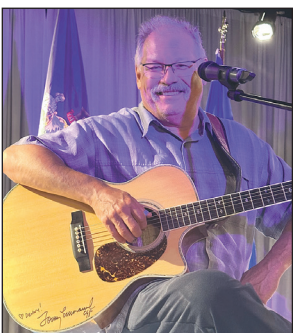


Concert to feature Denny Breau March 7 at Franco Center

LEWISTON, ME—The Franco Center presents a luncheon with live musical entertainment at its quarterly La Rencontre luncheon Thursday, March 7. Doors open at 10:30 a.m. for socializing. Lunch consisting of pot roast, potatoes, carrots, and dessert is served at 11:30 a.m. followed by featured musical entertainment by Denny Breau.

Diverse cultures, performing arts, and languages come together at the Franco Center during La Rencontre (the gathering). Traditionally, in Franco culture, big celebratory meals included live music provided by members of the family and their neighbors. Many families made sure their kids each learned to play an instrument to entertain at such gatherings — and



Musician Denny Breau Thursday, March 7, at the Franco Center. Franco Center photo.

so, accordingly, the Franco Center invites local musicians to provide live music for its guests.

After lunch, Denny Breau will provide the entertainment. Breau started playing guitar when he was nine years old and was performing professionally by his early teens. During more than 30 years as a full-time musician, he has performed with many well-known artists

and picked alongside outstanding guitarists.

Tickets are \$17 and include the meal and entertainment. All seats are reserved. Tickets must be purchased by noon Monday, March 4, so we can plan the number of meals to prepare. Tickets will not be sold at the door.

Call the box office at 207-689-2000 or visit between 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Purchase online at www.francocenter.org/shows.

La Rencontre series is sponsored by FACE Foundation, TV5 Monde, and the Quebec Delegation Boston.

The Franco Center is at 46 Cedar St., Lewiston. Parking is in the Oxford Street mill lot. Handicap access in on the Lincoln St. Side of the building.

YWCA’S Women of Achievement to honor local leaders

AUBURN, ME -- YWCA Central Maine’s Women of Achievement Awards being 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 event will be Emceed by Lori Voornas WHOM 94.9 DJ, part of Townsquare Media.

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.

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 in four distinct categories. 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.

The winners are:

Shanna Cox, President and CEO, LA Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce - Lee Young Leadership Award for excellence in professional, community, civic, or artistic leadership

Paula Marcus-Platz, Psychotherapist – Priscilla Gendron Legacy Award for extraordinary investment in public enrichment through philanthropic giving and fundraising

Abby Reuscher, Science Teacher, Lewiston Public Schools - Marcia Baxter Social Justice Award for courage, commitment, leadership, and humility in working toward a more just and equitable community.

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca
Central Maine

Linda Scott, Lewiston Homeless Warming Shelter and Self Employed – Tonie Ramsie Service Award for exceptional, long-term commitment to improving communities and the lives of others through service.

In addition to announcing award winners, YWCA Central Maine announced the keynote speaker, Judith Josiah-Martin, PhD. Judith Josiah-Martin, PhD, ACSW, CADC, has been a part of the University of Maine community for the past 16 years, as School of Social Work faculty and as the Director of Multicultural Student Life. Dr. Josiah-Martin will be



addressing the reception with a keynote called “The Shoulders of Strong Women: Walking Forward Together.”

YWCA Central Maine invites the community to celebrate with us at the Women of Achievement Awards Brunch. The event includes brunch, keynote speech, award ceremony, and a Silent Auction. Tickets are on sale now: <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@ywcaine.com

Extra servings of laughter this week at Great Falls Comedy Club

LEWISTON and AUBURN, ME – Great Falls Comedy Club will host live stand-up comedy this week on both sides of the bridge.

Friday, March 1, at 7:00 pm stir up some fun with “Comedy Soup”

Then on Saturday

March 2, starting at 6:00 pm, catch local funny favorites doing their stand-up in the downstairs speakeasy lounge at Obscura Café and Drinkery.

And, at 7:30 pm, be sure to reserve a seat back at Great Falls Comedy Club for the Maine debut of George Rigden, as the United Kingdom transplant works to fulfill his life-long professional ambition of performing across this country. He will be joined by Boston Comedy Festival invitee Shawn Ruiz, and lo-



cal favorite Crystal Bernard.

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

red awning. Obscura Café and Drinkery is located at 108 Lisbon Street, Lewiston.

For more information contact the club at info@greatfallscomedyclub.com or by phone at 207-200-5366.

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Magic Bus: The Who tribute band coming to Franco Center

LEWISTON, ME— Magic Bus, The Who tribute band based in Portland, Maine, will bring their show to the Franco Center at 7 p.m. Saturday, March 9. The Who, one of rock’s most iconic bands, made the charts in 1964 with their hit song, “Can’t Explain.” That was the beginning of their amazing journey. Still performing more than 50 years later, The Who can be heard in commercials, television theme songs and on the radio.

Magic Bus, the tribute band, captures the sound and feel of The Who. “We’ll take you on a tour of the rock band’s discography, covering songs from ‘My Generation’ to ‘Who Are You.’ We also perform select songs from the rock operas ‘Tommy’ and ‘Quadrophenia,’” said Paul Bessa, the Roger Daltrey role-player of the tribute band.

Bessa (vocals, piano, guitar, harmonica) comes

from New York and now lives in Portland, Maine. His introduction to music began with drums at the age of 15 after which he taught himself piano and guitar. He’s played in several rock bands and grew up listening to Led Zeppelin, the Beatles and other iconic bands. In 1997, he got a recording contract in Hollywood for his own music. Today, he gives vocal lessons and performs the music of The Who. His vocal style sounds like Daltrey’s and with Bessa’s talent on acoustic guitar, keyboards and harmonica, each song is rich with sound.

Andy Pappas plays the part of Pete Townshend on guitar and vocals. His love for classic rock began at an early age. Listening to Elton John as a young boy sent him on a musical journey, later becoming fully immersed in the classic rock genre. His main influences include Deep Purple, Yes, Van Halen, and Rush.



Portland-based The Who tribute band, Magic Bus, is coming to the Franco Center March 9. Tickets are available at 207-689-2000 and www.francocenter.org/shows. The Franco Center is at 46 Cedar St., Lewiston. Photo: Magic Bus via Facebook.

Pappas eats, sleeps, and breathes everything rock music. His passion for guitar started at the age of 12, and he was performing in a band by 13. A self-taught musician, his passion for The Who and his musical talent fit the role of Pete Townshend. His life’s mission is to keep classic rock alive and well.

“Mike Merservey was born with drumsticks

in his hands,” according to the musician’s online bio. After his parents gave him his first drum he has been raising chaos from day one. Playing in bands and traveling to six states and two countries, Meservey honed his musical skills. Hearing Who tunes all his musical life, he now takes on the high-profile part of drummer Keith Moon. Meservey has studied Moon’s drum-

ming and has said, “It’s an ongoing process. Keith is like a big band drummer in a rock band. You can’t appreciate his genius until you learn his unpredictable style.”

Rich Pierpont on guitar and vocals, steps up to the part of Who bassist John Entwistle. Musical talent runs in Pierpont’s family. His many times great-grandfather wrote “Jingle Bells,” and his father was in a competitive barbershop quartet. After not getting blessed with any of those particular musical genes, luckily there was a bass clef gene still kicking around, he said. Band members say Pierpont has “an ear for music and 10 nimble fingers. With blisters under callus, and grooves in his fingertips, it’s back to the future, flirting around the octaves emulating the great ‘Thunder Fingers.’”

Listen to the band’s music here: <https://magicbustour.com/audio-videos/>

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

Tier 1 tickets in advance are \$30 and at the door: \$35.

Tier 2 tickets in advance are \$25 and at the door: \$30.

Season Underwriter is Maple Way Dental Care; Media Sponsors are Sun Journal, Turner Publishing, Uncle Andy’s, Bennett Radio Group. Show sponsors are Dirigo Federal Credit Union; Lawn Guard; Norway Savings Bank; and Platz Associates.

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

A breath of Mozart

LEWISTON, ME -- The Maine Music Society Chorale will present A Breath of Mozart at 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 16, and at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, March 17, at the Franco Center in Lewiston.

Our classical concert will feature two glorious works accompanied by a Chamber Orchestra.

The performance begins with Mozart’s *Coronation Mass, K.317* which was composed in 1779 when he was 23. It was often used for celebrations in the Court of Vienna making it the perfect piece to recognize our Golden Jubilee season.

The lively and energetic rhythms are truly engaging and often have a

sprightly, dance-like quality. The Coronation Mass will highlight the talent of our own soloists throughout.

During the second half, you will be transported to a dream-like realm as you listen to the romantic strains and lyrics of *For A Breath of Ecstasy*, a new work by the modern composer Michael John Trotta. This seven-movement setting of Sara Teasdale’s love poetry was commissioned to celebrate the centennial of her winning the first Pulitzer Prize in Poetry in 1918 for her collection titled *Love Songs*. Teasdale was an American lyric poet who published seven volumes before her death at the age of 48. A string quartet and oboe

provide a haunting, melodic accompaniment to Teasdale’s beautiful, poignant poetry.

Michael John Trotta, is an exciting current American musical conductor and composer who has appeared at Carnegie Hall three times since 2014. The MMS Chorale has performed his music several times now, and is always challenged and engaged by his artistic renderings of beautiful texts. *For a Breath of Ecstasy* is no exception, and we are sure you’ll share our emotional response.

The Maine Music Society Chorale, under the direction of its Artistic Director, Richard Nickerson, has been rehearsing for weeks and is ready to



MMS Chorale at December 2023 concert with Director Richard Nickerson. Photo by Jared Morneau.

make this an incredibly moving performance that will be remembered for years to come!

Tickets are available online at www.mainemusicociety.org or by calling our business office at 207-333-3386.

MMS encourages you to purchase your tickets early.

Tickets:
Adult - \$27*; Senior - \$25*; Student - \$15*

Children under 12: free when accompanied by an adult.

Group rates available for 10 or more tickets to

the same performance purchased at the same time. Call our business office: 207-333-3386.

* Price includes all handling fees

The Maine Music Society thanks its season underwriters Hardy, Wolf & Downing and the Sun Journal, Foundation sponsor The Ladd Foundation, and the Event Sponsor Platz Associates for making this concert possible.

The Maine Music Society Chorale is an auditioned, mixed-voice community chorus based in Lewiston-Auburn. Led by

Maine Music Society Artistic Director Dr. Richard Nickerson, the 75+ voice chorale has distinguished itself with an ever-evolving level of excellence and professionalism. Founded as the Androscoggin Chorale in 1972, the group’s diverse repertoire reflects its desire to advance the cultural heritage of Central Maine, to explore a broad range of musical genres — contemporary, musical theatre, classical, opera, oratorio — and to provide its members with opportunities to experience their love of singing.



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High-Pressure Boiler Operator Training 2024

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 High-Pressure Boiler Operator Certification.

Information and registration for the free program is available at centralmaine.cc/workforceapply.

Running from March 19th – June 18th, this course offers a practical approach, knowledge, and techniques to power plant operation and is designed to prepare the student to sit for the Maine High-Pressure Boiler License Exam. Upon completing this course and the required in-service experience under a state-issued training permit, the student can take the Central Maine Community College licensing exam. The cost of the exam is included.

The average starting wage for a High-Pressure Boiler Operator is \$42,000 in the State of Maine.

Registration for this course is required.

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, Fiber Optic Technician, Heat Pump Installer Training, and the Welding Academy.

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.

Land Surveyor Technician I

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 15-hour Land Surveyor Technician Certification. The In-Person Course Dates: March 7 - April 4, 2024, Thursdays 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Information and registration for the free program is available at centralmaine.cc/workforceapply

The Survey Technician I course provides preparatory training for a nationally recognized Land Survey Technician certification. The course covers the setup for surveying stations, sequence stationing, data collection, recording observed angles, recording distances, utilizing point coding, and taking survey notes. The course will also cover reading topographical maps, CAD software operations, and following safety guidelines in the field. Upon completion, the cost of the exam is covered, students earn a Digital Badge, and starting salaries trend at over \$31,000 with opportunity for advancement.

This training is just one of the many free courses offered by Workforce and Professional Development including Introduction to Phlebotomy, CNA Lewiston, Computer Support Specialist – 2 Course Bundle, CETP Gas Training, Heat Pump Installer, Refrigerant EPA 608, High-Pressure Boiler, Fiber Optics Technician, 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. 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.

Letter to the Editor:

A message of thanks and hope to all veterans

Dear Editor, Twin City Times,

Today, I paused to recall the December 2023 flood of Lewiston’s Veterans Memorial Park, when a time capsule resembling a casket washed into the Androscoggin River. The capsule contained memorabilia from a gathering of veterans viewing the traveling Vietnam War Memorial.

I had the great honor as a veteran to offer the benediction prior to the sealing of the casket. As I prayed, many veterans approached the casket one last time placing personal Vietnam War items in it. As I completed the prayer, I placed the benediction words in the casket right before it was sealed.

When I heard of the loss of the time capsule, I was stunned and felt sad for all Vietnam Era veterans, their families and friends who like me, considered the sealing of this capsule part of closure as we stood before the Vietnam Wall filled with names of those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our nation’s freedom.

As the capsule remains missing, I offer for publication the original text of my October 1, 2007 benediction (below) as a message of thanks and hope to all veterans, of all wars, and all the men and women in active duty today serving and guarding our nation’s freedom in very challenging times.

Dignity Memorial Vietnam Wall—Bury The Vault Ceremony

Monday, October 1, 2007, 1:00PM

Lord, we gathered this past week as brothers and sisters on this sacred ground, for a time to remember, a time to reflect, and a time heal.

Lord, we gather before the Vietnam Wall, dedicated to those who served in Vietnam and honoring all veterans of the U.S. military forces to commit these hallowed artifacts to history so that all who visit this sacred ground never forget the cost of freedom, those who defended it with their lives, and those wounded in war.

On this most solemn occasion, we pray that our deceased sisters and brothers, who served with honor, continue to serve with the heavenly legion of angels, watching over our military forces in harm’s way in Iraq, Afghanistan and throughout the world. We ask God for their protection and care.

On this day of remembrance, we also pray for all veterans who have served honorably in peace and in war, especially those who died in service to a grateful nation.

May almighty God bless these artifacts and symbols of freedom and honor, those who wore them, and those who carried them to this place. Bless their friends and families and bless those still missing in action whose sacrifice is carried by their friends and families.

These artifacts and symbols of freedom will now be sealed for eternity, never to be forgotten, serving as a constant reminder for the sacrifice of all whose names are etched on this wall for the preservation of our sacred freedom, one nation, under god, indivisible and justice for all.

As we seal this vault † and lower it into sacred ground, we salute all Vietnam veterans, living and dead.

May God bless America, land of the free and home of the brave. Amen!

DEACON DENIS MAILHOT

U.S. Navy, CTR3, 1969-72

Cooking healthy on a budget at APL

AUBURN, ME -- Join Healthy Androscoggin Nutrition Educator, Rebecca Schoen, for this 2-part class series -- March 5 and 6. This hands-on and engaging program will have participants learning from each other through conversation and activities focused on healthy food options and stretching your food dollars. Lunch and recipes will be provided, as well as take-home resources and a cookbook!

NOTE: This is a 2-class series, please plan to attend both sessions -- Tuesday, March 5 and Wednesday, March 6! Registration is required. To register, go to: <https://www.auburnpubliclibrary.org/event/cooking-healthy-budget>

For more information on this or other upcoming programs visit Auburn Public Library’s website or call the Reference Desk at 207-333-6640, ext. 4

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Jonathan Knowlton joined Champoux Insurance Group in February as an Account Executive, with 20 years of experience in the insurance and investment field. After graduating from Thomas College with honors, he went to work for Metlife as a personal financial representative. From there he worked for Allstate insurance and within 3 years, had opened his own agency on Sabattus Street in Lewiston. Jonathan closed the agency after 13 successful years. Making sure clients are educated about the risks they face and protecting them with auto, home, and life insurance products has always been important to him; local families truly are in good hands with him. Jonathan lives in Auburn with his wife and son and enjoys ice fishing, ATVing, hiking, growing hot peppers and volunteering with the Boy scouts. Champoux Insurance Group welcomes John to our Team.



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Renewable Energy Grant application assistance available

Bangor, ME – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development is inviting grant applications from organizations to provide hands-on assistance to agricultural producers and rural small businesses applying for Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) funding. REAP provides grants and loans to help farmers and small business owners expand their use of wind, solar and other forms of clean energy and make energy efficiency improvements. The REAP Technical Assistance Grant (REAP TAG) program just

announced is for organizations that intend to provide support to REAP applicants. USDA has allocated \$250K for REAP TAG in Maine this fiscal year. “REAP offers Maine agricultural producers and small businesses a way to have more control over their energy costs,” said USDA Rural Development Maine State Director Rhiannon Hampson. “We want to ensure that all eligible businesses can apply, whether in our heritage farming and maritime industries or among the diverse businesses that sustain Maine’s rural towns.

These grants for organizations that provide technical assistance are one way we can make it easier for applicants to compete for our REAP grants. Access to efficient, green energy options means cost savings for businesses and a cleaner environment for all Mainers.” Eligible recipients for these grants include state, Tribal or local governments; land grant colleges and universities; electric cooperatives; and nonprofit organizations. Recipients may use the funds to: Help rural agricultural producers and small

business owners apply for REAP funding. Provide information on how business owners and agricultural producers can improve the energy efficiency of their operations and use renewable energy technologies and resources. Conduct required energy assessments and audits. Help agricultural producers and small business owners with planning construction and development of renewable energy or energy efficiency projects. Assist with the completion of environmental reports and/or documenta-

tion required for submittal of applications. This program works alongside REAP to create new economic opportunities, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and make energy more affordable for American families. Together, these programs will boost the long-term resiliency, reliability, and affordability of renewable energy systems in Maine. This assistance is made possible by President Biden’s Inflation Reduction Act, the nation’s largest-ever investment in combating the climate crisis.

The 2023 Maine REAP TAG recipients were the Sunrise County Economic Council, Pecos Wind Inc., and Sustaine Inc. Current applications must be submitted by March 15, 2024, at 11:59 p.m. ET. For additional information and submission details, see page 12815 of the Feb. 20 Federal Register. Find answers to frequently asked questions online at this link: <http://tinyurl.com/bde82vnr> or contact Katrina Shaw, RBCS Maine State Energy Coordinator (katrina.shaw@usda.gov or 207-990-9129) for further information.

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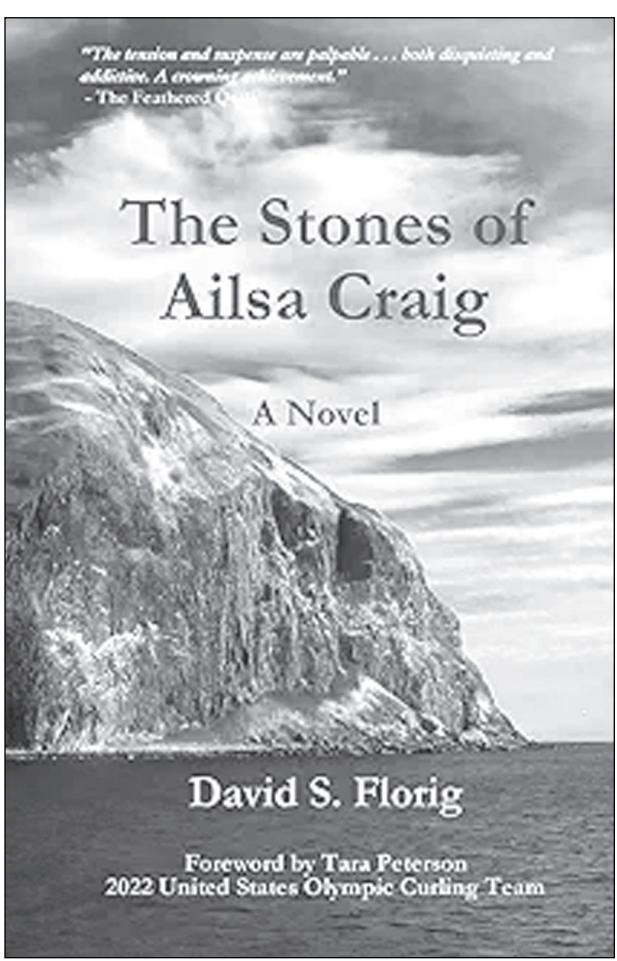
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Maine curler pens mystery about the great Scottish sport

OCEAN PARK, ME - Maine author David Florig announces the release of his debut novel, *The Stones of Ailsa Craig*. Set in present-day Belfast, Maine and 1880s Scotland, the novel is a sometimes dark look into one man’s loss, loneliness, and obsession with vengeance and justice. *The Stones of Ailsa Craig* is centered around the ancient Scottish sport of curling and features a Foreword by Olympic

curler Tara Peterson. Although curling provides the context, the novel is for fans of both historical fiction and mysteries. The book launch and speaking tour are timed to coincide with the beginning of the curling season in Maine. In a nutshell, this is the story of *The Stones of Ailsa Craig*: Confucius once said, “Before you embark on a journey of revenge, dig two graves.” Confucius was wrong. A widower at fifty years old, a lost, lonely, and increasingly obsessed man seemingly finds salvation in the ancient Scottish sport of curling, until it unexpectedly takes him down a much different and darker path. A path through present-day Belfast, Maine; 1880s Scotland; and to the remote, volcanic island of Ailsa Craig, home to the finest curling stone granite in the world and former home to tens of thousands of marauding brown rats. A path that was revealed to him after seeing a single, 130-year-old photo-



graph. What else could he do but embrace his calling after seeing that picture and learning the truth? David Florig is the past-president of the Pine Tree Curling Club in Portland, Maine, as well as a member of the Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance.

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Seniors Not Acting Their Age

Cold and Blustery Burnt Mountain

By Ron Chase
My son, Adam, and I made several attempts to plan a climb of Burnt Mountain in Carrabassett Valley over a two month period. At every juncture, our competing schedules interfered. Finally, on Sunday, January 21st, we were able to connect. There was a downside, powerful winds and frigid wind chills were forecast. After some deliberation, we decided to pack for extreme conditions and give it a try.

Located a short distance east of Sugarloaf Mountain, Burnt Mountain, also known as Burnt Hill, is little brother to its taller companion. Situated in a mountainous region, the 3,595 foot peak is often overlooked by hiking enthusiasts. The 5.5 mile out-and-back hike entails about 1,900 feet of elevation gain and the extensive barren summit cone provides remarkable 360 degree views. Scaling the boulder-strewn alpine zone is usually an exciting challenging endeavor since it's frequently covered with ice and windswept snow in winter.

Since we were anticipating severe above tree line conditions, significant consideration was given to how we dressed and what was selected for gear. Each of us carried snowshoes, micro spikes, emergency gear, a down parka and pants, a headlight and spare batteries, energy food, plenty of water, and additional layers of clothing. We were prepared to survive the night if necessary.

Skies were clear and temperatures in single digits when we met at the trailhead on the northwest side of the mountain. The



Adam Chase struggles to keep his balance in gusty winds at the summit of Burnt Mountain



Leaving tree line, there is a spectacular view of Sugarloaf Mountain

excursion began on an unexpectedly positive note; previous hikers had broken trail in about a foot of new snow leaving a hard packed surface on which to hike. Unknown was whether the trail was broken to tree line and what was required for footgear in the alpine zone. We decided carrying the added weight of snowshoes was the prudent choice as post holing in deep snow is exhausting and time-consuming.

We began the trek following a narrow path in a mixed hardwood and conifer forest. Sheltered from the worst of the wind, we were comfortable while proceeding along a partially frozen mountain stream. Blow-downs were skirted in a

couple of areas and two precarious stream crossings were cautiously negotiated.

After a short mile, we traversed two downhill ski trails and began climbing more steadily. When a precipitous wooded escarpment was encountered, the path angled right and rose more gradually. Once the vertical gradient was circumvented, we turned left and progressed upward through steep terrain in a dense conifer forest.

Sparse stunted tree growth indicated we were nearing tree line. Clamorous winds were gusting above. We halted in a protected area to prepare for the blustery arctic environment.

Hooded parkas were



The alpine zone on Burnt Mountain was covered with ice and windswept snow

donned and hand warmers activated in anticipation of harsh wind chills. Unsure of what to expect for surface conditions, we began in bare boots. Entering the turbulent world, a spectacular view of Sugarloaf Mountain was an immediate reward.

The inhospitable landscape was a bewildering combination of ice, hardened snow, and exposed rock which left no ideal choice for footwear. Snowshoes were unnecessary and an impediment in the gusty winds so we left them behind. Experiencing difficulty maintaining stability wearing just boots, we quickly affixed micro spikes.

The summit is about a half mile above tree line. Although problematic on bare rock, micro spikes were otherwise invaluable. The wind was primarily behind us as we guardedly ascended trying to avoid a fall. The two most significant difficulties were keeping our balance in the formidable winds and locating cairns

camouflaged with ice and snow.

We persisted over a steep rugged incline that appeared to be the top. Alas, it was a false summit. The large summit cairn was now visible a few hundred yards farther up. We labored on.

Arriving at the pinnacle, we briefly removed our mitts to take a few quick photos. We spent perhaps two minutes embracing the wonderful views before beginning our return. Persevering into an icy headwind, we reminded one another that the descent in the alpine zone was the most hazardous part of the trek.

Our careful return to tree line was thrilling but otherwise uneventful. Exuberance was overflowing during our easy hike down. We shared a high elevation report with three climbers who were heading up. Well-prepared, they expressed confidence.

My book, Maine Al Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in

Maine narrates nine more mountain hikes, including several stormy winter excursions.

Ron Chase resides in Topsham. His latest book, "Maine Al Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine" is available at www.northcountrypress.com/maine-al-fresco or in bookstores and through online retailers. His previous books are "The Great Mars Hill Bank Robbery" and "Mountains for Mortals – New England." Visit his website at www.ronchase-outdoors.com or he can be reached at ronchase-outdoors@comcast.net

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

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Arts & Entertainment

Stanton Bird Club to hold March meeting

AUBURN, ME -- Writer and photographer, Ed Robinson will be the featured speaker at the March 4th meeting of the Stanton Bird Club. Entitled “The Mystery of Maine’s Wildlife”, the presentation will feature Atlantic Puffins, black bears, Northern Saw-whet Owls, Canada lynx, and the American mink along with a couple surprises.

Robinson spends a

great deal of time studying the natural world and will share some insights about these fascinating animals. The presentation will include stunning photos, biological facts, and stories. Growing up in the Finger Lakes region of New York, Robinson developed a deep love for wild creatures and the environment. Since moving to Orr’s Island from England in 2007, he has been



Photo of an Atlantic Puffin by Ed Robinson.

exploring our beautiful state and writing about the creatures that live here. Ed recently published his second book titled Nature Notes from Maine: Puffins, Black Bears, Raccoons & More, with the profits benefitting public education and conservation. The talk will be held on Monday, March 4th from 4-6pm at the Auburn Public Library. The public

is welcome. This lecture is free of charge. The Stanton Bird Club, a leader in environmental awareness, owns and manages the Thorncrag Nature Sanctuary in Lewiston as well as the Woodbury Nature Sanctuary in Monmouth and Litchfield. More information about other activities of the Club can be found at www.StantonBirdClub.org and on its Facebook page.

Auditions announced for CLT’s “Alice in Wonderland”

AUBURN, ME -- “Alice in Wonderland” is the classic story of a young girl who falls down a rabbit hole and finds herself in a fantastical world filled with colorful characters and exciting and unusual adventures. CLT is looking for approximately 26 actors, some roles may be doubled. Auditions for Alice in Wonderland at LA/CLT are March 10 and 11 at 6pm

at 30 Academy St, Auburn ME. Auditioners need only attend one day of auditions. However, callbacks may be scheduled later in the week. Those wishing to audition for the Mad Hatter may be asked to perform some light choreography. For more information, contact info@LA-CLT.com The production dates for “Alice in Wonderland”

are June 14-23. L/A Community Little Theatre, located at 30 Academy Street in Auburn, has been producing live theatre since 1940. A volunteer, non-profit organization, our goal is to provide affordable and quality entertainment in the performing arts as well as education, training, and experience in theatre for area youth. www.laclt.com.

APL announces teen programs in March

Stop Motion Films: Show Your Story 3/1 from 2:30 PM - 4 PM - Teen Space, Auburn Public Library
Coding Basics 3/5 from 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM - Computer Lab, Auburn Public Library
Anime & Manga Club 3/6 and 3/27 from 4 PM - 5 PM - Teen Space, Auburn Public Library
Open Mic Night 3/11 from 3 PM - 4 PM - Teen Space, Auburn Public Library
Galaxies: with North Star Planetarium 3/11 from 6 PM - 6:45 PM - Grand Reading Room, Auburn Public Library
Craft Club 3/12 and 3/19 from 4 PM - 5 PM - Teen Space, Auburn Public Library
Tweens in the Teen Space 3/13 from 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM - Teen Space, Auburn Public Library
3D Modeling Basics 3/14 from 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM - Computer Lab, Auburn Public Library
Tween Craft Club 3/18 from 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM - Teen Space, Auburn

Public Library
Dungeons & Dragons 3/20 from 3 PM - 5 PM - Teen Space, Auburn Public Library
Internet Safety Gauntlet 3/21 from 2:30 PM - 3 PM - Teen Space, Auburn Public Library
Tween Anime Club 3/25 from 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM - Teen Space, Auburn Public Library
Let’s Make Comics! Artist Talk with Sarah Shaw 3/29 from 3 PM - 4 PM - Androscoggin Community Room, Auburn Public Library

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MLCA donates \$10K to help coastal communities rebuild


KENNEBUNK, ME – The Maine Lobster Community Alliance (MLCA), a non-profit based in Kennebunk whose mission is to foster thriving coastal communities and preserve Maine’s lobstering heritage, announced today that it is donating \$10,000 to the Working Waterfront Support Fund.

The fund was established following January’s devastating storms and historic flooding that caused widespread destruction and millions of dollars of damage in communities up and down the Maine coast.

MLCA is working with other fishing and working waterfront partner organizations including the Maine Lobstermen’s Association (MLA), Maine Coast Fishermen’s Association, Maine Marine Trades Association, New England Fishermen’s Stewardship Association, and the Maine Lobstering Union to survey the damage and determine how the Working Waterfront Support Fund can be most useful.

“Lobstermen can’t get to work if they don’t have access to working waterfront,” said Amber-Jean Nickel, president of the MLCA. “Right now, so many hardworking families who live in our coastal communities are suffering and trying to pick up the pieces. We are confident that the state and federal government will eventually provide financial resources to help the rebuilding, but we anticipate that the Working Waterfront Support Fund can provide not only a little bit of help today, but also a little bit of hope.”

MLCA also announced that it is selling special “Preserve and Protect” merchandise for anyone interested in helping to support the rebuilding process. Proceeds from the sale of this merchandise will support the Working Waterfront Support Fund. Products can be found here: <https://www.mlcalliance.org/category/protect-preserve>



(MLA), Maine Coast Fishermen’s Association, Maine Marine Trades Association, New England Fishermen’s Stewardship Association, and the Maine Lobstering Union to survey the damage and determine how the Working Waterfront Support Fund can be most useful.

Student loan repayment counseling with NVME

AUGUSTA, ME – New Ventures Maine (NVME) staff will now offer free Student Loan Repayment Counseling in addition to classes and coaching in financial education.

Student Loan Repayment Counseling is for individuals who are struggling to repay student loans or:

- have a loan that is past due or in default
- need assistance choosing a repayment plan
- want to learn about debt consolidation
- have questions about loan forgiveness programs

Individuals can schedule a repayment counseling session in person, online via Zoom, or by phone by contacting NVME at 207-621-3440 or info@newventures-maine.org.

Student Loan Repayment Counseling will also include information related to taxes, such as determination of eligibility for the Maine Student Loan Repayment Tax Credit (SLRTC) of up to \$2,500 annually when all of the following apply:

- you earned an associate, bachelor’s, or graduate degree after 2007 from an accredited Maine or non-Maine community college, college, or university
- you have a certain amount of earned income
- you live in Maine
- you file a Maine individual income tax return

The new free service is made possible in part by a grant from the John T. Gorman Foundation.

Five NVME staff who are experienced in providing financial education completed training with the Institute of Student Loan Advisors in order to provide student loan borrowers with student loan repayment options such as income-based repayment plans and public service forgiveness plans.



Extension 4-H workshop explores Maine’s April solar eclipse

MAINE -- The University of Maine Cooperative Extension 4-H program is offering a free online workshop for youth ages 9-18, focused on the upcoming solar eclipse in April. The workshop will be held Thursdays from 4-5 p.m. March 21-April 11.

Maine is set to experience a full solar eclipse on April 8, providing a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for residents of the state. A total solar eclipse occurs when the Sun, Moon, and Earth align in a direct line, resulting in a darkened sky and various atmospheric changes. During the eclipse, the center of the Moon’s shadow will hit the Earth, creating a unique and awe-inspiring phenomenon.

The 4-H workshop will delve into the science behind solar eclipses, offering hands-on experiments to help participants understand the phenomenon better. The workshop will also explore how youth can contribute to NASA’s data collection efforts during the eclipse in Maine.

To culminate the workshop, a ‘Solar Eclipse Extravaganza’ will be held on April 11th, allowing participants to reflect on their experience of viewing the solar eclipse.

Participation in the workshop is free; space is limited to 15 participants. Registration closes March 1. Registered participants will receive a link to access the workshop online and will also be provided with at-home materials.

To register visit the program webpage. For more information or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact Sarah Sparks, sarah.sparks@maine.edu, 207.581.8206.

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Recreation welcomes Kevin Bean as Community Sports Aide

LEWISTON, ME – Kevin Bean is now onboard with the City of Lewiston’s Recreation Department serving as Community Sports Aide. His responsibilities include maintaining working relationships with Lewiston organizations for the use of public facilities; overseeing athletic field rentals; maintaining a schedule for community games, practices, and events; and developing and implementing community athletic programs for all ages.

Bean grew up in a small Western Maine town that thrived on its ability to bring community together, especially through

sports and recreation. He embraced his hometown’s passion as a member of the University of Maine’s football team and later at Central Maine Community College (CMCC) where he supported basketball and baseball teams to multiple conference championships and national tournament bids.

As such, Bean is excited to bring diverse court and field experiences as a player and as an assistant coach to his new role with the City of Lewiston Recreation Department.

Bean is also finalizing the department’s newest volunteer program, Volunteer Forward. Volunteer



Forward welcomes volunteers who are interested in supporting recreational opportunities around the city. Ranging from coaching at a free soccer program to attending facility clean-ups, the program offers a variety of ways for residents to give back to the community. Those interested in helping with the program may reach him at kbean@lewistonmaine.gov. There is no fee to apply, and the City conducts a background check on each applicant.

‘Kevin’s experience in working with volunteers, paired with his participation in a wide range of athletics and capacities, makes

him a great fit for this new position. The Community Sports Aide will broaden recreational opportunities for our community, specifically with a focus on structured drop-in programming for youth and adults,’ said Nicole Welch, Recreation Director.

‘I look forward to bringing my love for sports and continuing to be active every day to make recreation more accessible to everyone in our community. I’m thrilled to call Lewiston my home again as I did during my time at Central Maine Community College and can’t wait to help this great city on its path forward,’ said Bean.

AREA Meeting Notice

LEWISTON, ME -- The Androscoggin Retired Educators’ Association will meet at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, March 13 at Lewiston High School’s Green Ladle. The price for this meal is \$19 (\$20 at the door).

The speaker for this meeting is Laura Johnson

from Seniors’ Plus.

Please make checks out to AREA and mail to Gina Fuller, 36 Elliott Ave, Lewiston, Maine 04240.

AREA meets five times per year: September, October, November, March, and April. Dues are \$10 per year for educators and \$6 for non-educator

spouses or partners. Dues are payable in September.

All who have served in the education profession are welcome: teachers, assistant teachers, guidance counselors, librarians, principals. You need not have taught in Androscoggin County, or even in the State of Maine.

Sea Dogs VP addresses Rotary



LEWISTON, AUBURN, ME -- Chris Cameron, at right, vice President of communications and fan experience for the Portland Sea Dogs, was guest speaker at a recent meeting of the Lewiston-Auburn Club.

Now in his 28th season with the team, he joined the organization as a part-time seasonal employee in 1996. Cameron was named the Public Relations Director of the Year in 2005 for all minor league sports by

MinorLeagueNews.com. He is pictured with Rotary President Roger Philippon.

Cameron announced that the Sea Dogs game on July 31st will be “Maine Strong” night in honor of the victims of the October 25th tragedy in Lewiston as well as first responders and community leaders. The team will wear special jerseys that will later be auctioned off to benefit the Lewiston-Auburn Rescue Fund.

The Lewiston-Auburn Rotary Club has been serving this community since its founding in 1917. In addition to various volunteer activities, the club raises funds to support local service agencies and to provide yearly scholarships to graduating seniors from area high schools. Anyone interested in joining is encouraged to come to a meeting and visit the club website at lewistonauburnrotary.org/.

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Lee bill unanimously approved, will close bail process loophole

AUGUSTA, ME – The Legislature gave final approval on Wednesday to a measure sponsored by Rep. Adam Lee, D-Auburn, that would help prevent unnecessary detention for those who present minimal or no risk to their communities.

Currently, a discrepancy exists in Maine’s bail laws. When a court deems an individual sufficiently low-risk to qualify for unsecured bail – where the defendant isn’t required to pay any bail amount – jail personnel can complete the necessary paperwork at no cost, facilitating the person’s release. However, if a bail commissioner reaches the same conclusion, the defendant must pay a \$60 bail commissioner fee, and jail personnel cannot handle the paperwork.

LD 2051 would fix this discrepancy. It would expedite the release process for individuals who would otherwise be released from jail without being charged. As a result, these individuals wouldn’t have to wait for a court appearance before securing their release.

“One night in jail can have a significant impact on a person’s life,” said Lee. “This impact can extend to children, who might end up without a place to sleep or proper adult supervision. Furthermore, adults may be at risk of losing their job or face other setbacks in their recovery. This legislation aims to avoid the unnecessary financial and social costs associated with imprisoning individuals who pose no threat to their communities.”

The Maine Judicial Branch, the ACLU of Maine and the Maine Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers all supported this legislation at its public hearing in January.

The bill now heads to the governor’s desk.

Lee is serving his first term in the Maine House and is a member of the Legislature’s Judiciary Committee. He represents House District 89, which includes a portion of Auburn, including its downtown.



Thawing season poses risk to Lewiston roadways

LEWISTON ME

LEWISTON, ME – With thawing season underway, the Lewiston Public Works Department warns those whose vehicles are over 23,000 lbs. that they are not permitted on 16 Lewiston roads. Thawing season extends through May 1.

“During thawing season, some roadways are vulnerable to heavy weights that cause the road base to become soft and muddy under the pavement. When heavier vehicles use those roads, the pavement above the softened materials can be damaged,” said Reggie Poussard, Highway Operations Manager.

The 16 roadways deemed for weight limit postings are those with an open ditch drainage system, no underdrains, and not built to withstand weights like primary roadways.

Ferry Rd – From Apple Rd to River Rd

River Rd – From Ferry Rd to the Solid Waste Facility at 420 River Rd

Dyer Rd – From Lisbon Rd to Ferry Rd

Pinewoods Rd – From Ferry Rd to Town Line

Gayton Rd – From Lisbon Rd to Town Line

Old Webster Rd – From Old Lisbon Rd to Crowley Rd

Merrill Rd – From College Rd to Main St

Sleeper Rd – From Merrill Rd to Town Line

Randall Rd – From Sunrise Lane to Grove St

Grove St – From Randall Rd to Town Line

Old Greene Rd – From North Temple St to Town Line

No Name Pond Rd – From Old Greene Rd to Town Line

Pond Rd – From Cherrywood Dr to No Name Pond Rd

Golder Rd – From Sabattus St to Pond Rd

South Lisbon Rd – Crowley Rd Eastward to Lisbon St (east end of So. Lisbon)

Cotton Rd – Lewiston/Lisbon Town Line to Ferry Rd

Exempt vehicles are emergency response vehicles, school buses, fuel delivery trucks, state or municipal highway maintenance vehicles, or authorized vehicles under the direction of a public jurisdiction engaged in emergency maintenance of a public highway.

The City of Lewiston extends appreciation to Lewiston residents for their cooperation in helping minimize thawing damage to Lewiston roadways.

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The Ladies of St Anne Sodality General Meeting March 2024

The Ladies of St Anne Sodality of Prince of Peace Parish, Holy Family are planning a General meeting on Wednesday, March 20 2024 at the Parish Hall at 6 PM; doors open at 5:30, at which time the Elections will be held as well as a Prayer Meeting. Refreshments will be served.

Please save a date for the Annual Card Party on Friday April 10, 2024.

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Local educators, MEA fight for pay raise at State House



Senator Joe Rafferty speaks to MEA members Thursday Morning at the State House

AUGUSTA, ME - Maine Education Association (MEA) members from around the state gathered Thursday to urge legislators to fund pay increases for teachers and education support professionals to help address the urgent educator shortage crisis.

“Right now, in February, school districts across the state have still been unable to fill critical positions—in some districts, there are dozens of vacancies,” said Grace Leavitt, MEA Board President.

The event follows Wednesday’s Appropriations and Financial Affairs committee hearing, where members and MEA President Grace Leavitt testified, urging legislators to include funding for LD

974 and LD 1064 in the supplemental budget. Both bills are aimed at raising pay for teachers and school staff and passed through the Education and Cultural Affairs committee with bipartisan support.

Representative Michael Brennen, D-Portland, Education and Cultural Affairs Committee Chair, echoed Leavitt’s remarks. “These two bills need to be a priority for the legislature; for the last two years, we have heard countless testimonies in front of the Committee about the challenges our educators face.”

“As an educator and coach, I know that kids need healthy food to fuel their day, whether that’s studying or competing in sports. When we get more

local foods into our school cafeterias, kids get better access to meals that taste good and give them the nutrients they need,” said Sen. Joe Rafferty, D-Kennebunk, who co-chairs the committee. “The reality is, not every district has the capacity to cook every meal from scratch. Thankfully, there are great businesses in our state that are ready to partner with schools to feed our kids. This bill is a great win for students and our economy.”

Both bills have received bipartisan support from the Education committee, “If we want a productive workforce and good citizens, we must invest in public education and public schools. The Republicans on the Educa-

tion Committee are proud to join our Democratic colleagues on the Committee to pass both bills and we hope the Legislature will continue working to find a path to fund both proposals,” said Senator Jim Libby, R-Cumberland.

MEA members Jim Handy, Ed Tech at Robert V Connors Elementary School, and Kendrah Willey, a first-year teacher in RSU 68, shared these challenges through their firsthand experiences of working at understaffed schools and recruiting young educators the press event on Thursday.

“I have classmates graduating with their education degree but choosing not to use it because the amount of time, dedication,

and effort that we put into teaching is not reflected in our pay,” stated Kendrah Willey.

“I work in a resource room with over 40 students,” said Jim Handy. “We currently have dozens of open ed tech positions in the Lewiston School District where I work, and we struggle to find applicants.”

Senator Teresa Pierce, D-Cumberland sponsored LD 1064 to increase teacher salaries also recognizes the challenges that districts across Maine face to hire and retain qualified educators. “School districts across

Maine are struggling to hire and retain qualified teachers. We know a major part of the problem is low pay that hasn’t kept up

with the cost of inflation. Raising pay to keep pace with both the cost of living and the pay in surrounding states is critical to making sure our students have the best education possible, so they can become the leaders of tomorrow. Investing in schools and educators means investing in Maine’s future,” Senator Pierce said.

The MEA remains committed to working with legislators to secure funding for both bills. “It is critical that we do more to attract and retain quality educators to work with our students in Maine. LD 974 and 1064 will go a long way towards doing just that,” said Leavitt. You can learn more about both bills at bit.ly/3SH420H.



MEA President Grace Leavitt surrounded by members, urges legislators to prioritize funding for educator pay increases.

Saco Bay Marine secures \$27K REAP Grant

BANGOR, ME – Senator Angus King joined USDA Rural Development Maine State Director Rhannon Hampson to meet with business owners, local officials, and marine science experts at Saco Bay Marine in Biddeford. The boatyard’s owners, Sean Tarpey and his son Matt Tarpey, inspired the meeting with their work to transition the business to renewable energy and to champion other innovative green technologies for waterfront businesses. At the event Director Hampson recognized the boatyard for securing a \$27,800 USDA Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) grant.

Sen. King and Director Hampson anchored a roundtable discussion that included Senator Henry

Ingwersen (Maine District 32), Biddeford Mayor Marty Grohman, representatives of the state’s congressional delegation, Luke’s Lobster co-founder Ben Conniff, Dr Charles Tilburg of the University of New England, and Island Institute staff. viewed Saco Bay Marine’s new rooftop solar array and examples of innovative “blue technology” that were on display.

The discussion focused on evolving green energy options for commercial vessels, especially the potential to replace diesel engines with electric engines. As the Maine commercial fleet begins to transition to electric propulsion, training a workforce to maintain the new equipment will also be critical. Roundtable participants

identified these as potential areas for increased public/private partnerships. Another frequent subject was the series of winter storms that recently devastated the Maine coastline and fishing industry, increasing the sense of urgency around climate change mitigation efforts.

“By transitioning to renewable energy, businesses like Saco Bay Marine can help slow the pace of climate change, which has had an outsized impact on the working waterfront,” said Director Hampson. “We can look to our past for the inspiration needed to get this job done. Maine can help lead the maritime industry in adopting ‘blue technology’. Today Senator King and I had a chance to meet with businesses, state and local

leaders, policy makers, and industry stakeholders. It’s truly an exciting time for one of our critical heritage industries, with so much innovation happening right here at home being supported by the Inflation Reduction Act. When it comes to green energy for the blue economy, our state motto applies: ‘Maine leads.’”

Following the discussion, the visitors moved outside to view Saco Bay Marine’s new rooftop solar array and examples of innovative “blue technology” that were on display. Senator King and Director Hampson recognized the boatyard’s work to transition to solar energy and to help develop other green technologies for heritage marine businesses. In his remarks, Sen. King noted

that the company’s work to research and develop electric commercial boat options heralds a time of change for Maine and for the country. “This all comes together right here, right now, in Biddeford, Maine,” he said.

Saco Bay Marine LLC is a Maine company with deep roots. It is the corporate parent of Rumery’s Boatyard, founded more than 60 years ago. Now owned by the Sean and Matt Tarpey, the company offers boat storage, maintenance and repair, and boatlift and crane support. Saco Bay Marine secured a REAP grant in 2023 and completed installation of a 19-kilowatt, roof-mounted solar voltaic system. The system will generate most of the business’s energy needs (amounting to the equivalent of two homes taken off the grid in terms of reduced carbon emissions).

The boatyard is also home to startup companies Maine Electric Boat Company and Marine Solar Technologies, both led by Sean’s son Matt Tarpey. Maine Electric Boat offers vessels for the commercial market. The company also

invests in research and development to develop electric outboard engines suited to Maine’s commercial fleet. Through Maine Electric Boat’s partnership with Flux Marine, and with assistance from Island Institute, one such boat is in use at Pendleton Yacht Yard on Islesboro. This vessel (the Take Charge) was on display at the Biddeford meeting.

After viewing the electric boats and other technology on display, the event participants talked about the role such a business can play in the local economy. Maine is poised to lead in “Blue Tech” innovation, which has the potential to lift other sectors at the same time. Commercial boatowners may save significant amounts of money and downtime as they transition to electric motors. Communities may soon be able to access real-time water quality data thanks to solar buoys. And in the meantime, grants for renewable energy installations remain available competitively to rural Maine businesses and agricultural programs through USDA’s Rural Development.

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NEWS CENTER Maine collects coats, toys for local kids



Brian Yocono and David Guildford help to fill a Salvation Army van with coats and toys from The Coats and Toys Wish List



Chris Costa and Anne Baldrige help fill a truck with items from the Coats and Toys for Kids Wish List



NCM morning report team with a viewer in Sanford on Coats and Toys for Kids Day

PORTLAND-BANGOR, ME – In just over one month, more than 14,000 coats, 3,860 toys, and \$16,111 were donated to The Salvation Army during NEWS CENTER Maine’s 41st year of Coats and Toys for Kids campaign. The campaign started in mid-November collecting gently used coats and new toys at Hannaford and Shaw’s stores. NEWS CENTER Maine also offered donors the option to purchase a new coat or toy from The Coats and Toys for Kids Wish List and have it delivered directly to the Salvation Army.

All items were distributed statewide to help Mainers stay warm this winter season. Money from the

donations was given to nine Salvation Army locations to purchase more coats and toys to help their communities. Toys were distributed throughout Maine to families in need during the holiday season. Coats, blankets, hats, gloves, and snowsuits have been and will continue to be distributed throughout the winter months.

NEWS CENTER Maine was able to hold its one-day, live kick-off event, Coats and Toys for Kids Day on December 2, 2023, sponsored by Maine Savings Bank. Mainers once again stepped up and donated coats and toys to help fellow Mainers. NEWS CENTER Maine crews were live at Pratt Abbott in Portland, Hannaford

in Augusta and Sanford, and Shaw’s in Auburn and Bangor.

“We’ve all been children,” Salvation Army’s Ted Tressler stated. “We know what Christmas morning feels like. For those who have – it’s a wonderful time. For those who have not – not so much.”

NEWS CENTER Maine not only thanks the viewers who made donations or purchases for the campaign, but also appreciates Pratt Abbott Cleaners for cleaning all the gently used coats, PepsiCo for distributing the coats and toys boxes, and Hannaford and Shaw’s for hosting the collection boxes in its stores.

Coats for Kids was

originally designed 41 years ago by The Salvation Army. NEWS CENTER Maine became a partner seven years later helping to collect coats for Maine families who cannot afford a warm winter coat.

In November of each year, donation boxes are placed in the NEWS RELEASE Hannaford Supermarkets and Shaw’s stores across the state. In 2004, NEWS CENTER Maine also saw the need for toys during the holiday season and expanded the program to Coats and Toys for Kids.

All the coats are cleaned and stored by Pratt-Abbott Cleaners and the Salvation Army distributes the coats and toys. PepsiCo has assisted this



NCM talent and employees helping to collect coats and toys in Auburn on Coats and Toys for Kids Day

great effort by donating and delivering the boxes to Hannaford Supermarkets and Shaw’s stores.

By estimation, NEWS CENTER Maine has collected more than 869,000

coats - all of which have helped to keep Maine children warm. Since 2004, they have collected 85,910 toys to distribute to those in need during the holiday season.

Andrei Vile joins Fontaine Family Team



PORTLAND, ME -- Fontaine Family - The Real Estate Leader is proud to announce Andrei Vile as the newest addition to their growing Scarborough team. Andrei is setting a new standard in the Southern Maine real estate landscape, combining his passion for community, strategic mindset, and unparalleled dedication to redefine the property transaction experience.

A proud native of Peaks Island, Andrei’s roots in Maine run deep.

After graduating from Cheverus High School, he continued his academic journey at Beloit College in Wisconsin, where he earned a degree in Psychology. This educational background provides Andrei with a unique perspective, enabling him to understand the intricacies of the human experience in the often complex world of real estate.

Before embarking on his real estate journey, Andrei served as an investor services representative, where he played a pivotal role in onboarding new clients. As the first line of contact for clients or hedge funds, he facilitated the subscription

and redemption of funds per client instructions, ensuring compliance with guidelines and providing a seamless experience for his clients.

Currently residing in Portland, Maine, Andrei is not only a distinguished real estate professional but a dedicated member of the community he calls home. His commitment to understanding the needs and aspirations of his clients is matched only by his passion for fostering strong, lasting relationships. Outside of his professional life, Andrei is an avid golfer, particularly during the summer months. While he may have labeled himself a soccer player in his young-

er years, his transition to golf reflects his adaptability and commitment to personal growth.

Andrei Vile’s clients benefit not only from his comprehensive understanding of the real estate market but also from his ability to navigate transactions with precision and care with the help of the Fontaine Team. His commitment to excellence, coupled with his friendly demeanor and passion for the community, make him the go-to real estate professional in the Portland area. For real estate opportunities with Andrei Vile, he can be contacted by phone at 207-807-6050 or email andrei@fontaineteam.com.



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Mar 2
GORHAM -- Public Bean Supper, White Rock Community Clubhouse, 34 Wilson Road, Gorham on Saturday, March 2, 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

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.

Mar 11
AUGUSTA -- Monday March 11 at 6:30 PM

Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

Denis Ledoux will present a program based on his new memoir French Boy / A 1950s Franco-American Childhood at the Augusta Public Library.

Mar 14
LISBON FALLS -- There will be a blood drive at the Lisbon United Methodist Church, 14 School Street, Lisbon Falls, Maine on Thursday, March 14th from noon to 4:30pm. To schedule an appointment call 1-800-RED-CROS and use sponsor code LISBON UMC

Mar 22
LEWISTON -- Fill the Plate Breakfast to benefit Meals on Wheels of SeniorsPlus 7 am – 9 am at Hilton Garden Inn Riverwatch, Auburn. Tickets: \$30 per person (\$35 at the door); available at www.seniorsplus.org or by calling 207 795-4010. Seats are limited. Advance registration encouraged.

A breakfast to benefit the Meals on Wheels program of SeniorsPlus, the Western Maine Agency on Aging, will feature a keynote by Maine humorist Gary Crocker and will honor Lewiston resident Lucy Bisson with the Ikaria Award for outstanding contributions toward improving the lives of older adults

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

Mar 26

LISBON FALLS -- Tuesday March 26 at 4 PM Denis Ledoux will present a program based on his new memoir French Boy / A 1950s Franco-American Childhood at the Lisbon Falls Public Library.

Apr 27
AUBURN -- Saturday April 27 at 11 AM Denis Ledoux will present a program based on his new memoir French Boy / A 1950s Franco-American Childhood for the Maine Franco-American Genealogy Society at the community room of the Auburn Public Library. Public invited.

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

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LEWISTON -- PROGRAMS FOR HOMESCHOOL FAMILIES, held the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Monday 11:15am-12:30pm at the Lewiston Public Library Children's Department

Homeschool families, are you looking for opportunities to have fun and socialize with other homeschool families? LPL will be offering activities for homeschool families in the Children's Department the first three Mondays of each month from 11:15am-12:30pm. The activities will be a Homeschool Video Game Social on March 6th, a Homeschool Lego Club and Curriculum Swap on March 13th, and a Homeschool Storytime and Craft on March 20th.

This program is free and recommended for homeschool families with children of all ages. No registration is required. Contact info. 513-3133, LPLKids@lewistonmaine.gov

Rep. Adam Lee to run for re-election

AUBURN, ME -- Representative Adam R. Lee, who proudly serves as an advocate for Auburn and the residents of District 89 in the Maine House of Representatives, filed his paperwork Wednesday to run for re-election.

District 89 is comprised of downtown Auburn, New Auburn, the Hampshire Street neighborhood, and Goff Hill up to Edward Little High School.

Representative Lee, who continues to practice as an attorney at the firm of Trafton, Matzen, Belleau & Frenette, has served as a significant presence on the Joint Committee on the Judiciary and provides an essential voice to the committee's work.

In his first year as a legislator, Lee passed two bills, one which ensures that survivors of workplace harassment and assault can hold their harasser or assailant responsible for their actions. The other bill continues his many years of work – reaching back to his two terms as an Auburn City Councilor – to protect the safety of pedestrians. The bill requires that D.O.T. projects are constructed with pedestrian, bicycle, and all forms of transportation in mind. Both of Lee's bills garnered significant bipartisan support.

In addition to his service in the legislature and his law practice, Lee coaches the Boston College Debate team and volunteers his time at the PAL Center and as the primary instructor to the Maine State Prison Debate Team. Lee is married to Heidi McCarthy, and both are proud cat parents to Obi-Wan Greg.

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 or calling 207-347-2335 and leaving a message with your name and phone number.

Option 2—Fully Virtual Service: Visit getyourrefund.org/gp-maine 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.

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.

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](https://cashmaine.org)

Albin, Randall & Bennett

announces promotions



John Hadwen

PORTLAND, ME – Albin, Randall & Bennett is pleased to announce the promotions of John E. Hadwen, CPA, and Benjamin A. Lord, CPA, CCIFP, to Principals of the firm.

John E. Hadwen, CPA, joined ARB in 2021. He specializes in tax consulting, planning, and compliance for businesses and ownership groups, and has notable expertise in automotive dealerships, construction, real estate, and manufacturing. With a focus on overall tax planning, transaction assistance, and efficiency strategies, including entity choice, restructuring, mergers, acquisitions, and sales, John collaborates closely with clients to achieve their tax goals and objectives.



Ben Lord

Benjamin A. Lord, CPA, CCIFP, joined ARB in 2013. He specializes in providing consulting, tax, and accounting services to clients in the construction, real estate development, manufacturing, and distribution industries. He is also a leader in the Firm's employee benefit plan audit group and has extensive experience with ESOPs, stock-based compensation, and complex equity structures.

Both professionals have made substantial contributions to the firm and ARB is very excited to see what they accomplish in their new roles.

Send all items for

Names & Faces to the editor.

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