more challenging

as we continued in turn, making sure not to repeat what was already said. What would you need to survive? Does this sound like fun? It truly was.

Our next group game was a version of "Telephone". Instead of whis-

pering into each other's ear, we wrote and drew the clues. Having no drawing skills, my challenge to show: "Bless Your Heart" became a Valentine card. Does this sound like fun?

Join us for our next GAME DAY, February

17th. You're invited to bring a game to play and/or a snack to share.

FMI: Lorraine Lindstedt  
[lindcabin@gmail.com](mailto:lindcabin@gmail.com)

Details: Game Day Saturday, February 17

1pm-3pm  
Cressey Road Christian Church

Cressey Road and Route 25, Gorham

Fun for all ages, the young and young at heart.

Parental Supervision Required

## CASH Greater Portland offers free tax preparation services

**PORTLAND, ME** -- CASH (Creating Assets, Savings, and Hope) Greater Portland has launched free tax preparation services for the 2024 tax season. Households that earned \$64,000 or less in 2023 and meet all eligibility requirements can get their taxes filed for free with the help of an IRS-certified volunteer.

Taxpayers can also learn about programs in their community that can increase their income, reduce debt, and build savings. 9% of households in Cumberland County live below the Federal Poverty Level, while another 28% are ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed). ALICE earns more than the FPL but still struggles to afford the high cost of living in our community. 53% of people under 25 in Cumberland County are also ALICE.

CASH Greater Portland offers four free and convenient options for filing taxes.

**Option 1—In-Person Appointment:** Schedule an appointment for in-person

services at United Way of Southern Maine's Portland office by visiting [uwsme.org/taxseason](http://uwsme.org/taxseason) or calling 207-347-2335 and leaving a message with your name and phone number.

**Option 2—Fully Virtual Service:** Visit [getyourrefund.org/gpmaine](http://getyourrefund.org/gpmaine) to start the online intake process. Answer a series of questions, upload documents, receive phone calls from the CASH team, and e-sign before the return is e-filed.

**Option 3—Online DIY:** File taxes independently (with access to helpline support) at [myfreetaxes.com](http://myfreetaxes.com).

**Option 4—Scan & Go:** Visit a Scan & Go Site to pick up an intake packet and return to have documents scanned into GetYourRefund. A list of Scan & Go sites is available at [uwsme.org/taxseason](http://uwsme.org/taxseason).

Through services like free tax preparation, CASH Greater Portland empowers people to achieve long-term financial stability, build assets, and thrive—not just survive. In 2023, CASH Greater Portland

filed 526 federal and state tax refunds and returned \$740,043 in federal tax refunds to the community. Filers saved an estimated \$122,304 in tax preparation fees.

CASH Greater Portland is supported in part by United Way of Southern Maine.

*About CASH Greater Portland*

*CASH Greater Portland is a partnership of community non- and for-profit partners working together to help empower individuals and families to achieve long-term financial stability. Since 2004, we have offered free tax preparation to qualified filers during tax season; helped employers bring financial education tools to their employees; and educated hard-working families and individuals about programs in the community that can increase their income, reduce debt, and build savings. CASH is a year-round resource, providing outreach and education about ways you can make the most of your money. [Cashmaine.org](http://Cashmaine.org)*

## Gorham community invited to enjoy winter at Stevens' Farm

**GORHAM, ME** -- Stevens' farm would like to welcome the community to use their land for sliding, tubing, snowboarding etc. As you turn into Great

Falls School you will see a hill and ranch on the right. This is farm land, please take all trash with you.

You are welcome to park to the left on Pit Rd.

Enjoy! Please wave to gram in the window, she loves to watch

\*Activities at your own risk. Considered recreational by our insurance.\*

## Follow us on Facebook! Don't miss our giveaways!



**Cherry Hill Farmers' Market**  
2024 June-Sept 2-6pm  
Wednesdays

*It's time to schedule your summer market space! Hop on board for your mid week market experience. We are now accepting applications for the 2024 summer season! Send us an email at [cherryhillfarmersmarket@gmail.com](mailto:cherryhillfarmersmarket@gmail.com)*

*And we'll get you started!*  
Monthly drawings  
Kids scavenger hunt  
Food trucks  
Music to shop by  
just to name a few events!

## Clothes Galore at Gorham's Mission of Hope Clothes Closet

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

We focus on clothes

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

Ukraine.

In addition to helping folks find clothes, we want to spend time with you! There are tables to sit, talk and to share a cup of coffee and usually a goodie with volunteers or others. Come see us! You might make a new friend. All are Welcome!

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# Seniors Not Acting Their Age

## Exploring Waterfalls on the Unique Cathance River Trails



An unexpected snow squall was encountered while exploring the waterfalls



A hiker crosses a new wooden bridge on the Cathance River Trail



A hiker approaches one of five waterfalls on the Cathance River Trail

By Ron Chase  
Well-known in paddling circles for its Class III through V creeking, the Cathance River in Topsham is one of the more popular and challenging whitewater rivers in Maine. The Cathance River Trails provide a stimulating hiking alternative.

The Cathance River Trails are located in the Cathance River Nature Preserve and Head of Tide Park. Developed and managed by Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust in concert with the Town of Topsham and Highland Green Retirement Community, over nine miles of trails weave along the river and through the surrounding area.

A collection of small ponds and streams in rural Bowdoin and Topsham are the source of the Cathance River which then winds cir-

cuitously to Merrymeeting Bay in Bowdoinham. Both the trails and whitewater are sequestered away in a wilderness area between Interstate 295 and Cathance Road in Topsham. The trails offer a unique opportunity for hikers to visit the habitat of many varieties of birds and wildlife while exploring several scenic waterfalls.

Back-to-back December rainstorms provided a rare chance to hike the trails while high water was cascading over the falls. My wife, Nancy, our longtime friend, Bob Rowe, and I decided to take advantage of the unusual occurrence.

The three of us met in a parking lot at Head of Tide Park on Cathance Road on a cool, breezy, partly sunny day. Our objective was to complete a traverse from the western

end of the trail complex to the park. We left a shuttle vehicle and drove Topsham roads to a trailhead next to a small parking area in Highland Green.

Senior citizens, we were all coping with physical ailments that ensured a modest hiking pace. The trek began on Vernal Pool Trail, a short route that connects with Highland Trail. We turned left onto Highland Trail and proceeded generally downhill in a mixed hardwood and conifer forest to Cathance River Trail.

The river was raging when we began hiking east along the shore. I had checked the river gauge at the boat landing next to Interstate 295 in advance of the hike. The level was on the high side of what is safely runnable in a canoe or kayak. A fallen tree

blocked the entire bottom of the first rapid, a potential hazard I mentally filed away for my initial spring kayak descent.

Short portions of the trail were flooded as we progressed downriver. Large waves tumbled through a narrow gorge next to where Barnes Leap Trail turns right and returns to Highland Green. We continued on Cathance River Trail past a long complex rapid called Z-Turn.

Light snow unexpectedly started to fall as we progressed past First Drop, a feisty cataract that takes a hard left turn over a ledge and crashes into a constricted chute below. Around the next bend, we arrived at Second Drop, a precipitous falls that plunges under an overhanging rock wall called Room of Doom. The snowflakes transitioned to a full-fledged snow squall adding a little drama to the outing.

The trail left the river, so we bushwhacked along the shore in driving snow to view the next cataract, Boulder Pile. The boulders at the bottom that give the falls its name were submerged beneath the high water.

The snow ended as we reconnected with Cathance River Trail and proceeded past Rapids Trail junction on the right. The most spectacular wa-



A map of the trails is located at the Highland Green Trailhead

terfall on the river follows. Known to paddlers as Little Gorilla, the impressive cascade gushes through an attenuated gorge, makes an abrupt left turn and plummets about fifteen vertical feet down a climactic slide.

Easy hiking brought us to the last falls, Final Drop. Similar to Little Gorilla, but more straightforward, powerful waves spilled down the steep descent.

The trail shifted away from the river and we climbed steadily up a north-facing slope. Shortly beyond, we dropped down to an impressive new wooden bridge reinforced with huge I-beams. More rolling terrain led us to the aluminum Clay Brook Bridge. The two rugged structures are designed to withstand the vicissitudes of the sometimes turbulent freshets that flow underneath them and should last for decades.

We followed the hilly remainder of Cathance River Trail to Cathance Road. A short walk down to the river brought us back to our shuttle vehicle completing a very entertaining trek.

My book, *Maine Al Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine* narrates numerous hikes and whitewater adventures around the state.

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.ronchaseoutdoors.com](http://www.ronchaseoutdoors.com) or he can be reached at [ronchaseoutdoors@comcast.net](mailto:ronchaseoutdoors@comcast.net)

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# Data security steps to take control of personal info

**PORTLAND, ME** – Consolidated Communications (NASDAQ: CNSL) a leading broadband and business communications provider, is sharing resources and tips to take a hands-on approach to the protection of personal information and to increase awareness of data security best practices.

“The threat of a data breach can cause tremendous anxiety, creating a feeling of helplessness for victims of cyberattacks,” said Aaron Reason, senior director of Network Security for Consolidated. “Being proactive to ensure your private information is protected and being dil-

igent in this effort can go a long way. For our Consolidated employees and customers, our teams work to provide education about the steps they too can take to protect their data.”

The privacy and security of customer data is of the highest importance for Consolidated, which this week joins in the national celebration of Data Privacy Week to spread awareness about online privacy for customers and others in the company’s service areas. The goal of Data Privacy Week is twofold: to help individuals understand that they have the power to manage their data, and to help



organizations understand why it is important that they respect their users’ data.

Every online activity generates a trail of data. Websites, apps and services collect data on users’ behaviors, interests, and purchases. Sometimes this includes personal data, like Social Security and driver’s license numbers. It can even include health data – think about how a smart-watch counts and records movement and location.

While it is true indi-

viduals and organizations cannot control how each byte of data is shared and processed, steps can be taken to fortify data protection. In many cases, data sharing controls can be implemented in a few simple steps. Remembering that personal information is precious is important for everyone and being selective with how it is shared is vital to data security.

To best protect personal data, the National Cybersecurity Alliance recommends following

some simple cybersecurity tips, which it calls the ‘Core 4.’

Create long (at least 12 characters), unique passwords for each account and device. Use a password manager to store each password – maintaining dozens of passwords securely is now easier than ever.

Turn on multi-factor authentication (MFA) wherever it is permitted – this keeps your data safe even if your password is compromised.

Turn on automatic device, software, and browser updates, or make sure you install updates as soon as they are available.

Learn how to identify phishing messages, which can be sent as emails, texts, or direct messages.

Consolidated encourages consumers to follow these steps and review additional data privacy resources, including how to manage privacy settings on websites, mobile apps and streaming platforms, to better manage personal information and make informed decisions about data sharing practices. For more information about Data Privacy Week and how to get involved, visit <https://staysafeonline.org/programs/data-privacy-week/>.

# MaineCF awards \$83K to nonprofit leaders of color

**PORTLAND & ELLSWORTH** —The Maine Community Foundation (MaineCF) has awarded 12 nonprofit leaders of color and their organizations a total of \$83,450. The foundation’s Investing in Leaders of Color (ILOC) program awarded 10 organizations a total of \$69,500. Donors with advised funds at MaineCF made an additional two grants totaling \$13,950.

ILOC supports nonprofit leaders of color and their organizations. The program provides the organization and leader \$6,950 each for one-on-one leadership coaching, a stipend for professional development and operat-

ing costs, and networking opportunities.

This program is designed for people of color in leadership positions in nonprofit organizations that serve communities of color and promote racial equity in the state of Maine.

2023 grantees include:

Samaa Abdurraqib, Maine Humanities Council

Jean Bosco Bihinda, Community Conserva-



## Maine

Community Foundation

tion Initiative

Jonathan Cross, Kennedy Park Football Club

Omar Hassan, United Youth Empowerment Services

Edmond Kabagambe, Maine Labor and Resource Center

Jacques Kabamba, Good Helper Foundation  
Mohammed Khalid and Safiya Khalid, Community Organizing Alliance

Ashley Medina,

Maine Community Integration

Deysi Garcia Ortiz, Mano en Mano

Amran Osman, Generational Noor

Bakhita Saabino, Multi Generations for Affordable Housing

Ruben Torres, Maine Immigrants’ Rights Coalition

Amran Osman is the founder and executive director of Generational Noor, a nonprofit organization based in Lewiston that works to educate the immigrant community on mental health and substance use disorders. She said participating in the ILOC program will empower her and the organization

and reinforce the importance of its work.

“Being a woman of color myself, ILOC’s central focus is particularly poignant. It enables us to draw from the program’s resources and to steadily enhance our methods of offering indispensable aid to our community,” Osman said. “This service is rarely afforded to individuals

who are knee-deep in the disparities that uniquely face immigrants and the BIPOC community.”

ILOC was piloted in 2019 with nine nonprofit leaders from across the state. The program is part of MaineCF’s racial equity work that focuses on supporting people and organizations that work to increase racial equity in Maine.

# Mills elected NBRC State Co-Chair

**MAINE** -- During the 2024 NBRC Winter Commission Meeting, Maine Governor Janet Mills was elected as State Co-Chair by her fellow governors. As State Co-Chair, Governor Mills will work alongside the NBRC Federal Co-Chair, Chris Saunders, to pro-

vide leadership in support of the continued growth and development of the NBRC as it serves communities within the states of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York.

Maine Department of Economic & Community Development Com-

missioner Heather Johnson will continue to serve as the Governor’s Alternate, representing Governor Mills at Commission meetings.

The State-Co-chair position is emblematic of the NBRC’s Federal-State partnership, as the combined roles of

Federal Co-Chair and State Co-Chair function similarly to an Executive Committee of a Board of Directors, working together on policy matters before they reach the full Commission. Each State Governor and their Alternate have the freedom to

See Mills, page 10

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# Arts & Entertainment

## Defend Our Health welcomes new President and CEO

PORTLAND, ME – Defend Our Health is proud to announce the hiring of Emily Carey Perez de Alejo as the new President and Chief Executive Officer of the nonprofit public health and social justice organization. The organization's founder and outgoing executive director, Mike Bellevue, will move laterally into a new staff role as Senior Strategist.

Carey Perez de Alejo comes to Defend as a highly accomplished environmental public health professional with more than 15 years of experience spearheading complex policy, strategy, and process improvement projects in healthcare, academia,

non-profit, and governmental settings.

"Emily Carey Perez de Alejo will bring a wealth of experience and fresh perspective to Defend Our Health, helping to advance our mission with her deep knowledge and passion for equity-focused programs to protect public health and the environment," said Mark Hyland, chair of the board of directors of Defend Our Health. "With Emily's hire, we are significantly strengthening our executive leadership and long-term sustainability."

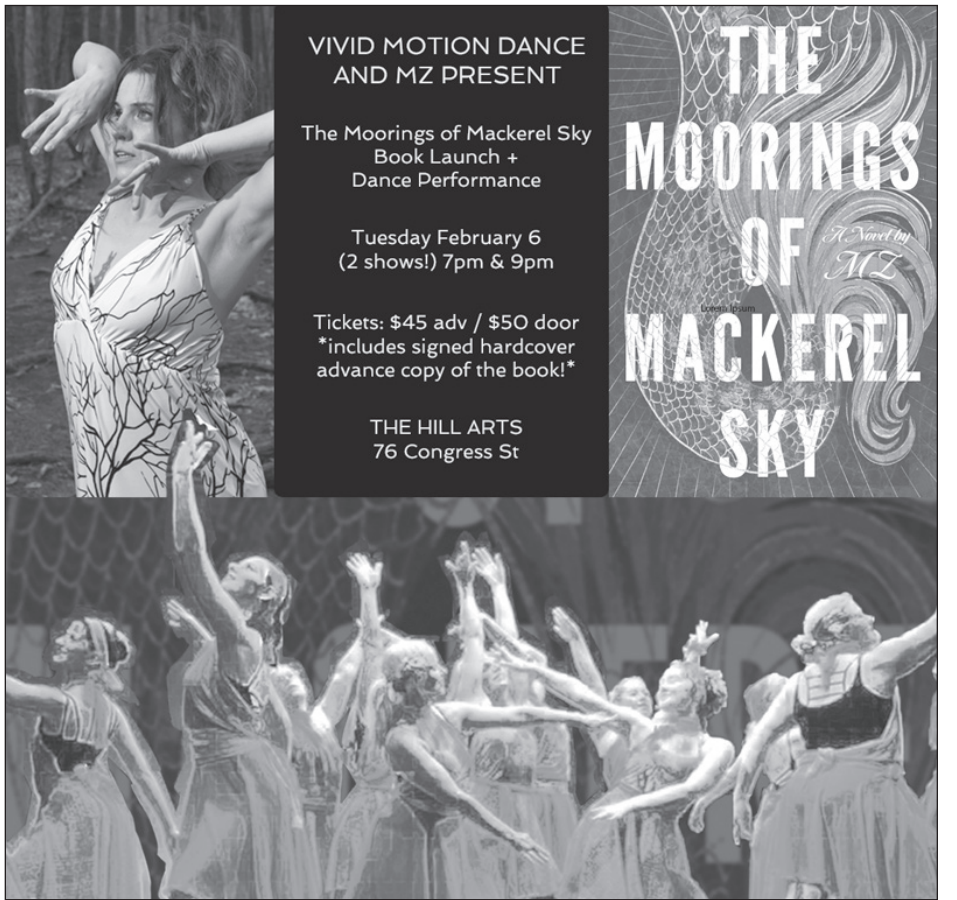
Most recently, Emily served as the program director for partnerships and strategic development at

the Rutgers Cancer Institute. In that role, she created and led a statewide cancer screening program in New Jersey that served more than 60,000 residents and resulted in significant improvements in morbidity and mortality for disadvantaged communities.

Emily graduated with highest honors from Rutgers University with a B.S. degree in Environmental Policy, Institutions, and Behavior & Political Science, with a minor in Public Health. She's currently pursuing an M.S. in Business Management and Leadership.

Her first day on the job at Defend Our Health will be February 5, 2024.

## Local author MZ & Vivid Motion collaborate on dance show



VIVID MOTION DANCE AND MZ PRESENT

The Moorings of Mackerel Sky  
Book Launch +  
Dance Performance

Tuesday February 6  
(2 shows!) 7pm & 9pm

Tickets: \$45 adv / \$50 door  
\*includes signed hardcover  
advance copy of the book!\*

THE HILL ARTS  
76 Congress St

PORTLAND, ME -- Vivid Motion Dance is proud to collaborate with local author MZ to present new dance works inspired by MZ's debut novel, The Moorings of Mackerel Sky. See the spoiler-free show live and go home with your copy of the book – three weeks before it is available for the general public!

This all ages show runs for one night only at 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. on

Tuesday, February 6th at The Hill Arts on Munjoy Hill in Portland ME. Tickets are on sale now at vividmotion.org and include a signed advance copy of the novel.

They say Mackerel Sky was founded when Captain Burrbank first saw Nimuë the Mermaid and forgot the sea. Stricken by love, he moored his tall ship and made camp on the highest cliff, hoping to forever

gaze upon her beauty. That camp became a settlement, the settlement a town, the town a community both blessed and cursed by their tempestuous affair.

Three hundred years later, the legend of the Mermaid and the Captain who loved her still invigorates and haunts the inhabitants of the small Maine lobstering town. In this close-knit town famous for its infamous mermaids, community is built through love and lore—willful elements that the townsfolk will have to harness if Mackerel Sky is to endure for another three hundred years.

WHO: MZ & Vivid Motion Dance, Portland's innovative and kinda quirky dance company

WHAT: The Moorings of Mackerel Sky

WHEN: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

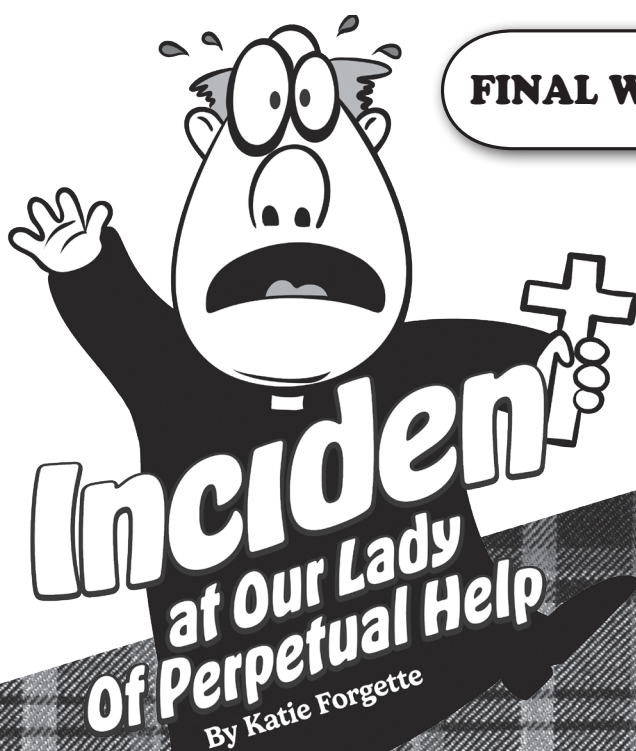
Tuesday, February 6, 2024 at 9:00 p.m.

WHERE: The Hill Arts (formerly St. Lawrence Arts), 76 Congress Street, Portland

All tickets include a signed hardcover copy of the book. Tickets are \$45 in advance/\$50 at the door and are available at vividmotion.org or madteawithmz.com.

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# FAME's 'Invest in ME Reads' benefits students

**AUGUSTA, ME**—The second half of the school year is underway in Maine and the Finance Authority of Maine (FAME), in partnership with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, is supporting more students than ever before through Invest in ME Reads, a family financial wellness program designed to support parents and caregivers in teaching their kids about money and building early financial skills for life.

Through Invest in ME Reads, Maine public school students in grades two through five receive a collection of educational resources, including free books, that include themes of saving, giving, and delayed gratification. Parents and caregivers also have an opportunity to use the ma-

terials at home, including conversation starters, tips from experts, information to support college savings, and InvestinMeReads.com, an educational webpage full of fun activities and resources for children and adults.

"You don't have to be a financial expert to teach your child about money, but we recognize that it is sometimes diffi-

cult to know where to begin. We want to support parents and caregivers by providing free resources and activities to begin the conversation," said Mary Dyer, Financial Education Programs Manager at FAME. Dyer recently was featured on the WGME podcast, Raising ME, where she provided practical tips and advice for starting the money conver-

sation at home. Invest in ME Reads helps to support Maine's statewide goal to produce an educated and skilled workforce. For many Mainers, a lack of financial capability can be a significant barrier to pursuing education and training after high school, which in turn can have an impact on an individual's ability to seek employment and, ultimate-

ly, the strength of Maine's economy. Families are also encouraged to share feedback about the program and how it has helped their family at InvestinMeReads.com/survey. For more information about how FAME can support your family's financial goals, please visit the Invest in ME Reads website.

# Mary's Firemen For A Cure to fundraise for Dempsey Center

**AUBURN, ME** – Following one of the most exciting years in the event's history, the 20th Annual Mary's Firemen for a Cure will once again be held at Lost Valley Ski Area in Auburn, Maine on March 2, 2024. Last year's 19th Annual Mary's Firemen was one of the most successful yet with the firefighter teams raising the most money ever. The race organizers then announced, in April 2023, a new partnership with Dempsey Center, headquartered in Lewiston, to continue to support cancer patients in Maine. This year's event will feature the exciting firefighters' ski race, with teams of four firefighters or EMTs, completing a modified slalom course in full gear, carrying a 50ft hose. However,

new this year, Mary's Firemen will also host a Ski Patrol race with the ski patrol teams from area ski resorts competing! This year also marks the 10 year anniversary that WTMW Channel 8 has been the event's official media sponsor. The 20th Annual Mary's Firemen for a Cure is shaping up to be the best yet!

Since 2004, Mary's Firemen has raised over \$300,00 to help breast cancer patients in Maine. Beginning last year, all proceeds from Mary's Firemen are donated to Dempsey Center to fund the Women's Support Group, which supports those women who have been affected by breast cancer and other types of cancer.

The firefighters' race features races between de-

partments from all over Maine, with teams of four firefighters racing down a slalom course in full turnout gear while carrying a 50ft firemen's hose. The brand-new ski patrol race will be very similar to the firefighter's race but will feature four ski patrollers in uniform carrying a 50ft snowmaking hose! Racers are encouraged to raise money because for each \$100 raised, one second is deducted from the team's fasted race time! In addition to the races, there will be kids' events, door prizes, a silent auction, a 50/50 and a live auction.

"My mom would be so incredibly proud that the event she started is still going strong and growing 20 years later." Mary's son and one of the event organizers, Dave

Soutter said. "Dempsey Center is the perfect fit for Mary's Firemen. My mom received chemotherapy treatments in Lewiston and would have greatly benefited from Dempsey Center's services. We are so proud to join them in their mission of helping those Mainers managing the impact of cancer."

In 2004, Mary and Wayne Allen started "Firemen for a Cure" at Shawnee Peak in Bridgton, Maine to give firefighters the opportunity to raise money for those fighting and awareness about breast cancer. Mary was a long-time employee at Shawnee Peak and had been fighting breast cancer for nearly 10 years. Wayne is a volunteer firefighter in North Bridgton. Unfortunately, Mary lost her courageous

battle in 2005, but Wayne and her three adult-children, Christine, David and Ryan Soutter renamed the event, "Mary's Firemen for a Cure" in 2006 and have been holding the event in memory of Mary. Since 2012, Wayne's wife, Laurie Allen, has been absolutely essential to the event's success.

Travis Dow, assistant General Manager at Lost Valley added, "The firefighter's race has been such a fun and exciting event at Lost Valley, but why should the firefighters and EMTs have all the fun? The new Ski Patrol race will be a great way to get other mountains involved!"

WMTW personality Meghan Torjussen will return as emcee for this year's event. Registration will be-

gin at 10:00am on March 2, 2024, with the firefighter's race beginning at 1:00pm. The Ski Patrol race will immediately follow. The entry fee is \$150 per team which includes four day/night lift tickets, a T-shirt for each team member and a chili lunch. Although registration can be done day of the event, teams are encouraged to register by February 23 to assist race planners. Discounted lift tickets are also available for family members of racers.

To register a team and begin fundraising, or to learn more about the event, please visit the organization's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/MarysFiremenforaCure](http://www.facebook.com/MarysFiremenforaCure). For any questions, email [dcsoutter@gmail.com](mailto:dcsoutter@gmail.com).



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# Cooking with Hannaford Chef Dorene Mills

## Italian sausage and cheese eggrolls



Just in time for Superbowl Sunday, try these Italian sausage and cheese eggrolls

Yield: 16 Eggrolls  
Prep Time: 20 minutes

Time for cook: Air fryer – 15 minutes; Deep Fry – 3-4 minutes; Bake – 20 minutes

**Ingredients:**  
1 package (1 – 1 ½ pounds) ground Sweet Italian Sausage, raw  
1 small onion  
½ red or yellow pepper  
8 strips string cheese  
1 package Egg roll wrappers

Water for wrapping  
Marinara for dipping  
Vegetable oil for coating

Method of Prep:

1) Prep onions and pepper by cutting into thin strips, and cut string cheese in half through the width. Using a fork, stir and fluff the ground sausage a little.  
2) Taking one wrapper at a time, place in front of you on a cutting board orienting like a diamond. Keep remaining wrappers covered with a damp paper towel until ready to use. Lay a couple strips of onion and pepper in the middle parallel to you, fol-

lowed by half of a cheese stick, then add a couple forkfuls of ground sausage on top. The fillings should be a short line in the center of the wrapper parallel to you with the points of the wrapper facing up, down and to the sides.

3) Using a finger, dip into the water and smear a thin layer over the top sides and point of the egg roll wrapper. Take the bottom point of the wrapper and wrap up and over the filling. Then take both sides and gently tuck them into the middle, careful not to pull too hard or the wrapper may crack. Then take the tubular part and wrap upwards towards the top point, making sure the water seals to the body of the wrap. Cover finished egg rolls with a damp paper towel until ready to cook.

4) If air-frying, use a brush to lightly coat the outside with vegetable oil, place on rack and air-fry at 400F for about 15 minutes till brown and internal temp reaches 160F. If deep frying, place in basket and fry at 350F for 3 – 4 minutes, until internal temp reaches 160F. If baking in an oven, place on a sheet pan with foil/parchment/silpat and bake at 400F for 20 minutes, until internal temp reaches 160F.

5) Enjoy with a side of Marinara or your favorite pasta sauce.

# Norway Savings Bank food drives assist Gorham pantries



Previous food drive at Standish Branch.

**GORHAM, ME---**  
During February, the Gorham and Standish Branches of Norway Savings Bank will celebrate Valentine's Day with month-long food drives to benefit local food pantries and, in the spirit of the month, spread love throughout the community.

To help, participants can drop nonperishable food items off at either branch during business hours:

**Gorham Branch**  
65 Main Street  
Mon. – Thu., 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Fri., 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sat., 8:30 a.m. to noon  
**Donations for Gorham Food Pantry**  
Standish Branch  
88 Ossipee Trail East  
Mon. – Thu., 8:30



a.m. to 4 p.m.; Fri., 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sat., 8:30 a.m. to noon

**Donations for Standish Food Pantry**

There is a special need for boxed macaroni and cheese, Ramen noodles, peanut butter, baked beans, canned pasta, canned soup, canned vegetables, tuna, chicken, coffee, tea, and cocoa, but all non-perishable food items will be gratefully accepted.

“Norway Savings Bank views initiatives like these as its responsibility,” said Dan Walsh, President and CEO of Norway

Savings Bank. “At all of our branches, efforts to confront challenges being faced by community members are in the forefront of planning and operation. The Bank believes that our communities work best when we all work together, and these food drives are another way we can engage our customers in joining us to help many in need.”

For more information or to discover additional ways to assist, call the Gorham Food Pantry at 207-222-4351 and the Standish Food Pantry at 207-358-0359.



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# Mamma Mia hits the Gorham High School stage

By Director Joshua Hurd

Personally, last year's production was a bucket list show. It was a massive labor of love from everyone that helped put it together and make it happen. It was a wonderful and very special production, but it took a lot of effort from the cast, the crew, the builders, and the community with all that endless fundraising. I mean, who knew it cost so much just to fly a couple students across the stage? This year with Mamma Mia, I think we all wanted something fun, lighthearted and special in its own way. So, what fits that mold better than ABBA?

Times are hard these days. Look to the people around you. Your friends, family and neighbors, the stranger to your left or right, and the person in

front of you or behind you. If we can't agree on much lately, I think we can all agree that the struggle is real for everyone. So while you're here, forget all that and soak up the music and the joy coming from that stage in front of you.

From the very beginning I wanted to showcase the music in the show. To just enhance the story of Donna and Sophie through these amazing songs. I wanted to pay tribute to ABBA by making our live band a highlight from the very beginning. Get excited by the sound and the noise that's going to come from that stage. It's this great music that we all know and love. You may not want to admit it publicly, but who doesn't love the beat to Dancing Queen?

Enjoy! Have fun! Smile and be happy with us

as this totally amazing cast, crew and band present this timeless songs of ABBA to a heartwarming story of love, trust and friendship.

The cast, ensemble, and crew of the show include:

- Crew- Sophie Sheridan- Elle Woodman
- Ali- Hailey Racine
- Lisa- Gracey MacDonald
- Donna Sheridan- Lily Rubin
- Tanya- Sophia Andrade
- Rosie- Ella Senatore
- Sky- Logan Mills
- Pepper- Alex Tukey
- Eddie- Zach Bourgo-
- in Harry Bright- Nicholas Tinkham
- Bill Austin- Patrick Delaney
- Sam Carmichael-
- Alex Robbins
- Ensemble- Lauren

Pierce, Lauren Greenier, Amy Morin, Jenna Pequinot, Izzy Smith, Anayah Brown, Olivia Kennedy, Hannah Martel, Mike Distasio, Elsie Moreno, Noah Williams, Ally Gos-

sen, & Isabelle Phinney  
Crew- Kira Keniston, Gillian Lachance, Max Lampron, & Emma Smith

Lighting Designer - Joseph Strout  
Costume Designer - Darnell Stuart

Preview Reception Caterer - For the Love of Food & Drink

Preview Concessions - Greeks of Peaks



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# Report: Maine must end flavored tobacco product sales

**MAINE** – A new report from the American Lung Association urges Maine lawmakers to focus on ending the sale of menthol cigarettes and all flavored tobacco products to reduce the burden of tobacco use. The 2024 “State of Tobacco Control” report evaluates state and federal policies on actions taken to eliminate tobacco use and recommends proven-effective tobacco control laws and policies to save lives. Maine received one F, one C, one B and two As for policies to improve statewide efforts to prevent and reduce tobacco use.

“Tobacco use is the leading cause of death in Maine and across the country, and takes the lives of 2,390 state residents each year. The tobacco industry will do anything to protect their profits at the expense of Maine lives, so we must push forward in our efforts to prevent and reduce to-

bacco use,” said Lance Boucher at the American Lung Association in Maine. “This year, we are working with state policymakers to focus on ending the sale of all flavored tobacco products, including menthol cigarettes. We know that kids are attracted to flavored e-cigarettes, and that menthol cigarettes continue to be the major cause of tobacco-related death and disease in Black communities, with over 80% of Black individuals who smoke using them. Ending the sale of all flavored tobacco products, including menthol cigarettes, will not only help end youth vaping, but will address health disparities.”

Maine Grades  
The “State of Tobacco Control” report grades states and the District of Columbia in five areas that have been proven to prevent and reduce tobacco use and save lives. In



the 2024 report, Maine received the following grades:

- Funding for State Tobacco Prevention Programs – Grade A
  - Strength of Smoke-free Workplace Laws – Grade B
  - Level of State Tobacco Taxes – Grade C
  - Coverage and Access to Services to Quit Tobacco – Grade A
  - Ending the Sale of All Flavored Tobacco Products – Grade F
- “We strongly urge the Governor and Maine Legislature to build upon the momentum of the six local communities that have acted already to end the sale of flavored tobacco prod-

ucts. Passage of LD 1215 will result in statewide action ensuring all Maine kids from Kittery to Madawaska are protected from the efforts of the tobacco industry to addict them to nicotine,” Boucher concluded, “Additionally, we are working closely with Maine officials to end the sale of tobacco products in pharmacies as well as preserve full funding of Maine’s tobacco prevention and control program.”

Federal Grades Overview

This year’s report focuses on recent federal actions, including President Biden’s failure to finalize rules to end the sale of menthol cigarettes and

flavored cigars, as well as FDA’s overdue review of all applications for e-cigarette products, including flavors that are popular among youth. Because of the delay on the federal rules to end the sale of menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars, it is even more important for states to enact laws to end the sale of all flavored tobacco products.

The 2024 “State of Tobacco Control” report grades the federal government in five areas:

- Federal Government Regulation of Tobacco Products – Grade C
- Federal Coverage of Quit Smoking Treatments – Grade D
- Level of Federal Tobacco Taxes – Grade F
- Federal Mass Media Campaigns to Prevent and Reduce Tobacco Use – Grade: A
- Federal Minimum Age of Sale for Tobacco

Products to 21 – Incomplete\*

\*FDA remains grossly overdue in publishing the final Tobacco 21 regulations as required by statute, which is why it earns an “incomplete.”

The Lung Association calls on the White House to urgently finalize rules to end the sales of menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars in the U.S. to save lives now. Send an email to President Biden at [Lung.org/Stop-Menthol](mailto:Lung.org/Stop-Menthol) to insist these rules be finalized urgently. To learn more about this year’s “State of Tobacco Control” grades and take action, visit [Lung.org/sotc](http://Lung.org/sotc).

Get involved and help the mission of the American Lung Association. The Trek Across Maine is coming up on June 14 -16 starting in Brunswick, Maine. Learn more at [CycleForAir.org](http://CycleForAir.org)

## Collins, King recognize National Mentoring Month

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – U.S. Senators Susan Collins and Angus King have joined a bipartisan resolution recognizing January 2024 as “National Mentoring Month” to celebrate the positive influence mentors can have on children and young adults.

The resolution underscores the mentoring gap that exists in the United States, where only one in three young people

grow up with a mentor, and highlights the need for more adults to invest their time in the success of young adults.

“Mentors provide leadership and act as role models for children and young adults as they navigate challenging times during their lives,” said Senators Collins and King. “The bipartisan 2024 National Mentoring Resolution underscores the

importance of this figure in a child’s life to equip our young people with the guidance that will empower them to build a brighter future for themselves and for the state of Maine.”

The resolution recognizes the benefits of mentoring, including fostering life skills in young adults. According to MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership, young people with a mentor are:

- 52 percent less likely to skip a day of school;
- 55 percent more likely to be enrolled in college;
- 92 percent more likely to volunteer regularly in their communities; and
- 75 percent more likely to hold a leadership position in a club or sports team.

The 2024 National Mentoring Month resolution is cosponsored by Senators Sheldon Whitehouse

(D-RI), Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Marsha Blackburn (R-TN), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Mike Braun (R-IN), Katie Britt (R-AL), Laphonza Butler (D-CA), Tom Carper (D-DE), Chris Coons (D-DE), John Cornyn (R-TX), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Dick Durbin (D-IL), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Cindy Hyde-Smith

(R-MS), Tim Kaine (D-VA), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), James Lankford (R-OK), Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM), Ed Markey (D-MA), Markwayne Mullin (R-OK), Chris Murphy (D-CT), Jack Reed (D-RI), Marco Rubio (R-FL), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Tina Smith (D-MN), Dan Sullivan (R-AK), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Peter Welch (D-VT), and Ron Wyden (D-OR).

## Norway Savings Bank named “One of the Strongest Banks”

**NORWAY, ME**---BauerFinancial, Inc., the nation’s premier bank rating firm, is pleased to announce that Norway Savings Bank has earned the “Best of Bauer” distinction, reserved solely for banks that have earned and maintained Bauer’s 5-Star Rating for 25 years or longer. Norway Savings Bank has held the 5-Star Rating for 136 consecutive quarters (34 years), with the latest rating assigned in January 2024. According to Bauer, the longevity

and dependability of the Bank makes it “one of the strongest banks in the nation.”

“Bauer rates banks based on their overall financial condition,” said Karen Dorway, president of the rating firm. “Bauer does not rate based on how much a bank gives back to its community, but sometimes I wish we could. The employees of community banks, like Norway Savings Bank, feel a responsibility to help their community grow and thrive. It

gives me great pleasure to acknowledge that a bank that measures its success by the success of its neighbors and friends, does so from such a solid financial foundation.”

Bauer has been analyzing and reporting on the financial condition of the nation’s banking industry since 1983. No institution pays for its rating, nor can they avoid a rating. Each bank and credit union is required to file a detailed financial report with federal regulators four times



a year. The quarterly data is subjected to a thorough analysis and is compared with historical data by Bauer for consistency. Upon completion of the analysis, a star-rating is assigned based on a scale of zero to five stars with five

stars being the strongest. “Bauer has been doing this for a long time and is highly respected in the banking industry so we are honored to receive this designation. It further affirms what we know to be true: understanding our

customers and building relationships in our communities are the keys to making solid investments that make a meaningful impact for those we serve,” said Dan Walsh, President and CEO of Norway Savings Bank.

**Mills**  
*Continued from page 5*  
bring their own approach

to the role, resulting in a dynamic partnership with the Federal Co-Chair and NBRC team during each

new term. “We are incredibly excited to welcome the leadership of Governor Mills as State Co-

Chair of the Commission. The Governor has a well thought out vision for economic growth in Maine and our region will

benefit from the creativity and dedication of her and her team,” said Federal Co-Chair Chris Saunders.

“In Maine, we’ve grown our economy at a faster rate than much larger states by investing in our people and the things they need to succeed. I look forward to applying lessons from our success as I work with my fellow Governors and our federal partners to spur economic growth throughout the Northern Border region,” said Governor

Janet Mills. “I extend my gratitude to Governor Sununu for his dedicated work as State Co-Chair over the last four years and thank the Maine Congressional Delegation for its continued work to provide federal resources for this vital organization.”

Since January 2020, the State Co-Chair position has been filled by New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu and his Governor’s Alternate, Commissioner Taylor Caswell.

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# Good Shepherd issues grants to healthcare, school partners

**AUBURN, ME --** Each year, Good Shepherd Food Bank offers the opportunity for our school and healthcare partners to apply for Capacity Building Grants. The purpose of this grant program is to support partners looking to increase the amount of healthy food they're able to distribute through their programs and to increase the number of individuals they serve.

In total, Good Shepherd Food Bank invested \$125,352 into 50 of our partners throughout the state.

\$40,000 was distributed to 8 Healthcare partners

\$85,352 was distributed to 42 school programs and afterschool partners

- School award list:
- Agnes Gray Elementary School
  - AIO Food & Energy Assistance
  - Athens Community School
  - Bangor School Department
  - Belfast Soup Kitchen
  - Searsport Elementary & Middle/High School
  - Bethel Area District Exchange and Food Pantry



- East Range II School Educare Central Maine
- Farwell School/ Lewiston Public School District
- Guy E. Rowe Elementary School
- Harrington Elementary School
- Hope Baptist Church
- Limestone Community School
- Locker Project
- Mannafed Backpack

- Program RSU16
- Mano en Mano
- Medomak Vally High School-RSU #40
- Montello Elementary Lewiston Maine
- MSAD #30 Food Cupboard
- MSAD #37-Narraguagus Jr/Sr High School
- Nokomis regional High JROTC
- Northern Maine Community College

- Oxford Hills Middle School
- Park Ave Elem School
- Penquis Valley Middle/High School
- Promise Early Educational
- RSU 9 Community Food Pantry
- SeDoMoCha RSU 68
- Southern Aroostook Community School
- UMA Bangor
- UMA Ellsworth Center
- University of Maine Valley Jr/Sr High School
- Van Buren District School
- Washington County Community College
- Whiting Village School
- Wisdom High School
- Healthcare award list: Christine B. Foundation
- Clinical Community Services
- Fish River Rural Health
- LincolnHealth
- Northern Light Home Care and Hospice
- Pen Bay Medical Center
- Southern Maine Health Care

# New England Cancer Specialists oncologists join team at CMMC



**LEWISTON, ME --** Two physicians from New England Cancer Specialists (NECS) will begin treating patients at the Cancer Care Center at Central Maine Medical Center (CMMC), which is part of Central Maine Healthcare (CMH).

Late last year, Central Maine Healthcare entered into a strategic co-management agreement with NECS, a leading provider of oncology services in the Northeast, to enhance medical oncology and infusion services in the central Maine region.

One of the new providers is Julia Moukharskaya, MD, a hematologist

and medical oncologist whose guiding philosophy is to provide patients with the highest quality of care possible.

"While part of this goal can be achieved by offering the latest therapeutic and diagnostic advances, the other part depends on each individual patient. By providing patients with an active role in the decision-making process, we inform a partnership that provides them with the most effective, compassionate and individualized care possible."

Dr. Moukharskaya attended medical school at Belarusian State Medical



University in Belarus. She completed her residency at East Tennessee State University, Quillen College of Medicine and fellowship at the University of Vermont.

Daniel Rausch, MD, graduated from Tufts University School of Medicine and completed his residency at the Lahey Clinic Medical Center. Dr. Raus-



ch, a native of the Lewiston-Auburn community, was employed by CMMC between 2010-2022, providing cancer care services to patients.

"The treatment of cancer is a complex and rapidly changing field, with new practice-changing information being released almost on a weekly



basis. I enjoy approaching every new patient I see as a unique case with unique goals and treatment options."

Additionally, Nichollette Erickson, MD, a leader in medical oncology with CMH for more than 30 years, has joined NECS as part of the agreement and will continue to see patients at Rumford Hospital, Bridgton Hospital and the Cancer Care Center at CMMC, all of which are part of CMH.

The Cancer Care Center at CMMC is a state-of-the-art facility that opened its doors to patients in the spring of

2022, providing multi-specialty, team-based care in a centralized location. The facility features the newest linear accelerators for radiation therapy in Maine, beautiful infusion suites, onsite lab, clinical pharmacy and convenient patient parking.

Under the co-management agreement, NECS will oversee operations and development of the Cancer Care Center's hematology-oncology practice and oncology infusion centers at CMMC, as well as CMH's two critical access hospitals, Bridgton Hospital and Rumford Hospital.

# SeniorsPlus awarded grant for care coordination services

**LEWISTON, ME --** SeniorsPlus, the designated Area Agency on Aging serving Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford counties, was awarded a \$500,000 grant through the Office of Aging and Disability Services (OADS), who has partnered with the National Disability Institute (NDI) for the project. The project is designed to enhance care coordination services to Section 19 waiver members with as-

sistive technology needs. Services include a comprehensive assistive technology assessment, and—as needed—device selection, installation, training, and tech support.

The goal of the project is to improve Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) through innovation that will be scalable and lead to improved quality of life, independence, and housing stability. The program also

aims to reduce hospital re-admissions and reliance on hands-on personal care services.

"The expectation is that the project will increase client independence and reduce hours of personal care, potentially reducing client and taxpayer dollars," said Betsy Sawyer-Manter, President and CEO.

As per the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (HCBS), "Home

and community based services provide opportunities for Medicaid beneficiaries to receive services in their own home or community rather than institutions or other isolated settings. These programs serve a variety of targeted populations groups, such as people with intellectual or developmental disabilities, physical disabilities, and/or mental illnesses."

Partners on the project include Brandeis University for data analytics and benchmarking, the University of Pittsburgh Department of Rehabilitation Science and Technology, and 3i Housing of Maine (3iHoME).

At SeniorsPlus, the project is led by Long Term Services and Supports Director Tracy Smith. A licensed occupa-

tional therapist with assistive technology expertise has been hired as the care coordinator for the project. The project goal for SeniorsPlus is to enroll up to 30 participants by the end of 2024. Potential candidates for the program must be enrolled in SeniorsPlus Care Coordination services and should contact their assigned Care Coordinator by email or phone.



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# Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

**Feb 2**

AUBURN -- Crafting Hour: Felt Corner Bookmarks from 3 PM - 4 PM - Teen Space, Auburn Public Library

Stop by the Teen Space to make your own felt corner bookmark! Supplies and snacks included.

**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 3**

GORHAM -- Public Bean Supper, White Rock Community Clubhouse, 34 Wilson Road, Gorham on Saturday, February 3, 4:00-5:30pm

Eat in or take out, no pre-orders. Meal includes baked kidney & pea beans, coleslaw, potato salad, macaroni & cheese, biscuits, hot dogs and dessert. \$10 adults, \$5 under 12 Follow us on Facebook for updates: facebook.com/whiterockcommunityclub

**Feb 4, 7, 8, 9, 10**

MAINE – DaPonte String Quartet Concerts in February. Program:

Beethoven String Trio in D Major, Op. 9 no 2, Francaix String Trio & Arensky Quartet No. 2 in A minor, Op. 35 for violin, viola and 2 cellos with guest artist, cellist Fred Edelen. Tickets and additional information available at [www.dapontequartet.org](http://www.dapontequartet.org)

Sunday, February 4, 2:00 pm, St. Columba's Episcopal Church, Boothbay

Wednesday, February 7, 7:00 pm, Union Hall, Rockport

Thursday, February 8, 7:00 pm, Jewish Community Alliance, Portland

Friday, February 9, 7:00 pm, Nordica Hall, University of Maine, Farmington

Saturday, February 10, 2:00 pm, Lemont Hall, Brunswick

**Feb 5**

LEWISTON -- TAROT 101 WORKSHOP AT LPL

The Lewiston Public Library will host a Tarot 101 Workshop on Tuesday, February 6, 2024, from 5 to 6:30 pm in The Jeanne Couture Room. The Tarot 101 Workshop will feature the return of Kate Sheridan, a.k.a The Laundress. This workshop is free and open to both teens and

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

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

**Feb 7, 21**

AUBURN -- Anime & Manga Club 2/7 and 2/21 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!

**Feb 8**

AUBURN -- Tweens in the Teen Space 2/8 from 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM - Teen Space, Auburn Public Library

Today the Teen Space will be open for teens and tweens to come hang out after school. Play games, do homework, and eat snacks with friends!

**Feb 13, 27**

AUBURN -- Teen Space Craft Club 2/13 and 2/27 from 4 PM - 5 PM - Teen Space, Au-

burn 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!

**Feb 14**

AUBURN -- Love Letters to Books 2/14 from 3 PM - 4 PM - Teen Space, Auburn Public Library

Celebrate Valentine's Day by writing your favorite book a love letter! Join us in the Teen Space and write to that special book in your life.

**Feb 15**

AUBURN -- Tween Craft Club 2/15 from 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM - Teen Space, Auburn Public Library

Tween Craft Club is a time to learn something new! Learn our craft of the month or bring your own project to work on. Crafters of any experience are welcome!

**Feb 20**

AUBURN -- Healthy Relationships: SAPARS Drop In 2/20 from 2 PM - 3:30 PM - Teen Space, Auburn Public Library

February is healthy relationships month! SAPARS is stopping by the Teen Space for a drop in session for anyone looking for information on healthy relationships, consent, and

resources that are available to you.

The Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Services serves Androscoggin, Franklin and Oxford counties by educating communities and supporting victims/survivors of rape, child sexual abuse and other forms of sexual violence. They work to prevent and eliminate sexual violence and rape and to promote healing and empowerment for everyone affected by all forms of sexual harassment.

**Feb 20**

AUBURN -- Button Making 2/20 from 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM - Teen Space, Auburn Public Library

Hang out in the Teen Space and learn how to make your own buttons. Create your own designs and decorate your jacket, backpack, and more. Supplies and snacks included.

This program is a part of the Lewiston Public

Library/Auburn Public Library Teen Mental Health & Support series. This series will run throughout 2024 and offer programs to help teenagers get information and resources on emotional and mental wellness, offer creative outlets for feelings and build community. These programs are run concurrently between LPL and APL with the same or similar community partners.

**Election**

*Continued from page 1*

To be counted, absentee ballots must be returned to the Town Clerk's Office by 8pm on Election Day - March 5, 2024 by you or an immediate family member.

For more general voting information, visit the Town's website. If you have further questions about absentee voting, please stop by the Town Clerk's Office, call 222-1670.

## GORHAM LITTLE LEAGUE

# Field Funding Campaign

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

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

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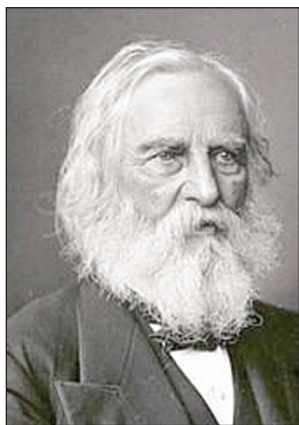
# Longfellow Days celebrates 20th year

**BRUNSWICK, ME**  
 -- Brunswick's month-long celebration of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and poetry is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year with events that include poetry readings, Longfellow's birthday celebration (his 217th), music, and gatherings for audiences- to share their own or favorite poems.

One of the features of this year's celebration is the recent publication of *Read to Me Some Poem: 20 Years of Longfellow Days Poems*, published by Moon Pie Press. Maryli Tiemann, one of the founders of the event and who with Alice Persons edited the new book, said, "We're thrilled to celebrate this collection of poems with a book launch on February 3rd. These ninety diverse poems are a perfect way to honor the poets who've read their poetry over our 20 years. Plus, the vibrancy of this collection echoes the pulse of poetry happening throughout Maine."

"The legacy of Longfellow began in Maine, and he lived here in Brunswick - not as the bearded old guy we might first imagine - but beginning as a Bowdoin student of just 15, and later as a newly married professor," she said. Longfellow graduated from Bowdoin College in 1825 and returned a decade later as the college's first professor of modern languages.

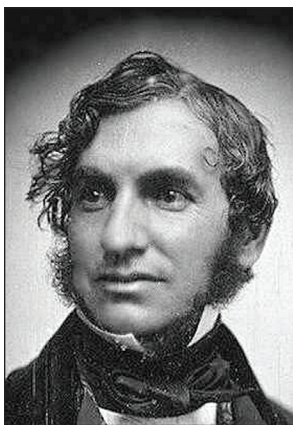
Bowdoin's contribu-



tions to Longfellow Days have included hosting two of Longfellow's biographers: Charles Calhoun and Christoph Irmscher, simultaneously. Other ongoing collaborations have been with poet and co-owner of Gulf of Maine Books Gary Lawless, Pejepsot History Center, MidCoast Senior College's Winter Wisdom programming, the Unitarian Universalist Church, and films at Eveningstar with Bowdoin Professor Tricia Welsch.

"Still," Tiemann said, "the poets and their poetry are the pulse of February. Brunswick has a cultural heritage of writers, of poets - not just Longfellow. And the beauty of Longfellow Days glows each time a poet shares a poem."

She noted that the events over the years have included students, Maine poet laureates, and elders reciting Longfellow poems they learned in grade school. She added, "It's the poets who make Longfellow Days vibrant, while



February zips by."

Throughout this February, anniversary displays will be on view at Curtis Memorial Library and the Brunswick Visitor's Center. And Gelato Fiasco will scoop The Longfellow, three themed flavors.

Twelve main events are scheduled this year, and all are free:

The first is the book launch on Saturday, Feb. 3, at 1 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Brunswick. Many of the book's poets will read, there will be music, and The Holy Donut will provide refreshments.

Four Sunday Courser Readings, named for long-time Bowdoin College literature professor and poet, Herb Courser, will feature poets reading their own works as well as poems of 12 deceased Longfellow Day's poets. The readings are Sundays on Feb. 4, 11, 18, and 25 at 1 p.m. at the Curtis Memorial Library Fireplace Room.

Poet Gary Lawless



and historian John Cross will explore "Morituri Salutamus," a poem Longfellow wrote for his 50th Bowdoin reunion. This "Parsing A Poem" event will be Feb. 13 at 6:30 at the Pejepsot History Center. Registration is required.

Community poetry readings, where those attending are invited to read their own or favorite poems, will be held Feb. 15 at the Highlands in Topsham and Feb. 22 at Thornton Oaks in Brunswick. Both are at 2:30 p.m.

A tour of the Joshua L. Chamberlain Museum - home to Longfellow decades before Chamberlain lived there - will be held on Feb. 17. Registration is required.

Mark Harris, minister emeritus of First Parish

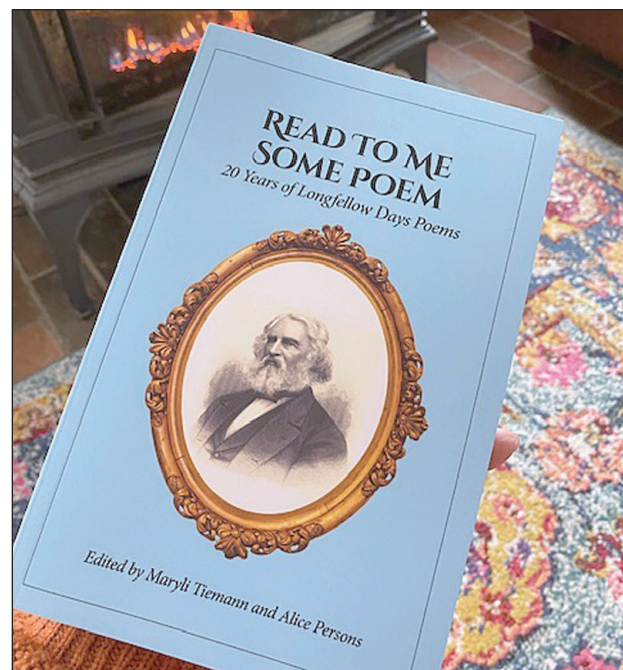
in Watertown, MA, will speak at 1 p.m. on Feb. 21 about Longfellow's younger brother, Samuel, a Uni-

tarian minister and hymn writer. The talk is part of the Midcoast Senior College Winter Wisdom series and will be held at the Unitarian Universalist Church.

The church will hold an ecumenical service to Longfellow on Feb. 25 at 10 a.m. led by Rev. Dr. Kharma Amos with music by Jud Caswell.

Finally, Henry's birthday party on Feb. 27 at 6:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Church will include a poetry open mic and music by the Bowdoin College a cappella group, the Longfellows.

For further details and information how to register for programs, visit <https://www.uubrunswick.org/longfellow-days-2024-anniversaries/>



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