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CMH, American Red Cross encourage blood donations

LEWISTON, ME -- Lab analysts and technicians from Central Maine Healthcare (CMH), which includes Central Maine Medical Center (CMMC), Rumford Hospital and Bridgton Hospital, are urging members of the public to consider giving blood. While CMH maintains an adequate supply of blood for its patients, the region is facing severe shortages.

January is National Blood Donor Month.

The American Red Cross is experiencing an emergency blood shortage, with donations at a 20-year low. Here in Maine, about 1,500 donor appointments are cur-



Sandy Clark confers with Nick Aripez, lab medical technologist at CMMC

rently unfilled.

Of the more than two hundred million Americans who are eligible to give blood, about six million donate.

The need for a dependable blood supply was highlighted during the Oct. 25 mass casualty event in Lewiston at CMMC. But CMH team members say the need is year-round.

"Working in the lab, I see first-hand the need for blood for our patients," said Sandy Clark, lab analyst at CMMC. Sandy lives in Bridgton and started her lab career at Bridgton Hospital 30 years ago and donates blood regularly, herself.

"Being in the lab, you see the pa-

tient orders. At Bridgton, these are my family, my friends and my neighbors. Giving blood is a very real and very simple way that I can help take care of them," she said.

"Our biggest concern is maintaining the supply," said Adam Norfolk, technical lab supervisor at CMMC. Our blood supply has been maintained by a few altruistic individuals wanting to help sick people. As this cohort ages and retires, they stop donating and younger people are not donating enough to replenish the inventory."

Anyone who wants to donate can check out the list of blood drives happening across the state and register online.

Shelly Quinn of Premier Pools & Spas is Salesperson of the Year



LEWISTON, ME – Premier Pools & Spas of Lewiston, Maine, is proud to announce that Shelly Quinn was awarded the 2023 National Salesperson of the Year at the Premier Pools and Spas Annual Awards Conference. Quinn joined Premier Pools & Spas in 2020. She is the first woman to achieve this level of success within the Premier Family and received the prestigious National Salesperson of the Year Award in 2022 and 2023.

"Competition for this award is fierce among salespeople all around the country, and to have our very own Shelly from Lewiston, Maine, win it while competing against offices in places such as Florida, California, and Texas is just incredible," said Premier Pools and Spas Co-Owner Derek Messenger.

"Shelly embodies everything it means to be a Premier Pools and Spas designer. Once she begins a journey with her clients, nothing will stop her from delivering that dream pool for them. It is her servant's heart and attention to detail that set her apart from the rest. We are honored to

have Shelly in the Premier family." ~ Josh Rickaby, Executive Vice-President Sales

"I am so grateful that Derek and Mike gave me this opportunity in 2020. I absolutely love what I do! I genuinely get excited about every project! I enjoy meeting each family or property owner, hearing about their dreams for their property, using my art background to design their pool, and then our incredible team brings their dreams to life. I can't think of a better career than making dreams come true!" said Quinn.

Premier Pools and Spas - Lewiston has been building swimming pools for over 30 years, building between 60 and 70 pools yearly. With deep roots in the Lewiston community, we pride ourselves on our high standards and exemplary customer service.

If you're considering a new pool for your property, Premier Pools & Spas can make your dream a reality. Request a free consultation and estimate by contacting Shelly Quinn of Premier Pools & Spas at squinn@ppas.com or call (207) 212-6395

YWCA'S Women of Achievement Awards open for nomination

Nominations for YWCA Central Maine's Women of Achievement Awards are now open. The awards brunch to be held on March 10th, 2024, at the Hilton Garden Inn Auburn Riverwatch will honor four distinguished women from Androscoggin County and the Greater State of Maine.

The Women of Achievement Awards Brunch is one the YWCA's largest bi-annual fundraisers and was founded in 2015 to honor the powerful leadership of women in Maine. This award program began to recognize the outgoing YWCA Board President, Lee Young. The decision to honor her work inspired YWCA executive leadership to create annual awards to celebrate the accomplishments of women in our community and state. The brunch convenes a diverse cross-section of our community, including organization leaders, educators, activists, artists, entrepreneurs, politicians, and supporters of the YWCA.

The Women of Achievement Awards Brunch is not only a uniquely, powerful celebration of women leaders, it is also an opportunity for proceeds to support the YWCA's work in the community, which provides meaningful programming and services to further the mission of empowering women, and eliminating racism, including scholarships for children in our community to attend summer camp and swim lessons.

YWCA Central Maine invites the community to submit nominations for our Women of Achievement award that includes four distinct categories honoring:

Leadership, Social Justice, Service, and Philanthropy. The award namesakes have all contributed their service to YWCA and their legacies inspire the work of the organization. The four awards include the Lee Young Leadership Award, the Marcia Baxter Social Justice Award, the Tonie Ramsey Service Award, and the Priscilla Gendron Legacy Award. Nominations are open until February 1, 2024. To nominate go to: <https://bit.ly/NominateWOA> Tickets for Women of Achievement can be purchased at: <https://YWCAMaine-WOA.eventbrite.com>

If you are interested in sponsoring this event or donating an item to the silent auction please reach out to Jennifer Molloy, Chief Development and Communications Officer at jmolloy@ywca-maine.org



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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

CMCC offering free CNA training

AUBURN, ME – The Center for Workforce and Professional Development at Central Maine Community College (CMCC) is partnering with area employers and service providers to recruit candidates interested in completing their Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Certification. Information and registration for the free program is available at centralmaine.cc/workforceapply.

The CNA course begins on March 4, 2024 and finishes on May 22, 2024. Classes and Clinicals will be held in-person in South Paris, ME. Classes will take place on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:00 pm - 7:00 pm; with Clinicals being held on Thursdays from 3:30 pm - 8:30 pm. Certified Nursing Assistant

students learn introductory concepts of nursing care, including areas such as anatomy, nutritional care, medication care, and disease management. This 130-hour course is taught by industry professionals in partnership with Oxford Hills/Nezinscot Adult Education. Skills lab and written exam included.

The starting salary for a CNA is averaging \$32,000/year.

This training is just one of the many free courses offered by Workforce and Professional Development including Introduction to Phlebotomy, Certified Pharmacy Technician, Computer Support Specialist – 2 Course Bundle, CETP Gas Training, Refrigerant EPA 608, and the Welding Academy.

These programs are funded by the Maine Jobs and Recovery Program (MJRP). The course materials and exam fees are also covered. Participants must be at least 18 years of age, possess a high school diploma, GED, or HiSet, and be a U.S. citizen and/or authorized to work in the U.S. A criminal background check may be required. Candidates are only eligible to participate in one MJRP program being offered at any of the seven colleges in the Maine Community College System.

For more information or to register, please contact Central Maine Community College's Center for Workforce & Professional Development at workforcedevelopment@cmcc.edu or 207-755-5280.

Lewiston Adult Ed welcomes veteran educator Bernie Fortier



Veteran Lewiston educator Bernie Fortier will teach a trio of new classes as part of the Winter-Spring 2024 semester at Lewiston Adult Education.

LEWISTON, ME -- A familiar face from Lewiston High School will teach three classes at Lewiston Adult Education during the Winter-Spring 2024 semester.

Bernie Fortier, who retired as a Latin teacher at Lewiston High School in 2023, will present classes

on financial literacy, Latin for legal/business terms and Latin for medical terms. His and many new and returning teachers' listings will appear in the new Lewiston Adult Education brochure, scheduled to arrive in mailboxes around Jan. 20.

Check out our new

selection of cooking classes, including Lali Constantino's on making tacos with corn tortillas; making a burrito with a flour tortilla and creating a sweet bread called conchas. Learn how to make strawberry lemonade from concentrate from Kate McCarty of the University of Maine Cooperative Extension.

Nicole Hastings of the Physics and Astronomy Department at Bates College will discuss the total eclipse taking place on April 8, 2024. It will have its zone of totality, or total darkness, in northern Maine. Hastings will give her talk at Bates College.

For exercise enthusiasts, Becki Leighton will bring back two popular classes, Chair Zumba and Power Stretch, and Rosa Storer will be teaching another session of Livin' It Up Line Dancing and a new class, Twerkout.

Check out listings and register online before your brochure arrives by going to the Lewiston Adult Education website, www.lewiston.maineadult-ed.org.

Sen. Rotundo welcomes Miss Maine to the State House



Rep. Michel Lajoie, Miss Maine 2024 Kirsty Beauchesne, Sen. Peggy Rotundo and Rep. Kristen Cloutier in the Senate Chamber

AUGUSTA, ME — On Thursday, Sen. Peggy Rotundo, D-Lewiston, welcomed Kirsty Beauchesne, Miss Maine 2024, to the State House.

"It was wonderful to meet Ms. Beauchesne in Augusta yesterday — she is a very impressive young woman," said Sen. Rotundo. "I thank Kirsty for representing our community of Lewiston in such a positive light and wish her the best of luck in July!"

Ms. Beauchesne is a Lewiston native. She is currently pursuing a Master's in Business Administration from Husson University. In July, she will travel to San Antonio, Texas to represent Maine in the Miss United States of America pageant.

According to its website, "United States of America pageants are designed to encourage women to strive to achieve their hopes, dreams, goals, and aspirations, while making them feel confident and beautiful inside and out."

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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 secreted 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 or in bookstores and through online retailers. His previous books are *"The Great Mars Hill Bank Robbery"* and *"Mountains for Mortals – New England."* Visit his website at www.ronchaseoutdoors.com or he can be reached at ronchaseoutdoors@comcast.net

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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

CLT to bring back “Bandstand to Billboard” concert

AUBURN, ME -- The “Bandstand to Billboard” concert – featuring song favorites from the 50’s, 60’s and 70’s, is back! After four consecutive years of sold-out shows at the Franco Center, this very popular concert is back, with three performances to be held at Community Little Theatre (CLT) on February 9, 10, and 11.

The repertoire includes major hit songs - all of which hit Billboard’s Top 100 list and were also featured on the American Bandstand TV show. With six singers and a full live band, some of the songs include “L-O-V-E,” “Come Go With Me,” “Stand By Me,” “Happy Together,”

“Downtown,” “Chapel of Love,” “Sweet Caroline,” “Tie a Yellow Ribbon,” “Suspicious Minds,” and “Leaving On A Jet Plane.”

As an added treat, the band will perform a special tribute to the Beatles, commemorating the week in April 1964 when the Beatles held all top five slots in the Hot 100 list.

The returning singers, who are all veteran performers at CLT, are Renee Mahon Davis, Sophie Messina, Eileen M. Messina (director), Michael Litchfield, Gerry Therrien, and Duane Glover. The band includes Paul G. Caron, musical director and keyboards; Mike French, guitar; Shane Davis, bass; Mark Fred-



The “Bandstand to Billboard” singers are pictured here from left: Gerry Therrien, Sophie Messina, Duane Glover, Eileen Messina, Michael Litchfield, and Renee Mahon Davis.

ericks, percussion; Blaise Spath, woodwinds; Bruce Theriault, trombone; Mike Plossay and Mike Truchon, trumpet; Alex Wong, cello;

Kate Gray, violin; and Linda Vaillancourt, viola.

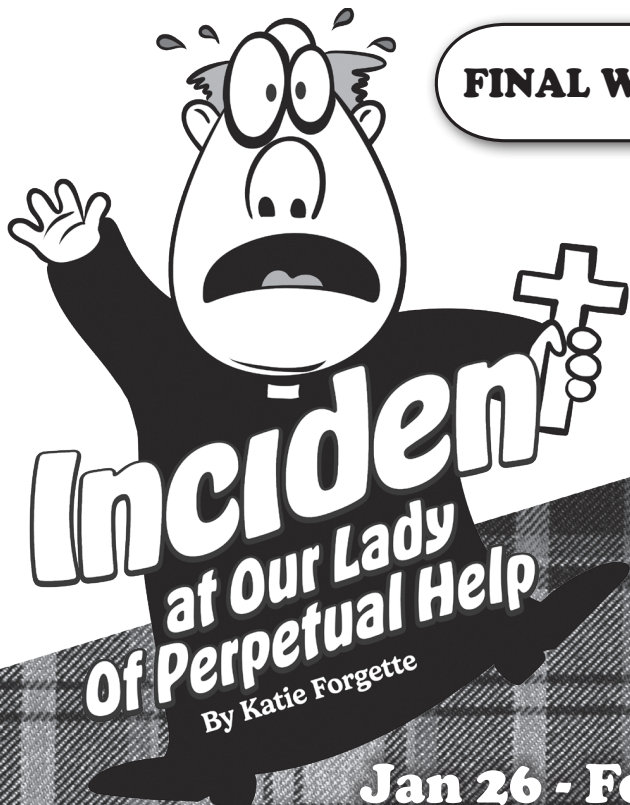
The three performances will be held starting at 7:30 p.m. on Febru-

ary 9 and 10, and at 2:00 p.m. on February 11. All performances will be held at CLT on 30 Academy Street in Auburn. Tickets

are \$25.00 and may be purchased online at <https://app.arts-people.com> or at the door. More information at <https://www.laclt.com>.

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TO

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Sat, Feb 10th, 2024 at 7:30 pm
Sun, Feb 11th, 2024 at 2:00 pm

What do you get when you take six local singers very familiar to CLT audiences, add eleven of the best musicians in Maine - all of whom met at and have been performing at CLT for decades, then mix them all up with some of your favorite love songs from the 50’s, 60’s and 70’s?



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A portion of these proceeds will go to the CLT Eastman Family Scholarship Fund to benefit high school seniors going on to study Performing Arts.

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. For any questions, email dcsoutter@gmail.com.



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Auburn UU Screens “sUUunday mUUvies”

AUBURN, ME -- In celebration of Black History Month, the First Universalist Church of Auburn will screen two films honoring the contributions of notable African Americans. The Adult Religion Education group will present these documentaries for free, following worship services on Feb. 4 and 18 @ 11:45 in the Vestry, as part of their “sUUunday mUUvies” series.

On Sunday, Feb. 4, 2024, Auburn UU will screen *Sweet Honey in the Rock: Raise Your Voice* (2008; 84 minutes). This film chronicles the history, music, and cultural impact of Sweet Honey

in the Rock, a Grammy Award-winning African American female cappella group with musical roots combining jazz, blues, sacred songs of the Black Church such as spirituals, hymns, and gospel.

The documentary, directed by the legendary African American film maker Stanley Nelson, Jr., uses concert footage and rehearsals, archival stills, and reflections by ensemble members, as well as interviews with scholars and cultural commentators.

On Sunday, Feb. 18, 2024, *Backs Against the Wall: The Howard Thurman Story* (2018; 56 minutes) will be screened. The

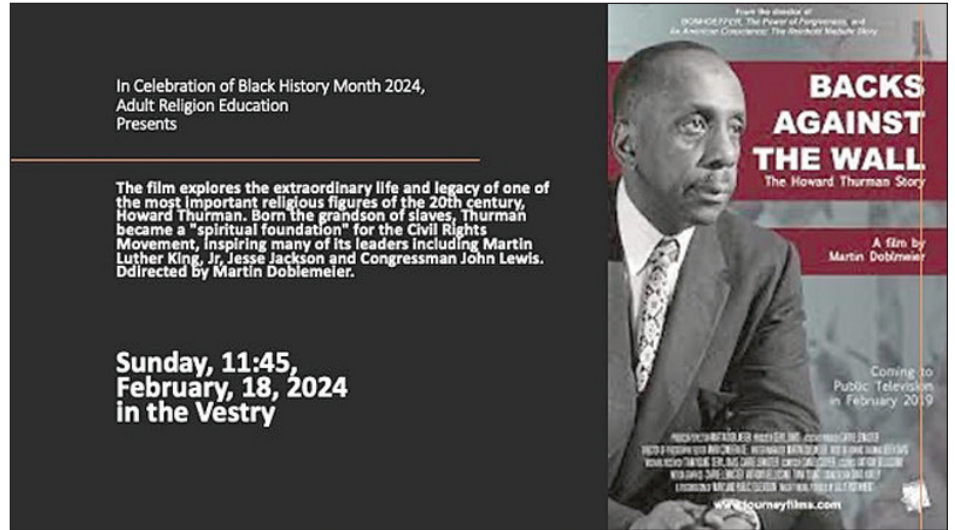
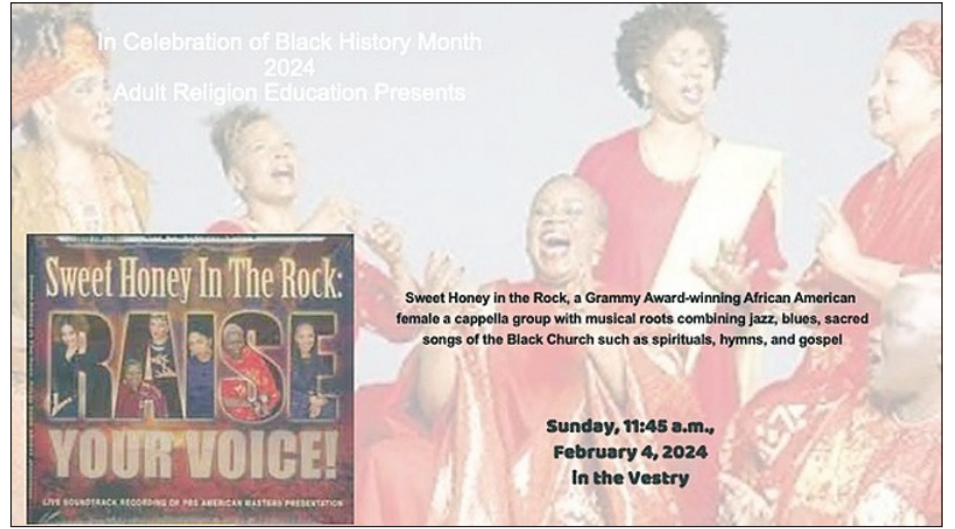
film explores the extraordinary life and legacy of one of the most important religious figures of the 20th century.

Born the grandson of slaves, Thurman became a “spiritual foundation” for the Civil Rights Movement, inspiring many of its leaders including Martin Luther King, Jr, Jesse Jackson and Congressman John Lewis. The documentary is directed by Martin Doblemeier.

Lively discussion will following each screening, moderated by Charles Nero, Distinguished Professor of Rhetoric, Film, and Screen Studies at Bates College.

Screenings are held at the First Universalist Church of Auburn, located at 169 Pleasant St. Enter on Spring, St., across from Dairy Joy. Parking; accessible. FMI 783-0461 or www.auburnuu.org.

Stay tuned for movie screenings in April, celebrating Women’s History Month.



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Barbara Gavin named 2023 Volunteer of the Year

LEWISTON, ME -- On November 14th, 2023 Androscoggin Home Healthcare & Hospice, Volunteer Barbara Gavin, received the Home Care & Hospice Alliance of Maine’s 2023 Volunteer of the Year Award. This award is presented to two outstanding volunteers

(one in the home care setting and the other in the hospice setting) who support activities related to home care and/or hospice care.

The Home Care & Hospice Alliance of Maine is a nonprofit organization comprised of home care, home health care & hospice providers who work collaboratively to ensure

Mainer’s with disabilities and older adults have access to affordable, accessible quality care in the comfort and safety of their own home and community.

On November 14th, the alliance hosted Maine’s home care and hospice community at the Blaine House to celebrate Home Care and Hospice Month and give thanks to

outstanding staff and volunteers.

“We came together to celebrate excellence in home care and hospice—both the outstanding staff and the selfless volunteers who profoundly impact the lives of our patients and their families.” ~Laurie Belden, Executive Director, Home Care & Hospice Alliance of Maine



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MCP announces cast of “Peter and the Starcatcher”

MONMOUTH, ME – The Monmouth Community Players, along with MCP Marquis Sponsor Great Falls Federal Credit Union, Season Sponsors Winthrop Area Federal Credit Union, Readfield Insurance Agency, and Media Sponsor Turner Publishing are excited to announce the cast for the first show of their 2024 season, Peter and the Starcatcher by Rick Elice. The show is being directed by Emily Carlton, with Producer Josie French, Music Direction by Gabe Verrill-Grant, percussion by Colton Powers, Sound by Alex Lally, Lights by Hannah Hanson, Set by Danny Gay, Props by Adam Runnells and Stage Management by Paige “Bo” Desmarais.

Filled with swash-buckling pirates, jungle tyrants, beautiful mermaids, a nameless orphan and his mates, and a precocious

Starcatcher, this “Peter Pan” prequel takes a magical look at the celebrated hero known as the Boy Who Would Not Grow Up. Poetic, hilarious and even musical, follow a mysterious treasure chest, battle against the fearsome Black Stache, and capture the joys of friendship and love on this adventure.

The cast features: Allie Lerch of Litchfield as Boy/Peter; Danny Gay of North Monmouth as Black Stache; Emma Farris of Pittsfield as Prentiss; Addie King of Benton as Ted; Jacob Osborne of Randolph as Lord Leanord Aster; Lena Page of Clinton as Molly Aster; Tim Ryan of Augusta as Mrs. Bumbrake/Teacher; Alex Lally of Auburn as Captain Robert Falcon Scott; Birdie Gay of North Monmouth as Gremppkin; Gregor Smith of Belgrade as Bill Slank; Adam Dawes

of Lewiston as Alf; Josh Oakes of Biddeford as Smee; and Ken Mansur of Auburn as Ensemble.

Peter and the Starcatcher will play at the historic Cumston Hall in Monmouth March 1-10, 2024. Performances will be at 7:30pm on 3/1, 3/2, and 3/8, and matinee 2pm shows on 3/3, 3/9 and 3/10. Tickets are \$20.00 for adults and \$17.00 for students and seniors. Group sale discounts are available for groups of 10 or more patrons by contacting the box office directly. Peter and the Starcatcher is presented through special arrangement with Musical Theatre International (MTI). For more information, or to purchase tickets, please email the theater at mcp-boxoffice@gmail.com, call them at (207)370-9566, or purchase tickets online at www.monmouthcommunityplayers.org.



Floor: Gregor Smith and Adam Dawes; Sitting: Addie King, Allie Lerch, Lena Page and Emma Farris; Standing: Gabby Smith, Tim Ryan, Josh Oakes, Ken Mansur and Birdie Gay.



Alex Lally, Danny Gay and Jacob Osborne

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Androscoggin promotes Executive Leadership

LEWISTON, ME – Steve Doyon, previously Director of Technology & Facilities, has been promoted to serve as Chief Technology Officer at Androscoggin Home Healthcare & Hospice. Mr. Doyon has been with the organization since 1997 when he was hired as a part-time employee working on the facility maintenance team. He has since gone on to earn an undergraduate degree in Information Technology from University of Phoenix, and a Master’s Degree in Business Administra-

tion from Saint Joseph’s College of Maine. Over the years Mr. Doyon has held several leadership positions of progressive importance to the overall success of Androscoggin’s mission.

In his new role, Steve will serve on the organization’s executive leadership team ensuring that Androscoggin evolves its digital capabilities and data insights to drive exemplary clinical and operational performance supported by a state-of-the-art information technology center of excellence. He will

also grow Androscoggin’s Health Informatics team supporting our electronic health records platforms, and expand data analytics capabilities that will enhance clinical outcomes and operational performance with the use of predictive analytics and a comprehensive data warehouse. As a member of the executive leadership team, Mr. Doyon will provide influential leadership in all governance matters including our patient and employee experiences, quality, safety and security, and fiscal oversight.

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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 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.

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

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
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 - 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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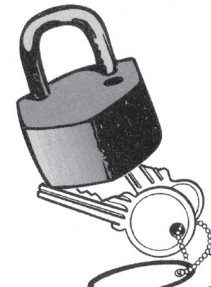
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Calendar

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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.daponte-quartet.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

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, Auburn Public Library

Whether it be crocheting, drawing, origami or something else entirely, The Teen Space Craft Club serves as a time to work on

any arts and crafts related projects, share advice and learn something new. Crafters of any experience are welcome!

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 Ox-

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ford 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 emo-

tional 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.

Feb 21

AUBURN -- Dungeons & Dragons 2/21 from 3 PM - 5 PM - Teen Space, Auburn Public Library

Come to the Teen Space for a D&D adventure in a fantasy world! Open to beginners and experienced players alike. Come with a character sheet (level 1-3) or use one that we provide.

Feb 22

AUBURN -- Tween Anime Club 2/22 from 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM - Teen Space, Auburn Public Library

Stop by the Teen Space to watch and talk about your favorite anime, draw or color and enjoy snacks with your friends! Snacks included.



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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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Androscoggin welcomes new Executive Leadership

LEWISTON, ME – Androscoggin Home Healthcare and Hospice hires Sarah Conroy as Chief Human Resource Officer. Conroy is an SHRM-SCP, SPHR, CEBS certified human resources professional. A Mainer at heart, Sarah returns to our state from

the Washington DC Metro Area where she spent the last 7 years working as an HR Business Consultant and serving on the Maine State Society of Washington DC Foundation, “a home away from home” for Mainers living and working in the area. Prior to her time in DC,

Sarah’s career has included CMMC, the State of Maine, Unity College, and her own independent HR consultancy, MainelyHR. Sarah brings to Androscoggin her decades of HR experience in organizations of various sizes, including the manufacturing, health-

care, financial services and technology industries. Her specialties include employee relations, compensation and benefits design and delivery, compliance, communications and strategic planning. She is a graduate of the University of New Hampshire and holds both the Senior

Professional in Human Resources (SPHR) and Certified Employee Benefits Specialist (CEBS) designations. Throughout her career, she has written broadly about HR issues, delivered solutions across the HR spectrum and encouraged other HR professionals to have a voice

in both the boardroom and the legislature. “I’m glad to be here and perpetually curious. I’m an animal lover with eclectic taste in music and books. I’m a strategically focused collaborative and appreciate humor! Though I am a naturalized Mainer, I’m fierce in my devotion!”

Ken Albert receives 2023 Distinguished Service Award

LEWISTON, ME – On November 14th, 2023 The President and CEO of Androscoggin Home Healthcare & Hospice, Kenneth Albert R.N., Esq. , received the Home Care & Hospice Alliance of Maine’s 2023

Distinguished Service Award. This award is presented to the employee of any member home care and/or hospice agency who consistently demonstrates outstanding leadership qualities.

The Home Care & Hospice Alliance of Maine is a nonprofit organization comprised of home care, home health care & hospice providers who work collaboratively to ensure Mainer’s with disabilities and older adults have

access to affordable, accessible quality care in the comfort and safety of their own home and community. On November 14th, the alliance hosted Maine’s home care and hospice community at

the Blaine House to celebrate Home Care and Hospice Month and give thanks to outstanding staff and volunteers. “We came together to celebrate excellence in home care and hospice—both the out-

standing staff and the selfless volunteers who profoundly impact the lives of our patients and their families.” ~Laurie Belden, Executive Director, Home Care & Hospice Alliance of Maine

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HCCA welcomes new staff member to the team

GARDINER, ME – Healthy Communities of the Capital Area (HCCA) is proud to welcome Malory Siddiqui as Tobacco Prevention Coordinator. Siddiqui is responsible

for planning and implementing policy, systems, and environmental change strategies within the community to address tobacco use and exposure. Siddiqui comes as

a recent graduate with a Masters of Science in Global Health from Northwestern University, a Master’s of Education from Arizona State University, and a background in education.

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