

USM Gorham Theatre Dept. presents *The Prom*

GORHAM, ME -- The University of Southern Maine, in collaboration with the Osher School of Music, proudly presents the Maine premiere of *The Prom*, a dance- and music-filled ode to one girl's wish to bring her girlfriend to the prom. To celebrate Maine's LGBTQ+ community and raise funds for OUT Maine's Rainbow Ball Weekend, USM is also hosting "The Prom V.I.P. Experience: A Night OUT to Remember" as part of the April 13th performance.

Four eccentric Broadway stars desperately need to revitalize their stalling careers. So when they hear about a small town preventing a lesbian student from attending prom with her girlfriend, they know it's time to put a spotlight on the issue... and themselves. The town's parents want to keep the prom on the straight and narrow. One student, Emma, just wants to bring her girlfriend to the prom. When Broadway's brassiest joins forces with both, they find that love brings them all together. Winner of the Drama Desk Award for Best Musical, *The Prom* captures the humor and heart of a classic musical comedy with a message that resonates with audiences everywhere.

For Director Danny Hutchins, it's more important than ever to produce this show. "We are living in a time where LGBTQ+ identities are under increased scrutiny and at-

tack. Nowhere is this truer than in public schools, especially K-12 districts. While there have been many hard-fought victories for queer folks, there have also been significant hurdles and increased discrimination over the last several years. Emma's story in *The Prom* is a reminder of those very struggles."

With musical direction from Edward Reichert and choreography from Vanessa Beyland, Director Hutchins says the show keeps things light despite its serious topics, "This show is so much fun! Despite the heavy themes, *The Prom* makes sure to find moments not to take itself too seriously. I think audiences will enjoy these moments of levity and comedy throughout the script." Ultimately, he says, *The Prom* leaves audiences "...with a hopeful message that young people, like the very students performing in this production, can change the course of our nation and communities towards one that is more inclusive, equitable, and accepting."

The Prom V.I.P. Experience: A Night OUT to Remember

In celebration of Maine's LGBTQ+ community, the USM Department of Theatre will present a special performance on Saturday, April 13th., *The Prom V.I.P. Experience: A Night OUT to Remember*. The event celebrates the spirit of the show and the vital cause of equality. A portion of the proceeds



Emma Hall (Emma), Danny Hutchins (Director), Karoline Bretchter (Alyssa)

will support OUT Maine's Rainbow Ball Weekend. OUT Maine works toward a welcoming and affirming Maine for all rural young people of diverse sexual orientations, gender expressions and gender identities.

Ticket price includes pre-show hors d'oeuvres, cash bar, music, photo booth, raffles, a silent auction, an intermission dessert bar, a chance to become Prom Royalty, a meet-and-greet with the cast after the show, and more. Guests are encouraged to wear their rainbow prom best! Tickets are \$50/person.

The Prom in collaboration with the Osher School of Music

Book & Lyrics by Chad Beguelin

Book by Bob Martin

Music by Matthew Sklar

Directed by Danny

Hutchins

Musical Direction by

Edward Reichert

Choreography by Va-

nessa Beyland
April 5-14, 2024
Friday, April 5, 2024 at 7pm
Saturday, April 6, 7pm
Sunday, April 7, 2pm
Wednesday, April 10, 10am - All tickets \$10
Thursday, April 11, 7pm - All tickets pay-what-you-can
Friday, April 12, 10am - All tickets \$10
Friday, April 12, 7pm
Saturday, April 13, 7pm: The Prom V.I.P. Experience: A Night OUT to Remember - \$50
Sunday, April 14, 2pm
All performances take place on the USM
See Prom, page 8

Gun Owners of Maine files ethics complaint against Sen. Carney

The following is a press release and letter by the Gun Owners of Maine:

When members of the legislature behave

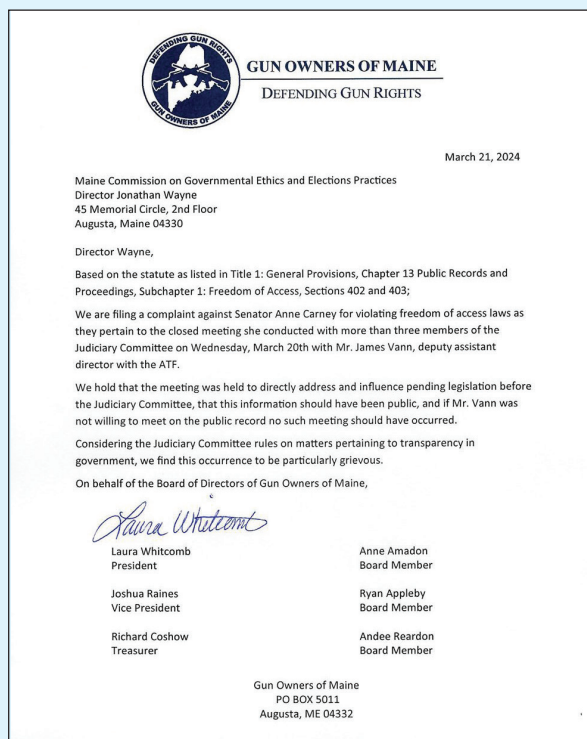
in an unethical way, especially when their end goal is to infringe on the rights of law-abiding Maine Gun Owners, it is our responsibility to shed light on such

occurrences and hold them accountable.

We are submitting a complaint to the Maine Commission on Governmental Ethics and Elections Practices stating Senator Anne Carney is in violation of Freedom of Access Laws by holding a meeting - originally slated to be before the full Judiciary Committee - that was designed to directly address and influence pending legislation that the public had no access to.

Transparency in the affairs of government must be of paramount importance. The public has a right to be included and aware of proceedings, as outlined in Maine Statute, anything else is unethical.

The Gun Owners of Maine Board of Directors



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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Central Maine Healthcare honors its certified nurses

LEWISTON, ME -- Central Maine Healthcare joined the rest of the medical world this week in recognizing its certified nurses.

March 19 was Certified Nurses Day which is an occasion to publicly acknowledge nurses who earn and maintain the highest credentials in their specialty and contribute to better patient outcomes through their advanced certifications.

"I wanted to get certified to be a role model for my department and to lead by example," said Amandar Wotten, MSN, RN, CEN, an Emergency Department nurse leader at Bridgton Hospital, which is part of Central Maine Healthcare. "Certifications are a great way to show the community we are the very best at what we do and are constantly committed to learning more. As a leader, it builds credibility with



Gisele Castonguay
your team and connects you to many resources that can benefit colleagues and



Amandar Wotten
patients alike."
"Being certified is about intentionally gaining

the knowledge and skills to provide evidence-based care to our patients," said Gisele Castonguay, RN, CWOCN. Gisele is a registered nurse who is certified in wound, ostomy and continence. "It has allowed me to earn the acceptance and respect of those who refer patients to me," she said.

According to the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), nursing certification covers

a wide range of specialties, such as medical-surgical, pediatric, pain management, cardiac vascular, oncology, hospice, case management, emergency nursing, critical care and many others.

The significance of certified nurses has been especially profound in recent years, as they have been at the forefront of the global healthcare response, providing vital care during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Healing Hearts presents Lewiston Relief Gala

LEWISTON, ME -- A dedicated team of Maine-based event professionals has organized the Lewiston Relief Gala, in collaboration with the Lewiston Auburn Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, with the shared goal of raising significant funds to be donated to the OneLewiston Resilience Fund to support long-term economic and community healing events related to the impacts of October 25, 2023 mass shooting in Lewiston.

On October 25, 2023, a somber event unfolded, shaking not only the City

of Lewiston but the entire State of Maine. The unfortunate incident claimed the lives of 18 individuals, leaving dozens more injured. Many families have been profoundly affected, prompting a compassionate group of Mainers to unite in support. Let's come together on March 29th to make a positive impact and assist those in need.

In addition to the event, Healing Hearts is hosting an online silent auction at <https://givebutter.com/c/HealingHearts-LA/auction>. Online auction items include: 1880's Sara-

toga Dome Trunk Restored by Maine Steamer Trunk Company; Four tickets to Portland Symphony Orchestra Magic of Christmas!; four tickets to experience one of the PSO's Classical or POPS! performances at Merrill Auditorium in Portland, Maine; One Night Stay & \$50 Pub Certificate at Oxford Casino; Oxbow Beer Garden Gift Basket; and White Glove Detailing Package: Bill Dodge Auto. The auction ends at 9pm on March 29, 2024.

Net proceeds from the Healing Hearts Gala will

be donated to L/A Metro Chamber of Commerce Foundation to support the long-term economic and community healing related to the impacts of October 25, 2023.

WHO: Healing Harts
WHAT: The Lewiston Relief Gala

WHEN: Fri., March 29 from 6 PM to 10 PM

WHERE: Hilton Garden Inn, Auburn Riverwatch

14 Great Falls Plaza, Auburn

TICKETS: <https://givebutter.com/c/HealingHeartsLA>



Sen. Collins pushes for timely disbursement of TRIO awards

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senators Susan Collins, co-chair of the Congressional TRIO Caucus, and Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) led 13 of their Senate colleagues in sending a letter to U.S. Department of Education (ED) Secretary Miguel Cardona, urging the ED to ensure timely execution of the upcoming Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) grant competition. By law, TRIO awards must be determined eight months prior to the expiration of a grant. The

ED has repeatedly failed to meet this deadline, disrupting services that TRIO grantees provide.

The SSS grant program is one of eight programs under the TRIO umbrella, and provides opportunities for academic development, assists students with basic college requirements, and motivates students toward the successful completion of their postsecondary education. SSS awards fund projects providing students with academic tutoring and advising, counseling, and

financial aid information.

"As you know, SSS is the only national program providing college retention and completion supports for low-income, first-generation students and students with disabilities," the Senators wrote. "Unfortunately, the Department has an historic track record of failing to award grants to TRIO funding recipients in sufficient time to prevent disruptions to student services."

"Specifically, we urge the Department to enact a timeline that notifies grant-

ees if competition results at least three months before the grant start date," the Senators continued. "This would prevent the previous unnecessary crises created by the Department and instead allow successful grantees sufficient time to recruit students and staff, secure campus resources and take others steps needed to ensure student success."

According to the College Board, the SSS program gives a return on investment of at least \$13 for every \$1 spent by the federal government. TRIO SSS participants were nearly 50% more likely to complete a 2-year degree

or transfer, and 18% more likely to complete a bachelor's degree, when compared to eligible non-participants in the program. In the State of Maine, the SSS program supports 2,765 students at 14 different institutions.

Last year, Senator Collins introduced the bipartisan Educational Opportunity and Success Act that would reauthorize and strengthen the federal TRIO programs while instituting commonsense reforms to make it easier for educational institutions to reach students who would benefit from these programs. These reforms came in part as a result of

the University of Maine at Presque Isle having had its TRIO application denied due to the use of one-and-a-half spacing rather than double spacing in text appearing in graphics on two of its application's 65 pages.

The letter was also signed by Senators Angus King (I-ME), Jack Reed (D-RI), Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Peter Welch (D-VT), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Jacky Rosen (D-NV), Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV), Ron Wyden (D-OR), Mike Crapo (R-ID), and James Risch (R-ID).




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Statewide coalition seeks to put Maine trails bond to ballot

AUGUSTA, ME – More than 500 organizations, businesses, and towns from across the state urged lawmakers to pass a \$30 million Maine Trails Bond so Maine voters will have an opportunity to support it on the November ballot.

In a statement to lawmakers, the remarkably broad statewide coalition said that investing in trails is a key strategy for boosting Maine's outdoor recreation economy.

The statement reads, in part: "In literally every corner of the state, trails are a valued resource for connecting Maine people and visitors with the natural world and reaching destinations to work and play. Trails are an essential component of Maine's \$3 billion outdoor recreation economy, which supports 31,000 jobs. We urge the Legislature to support the \$30 million Maine Trails Bond."

The full list of 515 Trails Bond supporters includes: 43 statewide organizations; 192 local organizations; 75 cities and towns; 167 businesses; and 41 ATV and snowmobile clubs. Noteworthy endorsers of the Trails Bond include L.L. Bean, Maine State Chamber of Commerce, Maine Municipal Association, Maine Snowmobile Association, ATV Maine, Maine Tourism Association, Maine Youth Camping Association, cities and towns from Mad-

awaska to York to Rumford to Calais, and dozens of the state's top outdoor recreation companies, sporting camps, land trusts, and trail organizations. (Map of towns with Trail Bond endorsers)

The Maine Trails Bond (LD 1156) was introduced by Representative Jessica Fay (D-Raymond), with cosponsor support from three other Democrats, five Republicans, and one Independent.

The bill would provide \$30 million in grants over four years to organizations and towns for motorized, non-motorized, and multi-use trail projects. Funds would be managed by the Bureau of Parks and Lands. This would be the first-ever opportunity for Maine voters to support a trails bond. In contrast, Mainers have approved 12 highway bonds for a total of \$1.1 billion since 2007.

This winter's storms and floods caused serious trail damage, increasing the sense of urgency for funding to help communities, trail clubs, and land trusts with the needed repair work.

"I encourage lawmakers to take a close look at the breadth, diversity, and statewide distribution of this coalition of supporters of the Maine Trails Bond and think hard about whether they've ever seen anything like it for a legislative bond measure," said Gabe Perkins, Executive Director of Inland Woods

+ Trails and Co-Coordinator of the Maine Trails Coalition. "Mainers in every part of the state want the opportunity to vote for the Trails Bond."

"From my background in marketing, I believe Maine has the potential to become broadly recognized as the state with the most incredible trails in the Eastern United State," said Angela Arno, Executive Director, Piscataquis County Economic Development Corporation. "Outstanding trails could easily become part of Maine's brand identity, drawing people to our state for recreation, to support and start businesses, and to relocate."

"Maine has some of the most amazing trail experiences in the country, and the potential for the future is incredible," said John Raymond, President of ATV Maine and Northern Maine Timber Cruisers. "But to achieve that future, we need to recognize that trails do not maintain themselves. It takes hard work and money to build and maintain our trails, but Maine is not investing in our trails, even as they are battered by storms and are experiencing record use."

"Maine's trails and trail clubs bring people together and help them access some of Maine's most spectacular places," said Al Swett, President of Maine Snowmobiling Association. "Trails also create a lot of economic

activity. Snowmobiling alone generates more than \$600 million annually for Maine's economy, but for too long we've been underinvesting in our trails."

"Trails are one of the most important resources for Maine towns, providing outdoor experiences for people of all ages and drawing visitors who provide a real economic stimulus," said Deb Bowker, Recreation Director, Town of Carrabassett Valley. "We've seen explosive growth in trail use in Carrabassett Valley over the past decade, and there's no sign of it slowing down. The Trails Bond will help tap into that momentum, helping Maine trails rival any in the country."

"Having worked with communities and groups throughout Maine to map out more than 500 miles of potential new trails, I'm awed by Maine's potential," said Steve Kasacek, Assistant Director, Outdoor Sport Institute. "But what really excites me is the opportunity to use trail building for educational purposes and workforce development. Investing in trails through the Trails Bond will create jobs and career paths in trail design and construction, and this, in turn, can provide skills and employment for

our youth, as well as help draw new people to Maine. I can speak from personal experience. My family and I moved to Maine in no small part because of the state's current trails and the potential for future trails."

"Now more than ever, trails are critical to our quality of life and the health of Maine people," said Representative Jessica Fay. "During the pandemic, we discovered trails that we didn't know existed, but we also discovered that we take our trails for granted. As a state, we invest almost nothing in our thousands of miles of trails. This bond would help us realize a compelling vision that features accessible trails that enrich our lives, communities, and economy."

"As a wheelchair user and lifelong resident of Maine, I grew up in a time when accessibility was not at the forefront of most people's minds. That's why I'm so enthusiastic about the Maine Trails Bond," said Enock Glidden, Outdoor Accessibility Specialist. "This bill will go a long way toward providing accessible opportunities for people like me to be surrounded by nature and reap the benefits of what Maine's outdoors has to offer."

"From Caribou to Kittery and Calais to Eustis, Maine people, towns, and businesses are urging the Legislature to send the Trails Bond to the November 2024 ballot," said Pete Didisheim, Advocacy Director, Natural Resources Council of Maine. "The Trails Bond provides a rare opportunity for people across Maine to find common ground on a resource we all value—trails."

"This Maine Trails Bond would reaffirm Maine's status as a national leader in outdoor recreation and further boost our \$3 billion outdoor recreation economy. Investments in trails are an investment in our entire state and have helped make Maine a desirable place to live, work, visit, and do business," said Jenny Kordick, Executive Director, Maine Outdoor Brands.

LD 1156 was introduced in 2023 and carried over to the 2024 legislative session. The Appropriations Committee is expected to decide the fate of the Maine Trails Bond in the weeks ahead. The bill needs a two-thirds vote in the House and Senate, and the Governor's signature of approval, to place it on the November 2024 ballot for consideration by Maine voters.

Clothes galore at Gorham's Mission of Hope Clothes Closet

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

We focus on clothes and accessories (gloves, scarves, hats, etc.) and welcome your donations during our operating hours. Clean clothes in good shape help the most, as they go right out to help people locally or in nearby communities. An attempt is made to have season appropriate clothes available to you. After we have

displayed them for a time, they are donated to our local second-hand shops.

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

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

Jason Hodsdon Masonry

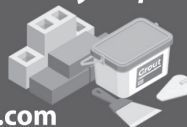
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McDonald's launches partnership with the Maine Celtics

PORTLAND, ME – New England McDonald's have launched a multi-year partnership with the Maine Celtics, the NBA G League Affiliate of the Boston Celtics. As an official partner, New England McDonald's fans will gain access to exclusive game day app deals, giveaways and more.

"This partnership is a slam dunk for McDonald's and basketball fans across the state," said local Maine McDonald's Operator Ron Lydick. "By bringing together two legacy brands, fans will have the chance to score big on our iconic menu items through the McDonald's app. With McDonald's and the C's on

the court together, everyone wins."

The partnership includes opportunities for fans to cash in on exclusive digital offers through the McDonald's app, including the chance to redeem a free Big Mac with \$2 purchase when the opponent misses a free throw. Fans may also catch glimpses of famil-

iar Celtics faces in Maine McDonald's restaurants throughout the season.

"We are thrilled to continue our partnership with McDonald's here in Maine," said Maine Celtics Team President Dajuan Eubanks. "The local franchise owners are a part of the fabric of our community, and the McDonald's brand

has been intertwined with the NBA for years. This partnership makes sense for us on every level."

The collaboration also emphasizes McDonald's and the Celtics' shared commitment to supporting local communities through collaborative giveback initiatives. The Celtics will support Mc-

Donald's initiatives benefiting Ronald McDonald House Charities of Maine – including Round-Up for RMHC – through player and mascot appearances.

Fans can learn more about the partnership and upcoming digital deals via Instagram, Facebook and TikTok @McDonaldsNewEngland.

Mediation program offers training opportunity in April

MAINE -- The Maine Agricultural Mediation Program (MAMP) will offer a 16-hour training program on Wednesdays in April for individuals interested in learning more about conflict resolution or becoming a MAMP co-mediator. The four program sessions will meet from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. online via Zoom on April 3, 10, 17. The last session on April 24 will be held in person in Augusta.

This 16-hour training will introduce a range of topics including conflict theory, stress response, participant rapport, interventions and ethics and provide daily opportunities to practice and review case studies around the types of conflicts and issues that arise within Maine's agricultural community. Upon completion of this training and a 40-hour basic mediation course, participants can apply to be

a MAMP co-mediator and work with a wide range of issues and needs involving producers, loan holders, and members of the ag community.

Participants will learn from service providers from U.S. Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency, Land for Good, SCORE, Maine Farmland Trust, UMaine Extension as well as current MAMP Co-Mediators.

The sessions will be facilitated by Lucy Wess and Leslie Forstadt from MAMP and Extension. Karen Groat, UMaine at Augusta Libra Professor and mediation professional, will also provide guidance and instruction throughout the training.

For more information and to register, visit the event website. To request reasonable accommodation, please contact Lucy

Wess, maineagmediation@maine.edu, 207.974.9637.

MAMP, a part of the USDA Agricultural Mediation Program, is locally managed by University of Maine Cooperative Extension. The program aims to support and promote the agricultural community in Maine by providing no-cost mediation and conflict resolution services, contract and lease co-drafting, and personal financial coaching.

Mediation is a voluntary and confidential process which is guided by trained neutrals. It can help resolve conflict around topics that include agricultural loans, conservation programs, wetland determinations, pesticides, family farm transition, lease issues, neighbor disputes and worker/employer disagreements. Visit the program website to learn more about agricultural mediation at UMaine Extension.

MaineHealth opens addiction medicine practice

PORTLAND, ME – MaineHealth has opened a Comprehensive Addiction Medicine practice at 576 St. John Street in Portland to provide substance use disorder treatment in a safe, supportive, confidential and therapeutic environment designed to support recovery and health.

It is the first practice of its kind in southern Maine.

Comprehensive Addiction Medicine (CAM) differs from previous models of addiction care by using a more holistic and integrated approach to treatment. Unlike traditional models that focus on a specific aspect of ad-

MaineHealth

diction, the comprehensive model uses a multidisciplinary team to offer individually tailored, personalized care.

"The CAM practice

is unique in our region," said MaineHealth CEO Andrew Mueller, MD, at the practice's grand opening on Feb. 5. "For the first time, a person can wake up, decide to seek help for substance use, walk into a practice that very same day and receive virtually all the support they'll need immediately, including long-acting medications, harm reduction resources, access to a highly trained

team of addiction specialists, preventative care and more. The practice truly represents MaineHealth's vision of working together so our communities are the healthiest in America."

MaineHealth partnered with the City of Portland and the Davis Family Foundation to fund the opening of the practice and directly address an addiction crisis that has taken the lives of more than 4,000 Mainers in the last ten years.

"It is nice to see how a collaboration of this magnitude came together

for individuals in Portland and beyond who are experiencing substance use disorder and how they will have access to treatment and support in a respectful and inviting environment," said Portland City Councilor Regina Phillips.

The practice team includes addiction medicine physicians, a behavioral health clinician, nursing staff and a peer support specialist. It is open for appointments from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and walk-ins from 9 a.m. to noon weekdays. Reach the practice at (207) 661-0700.

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Seniors Not Acting Their Age

A Glorious Day on South Moat Mountain



Three hikers approach the summit of South Moat Mountain



The lower South Moat Mountain Trail passes through a handsome stand of tall conifer trees



The summit overlooks Mount Washington Valley

South Moat Mountain near Conway, New Hampshire is one of my favorite mountain hikes. I included it in my book, *Mountains for Mortals – New England*, a mountain guidebook that features what I consider to be the 30 finest most scenic mountain hikes in New England. The 2,749 foot peak is particularly beautiful during winter.

My wife, Nancy, and I began contemplating a South Moat hike in early winter. A couple of nagging ailments (mine a knee and hers a hip) prevented us from coordinating a trek. Recently, treatments for the afflictions were aligned on an exceptional winter day.

The Moat Mountain Trail to the summit of South Moat Mountain is easy to moderate in difficulty with some ledge scrambling at higher elevations. Situated in the heart of the White Mountains, partially barren Moat Ridge parallels and overshadows North Conway and Mount Washington Valley. Ledges on the south face and the summit area provide exceptional views of the White Mountains.

When we arrived at the parking area on Passaconaway Road in Conway on a glorious, sunny, cool late-February day,

several vehicles were already parked in the medium-sized lot. The trailhead is part of White Mountains National Forest and park passes must be displayed or a fee paid in the collection box. A popular hike, the trail surface was solidly packed snow. In our estimation, snowshoes were unnecessary. Instead, we chose micro spikes and used them throughout the trek.

Passing a steel gate at the entrance to the trail, we hiked easily through an open area. A short distance beyond, the trail turns sharply right beside an arrow sign posted on a tree and continues up a gentle grade in a mixed hardwood and conifer forest.

After dropping down to a narrow brook, the trail rises in a northwesterly direction through a handsome stand of tall conifer trees. After a mile of hiking, we crossed a sturdy wooden bridge over Dry Brook and met several returning hikers.

The path continues on rolling hills to an area where a long switchback begins. Given it was her first mountain outing since receiving treatment, Nancy decided she had tested her hip sufficiently and began a return.

Beyond the switchback, I climbed steadily

in rocky terrain before arriving at two steep boulder-strewn escarpments. Both required careful maneuvering. Above, I met a descending hiker. He reported gusty winds above tree line that required a parka for protection and told me there were more hikers ahead.

Shortly after, I emerged onto an extensive sloping south-facing ledge. I paused to savor exceptional views of the southern White Mountains.

Following the tracks of previous hikers in patchy spruce growth, I progressed higher on the long exposed ledge all the while enjoying views of Mount Chocorua to the west. At the top, where the path turns right and enters a wooded area, I met two hikers who again reported blustery conditions ahead.

The trail narrowed and I began scrambling over and around large boulders and oblique ledges on a partially open ridge. Higher up, I could see three hikers above tree line approaching what appeared to be the summit. I stopped to add a hooded parka.

Hiking in a thin snow pack, I persisted above tree line while enjoying marvelous views looking down into North Conway in the east. The parka was

adequate protection from piercing northwest winds when I arrived at the barren summit marked with huge boulders.

The views were phenomenal. To the east is picturesque Mount Cranmore with Mount Kearsarge slightly north. Moat Ridge extends north over Middle and North Peaks pointing towards the towering Presidential Range that was unfortunately enveloped in clouds. The White Mountains dominate the landscape south and west.

I huddled behind one of the boulders for protection from the wind and consumed a snack and water. The temptation was strong to follow the other hikers who were persevering towards Middle Peak.

However, Nancy was waiting and I had misgivings about putting more stress on my knee, so I began my return instead. It was a good decision as I experienced mild soreness during the descent and skiing was on the agenda for the next day.

My book, *Maine Al Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine* narrates nine Maine mountaineering outings, several in winter.

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

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

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Arts & Entertainment

NSB support of Big Brothers Big Sisters grows to over \$50K

PORTLAND, ME — Empowering Maine kids on the path to graduate with a plan for their future and a mentor whose impact will last a lifetime is more than a goal espoused by Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS), it is a reality.

“Mentoring relationships provide a key source of stability and social connectedness that is essential in life,” said Eileen Veroneau Brown, Director of Development and Communications for BBBS of Southern Maine. “The generosity of Norway Savings Bank makes a profound difference in our community and supports the continuous growth of littles waiting for their endless potential to be unlocked.”

Playing a small part in helping to nurture these relationships, as well as the support and encouragement they offer, is an honor for Norway Savings, which has proudly contributed over \$50,000 to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southern Maine and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Bath/Brunswick in the last eight years, including ongoing donations in 2024.

In addition, NSB team members act as mentors in the programs, volunteer at BBBS events, and even serve on the organization’s boards.

“These mentoring relationships ignite the power and promise of our youth and touch the hearts of the caring adults who do-



nate their time to the programs,” said Penny Anderson, NSB Market Manager in Brunswick who serves as Treasurer on the BBBS of Bath/Brunswick’s Board of Directors. “To see it in real time and observe the impact over the years is remarkable.”

“BBBS is guided by the vision for all children to achieve success in life,” said Karry Kane, NSB’s Mortgage Loan Officer VP in Brunswick and current BBBS of Bath/Brunswick Board Member. “This experience can help dramati-

cally change the path of a child’s life for the better.” Karry, herself, is a new “big” in the program.

“I just love it so much,” she said. “My ‘little’ is amazing. I find myself looking forward to the next time we can get together. It’s so special.”

“I’m continually moved by our team members’ commitment to lend both their time and hearts to this program and these children,” said Dan Walsh, President and CEO of Norway Savings Bank. “BBBS changes kids’ perspectives

in a positive way through friendship and guidance at a critical time in their lives.”


The organization doesn’t receive state or federal funding, and the important connections made by BBBS would not be possible without the financial support of businesses and community partners.

“Norway Savings Bank and other benevolent businesses play a crucial role in helping our ‘bigs’ make life-changing impacts on ‘littles’ that generate better communities in the years that follow,” said Carol Marquis, Executive Director for BBBS of Bath/Brunswick. “This support is a driving force that im-

proves our children’s lives every day. Happier, healthier, and brighter futures are possible for the kids that need us most.”

For more information on how to offer assistance in a variety of ways to Big Brothers Big Sisters, visit www.bbbsathbrunswick.org or www.somebigs.org (Portland).

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



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SPRING AWAKENING is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. www.mtishows.com

Yarmouth students win regional National Science Bowl

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A team of high school students from Yarmouth, Maine won their regional competition for the 2024 National Science Bowl® (NSB) this past weekend and will compete in the NSB National Finals this spring, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), who sponsors the NSB.

“Every year this ‘competition like no other’ brings together some of the most remarkable and inspiring students from across America,” said Asmeret Asefaw Berhe, DOE Office of Science Director, “and I would like to congratulate the Yarmouth High School team as they advance to the National Finals! Good luck to you – our future scientists, visionaries, and leaders!”

The NSB brings together thousands of middle and high school students from across the country to compete in a fast-paced question-and-answer format where they solve technical problems and answer questions on a range of science disciplines including biology, chemistry, Earth and space sciences, physics, and math.

The top two middle and high school teams

will win \$5000 for their schools’ math and science departments. Other schools placing in the top 16 in the National Finals will win \$1,000 for their schools’ science departments. For press inquiries, please contact the NSB media outreach manager, Nathan Clark, at nathan.clark@science.doe.gov.

The winning team from each qualifying regional competition will be eligible to compete in the National Finals held in Washington, D.C., from April 25 - 29, 2024, with all expenses paid. The national event consists of several days of science activities and sightseeing, along with the competitions.

The NSB annually draws more than 10,000 middle and high school competitors. Since the first competition in 1991, approximately 344,000 students have faced off in the National Science Bowl® Finals. The knowledge that former competitors have acquired and, more importantly, the collaborative skills and study habits that they learned along the way have led them to successes in a variety of fields. Many have become researchers; others

are science and math professors.

The 2024 competitors will follow in the footsteps of previous National Science Bowl® contestants and will blaze a trail for students in science, math, and engineering.

DOE’s Office of Science is the single largest supporter of basic research in the physical sciences in the United States and is working to address some of the most pressing challenges of our time. For more information, please visit <https://www.energy.gov/science>.

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MaineHealth announces unified identity across healthcare system

PORTLAND, ME – MaineHealth announced today that during 2024 it will roll out a unified identity for its hospitals and other entities across its system, making it easier for patients to understand, find and access their care.

“We are updating our look, logo and names of our hospitals, practices, administrative offices and other locations to further our shared commitment to working together so our communities are the healthiest in America,” said Dr. Andrew Mueller, CEO of MaineHealth.

Mueller said that, not only would the new approach help patients better understand that they are receiving care from the region’s premier health care provider, but it will also bring the organization’s care team together with a unified identity.

“More and more, meeting our patients’ needs requires us to provide services at multiple locations with a care team working in concert across what had traditionally been separate hospital organizations.

This new approach will reinforce that we are one team committed to our vision,” said Mueller.

Mueller also noted that a well-defined brand will help in attracting and retaining talented caregivers, making it easier for them to identify with the organization’s values. That will directly benefit patients and support the organization’s bottom line by further reducing the need for expensive contract labor.

Dr. Ross Isacke, who serves as chief medical officer at Franklin Memorial Hospital in Farmington and has also practiced at Maine Medical Center in Portland and Stephens Memorial Hospital in Norway, said the unified brand will be of great benefit to patients.

“In my role at Stephens, when I would tell a patient that they need to be transferred to Maine Medical Center for a higher level of care, or when we were sending a patient from MMC back home to Stephens, there could be anxiety about leaving the

hospital that they know and trust,” said Isacke. “Often, I would flip my badge over and show that I was part of both hospitals to explain that we are all one and the same. Now, with this new approach to our brand, that will be self-evident, and I think patients will better understand how we deliver care.”

Because new names for health care sites must adhere to strict regulations, and therefore require updates to critical systems, the brand update will be made in phases over a five-month period between June and October.

Locations in MaineHealth’s Southern Region, where, as previously announced, Maine Medical Center in Portland and Southern Maine Health Care in Biddeford and Sanford are coming together under a single hospital license with one medical staff, will make the brand transition in June. The Mountain Region – which includes hospitals in North Conway, N.H., Norway and Farmington - will follow in August. The Coastal

Region – made up of hospitals in Belfast, Rockport, Damariscotta and Brunswick - will make the transition in September, as will systemwide services for home health and behavioral health.

Locations will be identified primarily as “MaineHealth” and will all display the same logo across the system, and in most cases local hospitals will retain an identifier consistent with their historical names.

Across the Southern Region, because the hospitals are uniting, the Maine Medical Center name will be used along with the hospital location. So, the locations will be known as follows:

- MaineHealth Maine Medical Center Portland
 - MaineHealth Maine Medical Center Biddeford
 - MaineHealth Maine Medical Center Sanford
- The hospitals in the Mountain Region in North Conway, N.H., Norway and Farmington will be named as follows, respectively:
- MaineHealth Memo-

- rial Hospital
- MaineHealth Stephens Hospital
- MaineHealth Franklin Hospital

In the Coastal Region, the hospitals in Belfast, Rockport, Damariscotta and Brunswick will be named as follows, respectively:

- MaineHealth Waldo Hospital
- MaineHealth Pen Bay Hospital
- MaineHealth Lincoln Hospital
- MaineHealth Mid Coast Hospital

The health care system’s inpatient behavioral health site in Westbrook will be named “MaineHealth Behavioral Health at Spring Harbor.”

The inpatient pediatric hospital at MaineHealth Maine Medical Center Portland will have its own version of the MaineHealth logo and will be called “MaineHealth Barbara Bush Children’s Hospital.”

Most other sites across the system will also be renamed with “MaineHealth” as the primary identifier. For instance, a

practice in Saco offering pediatric care will be called “MaineHealth Pediatrics Saco.”

Terri Cannan, chief marketing and communications officer with MaineHealth, said that, on a practical level, the new approach to branding will save money over time. Currently, MaineHealth operates with more than a dozen brand identities and logos. That means separate branding on everything from lab coats to stationery. It even interferes with money-saving initiatives like combining laundry services across the system and standardizing care team badges.

“We will get a really good return on this investment,” said Cannan. “Not only will we see direct savings by eliminating duplication with all those different logos, but we will also be enhancing the experience for our patients and better positioning ourselves to attract top talent as a high-quality health care system united in our commitment to our patients and communities.”

Mental health funding for Maine following Lewiston shooting

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senators Susan Collins and Angus King and U.S. Representatives Chellie Pingree and Jared Golden announced that the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (Maine DHHS) will receive \$2,048,452 through the U.S. Substance

Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA) Emergency Response Grant program (SERG). This program is designed to meet emergency substance use and mental health needs for communities impacted by a precipitating emergency or disaster event. In this

instance, the funding will be used for community mental health needs in the greater-Lewiston community, following the shooting that took place in October of last year and claimed the lives of 18 individuals and wounded 13 others.

“In the wake of last year’s horrific shooting in

Lewiston, this emergency funding from SAMHSA will help meet the mental health needs of those impacted by this tragedy,” the Delegation said. “The people of Maine are resilient. While nothing we can do will bring back the lives lost, we will continue to work together with our

state and federal partners to help ensure that Lewiston and surrounding communities have the resources and support needed to heal and recover.”

Following the shooting of October 25, 2023, the Maine delegation sent two letters to the Inspector General of the U.S.

Department of the Army, Lieutenant General Donna W. Martin, calling for a comprehensive review of the events surrounding the shooting. The Inspector General has since announced she will conduct a formal, independent investigation into the events leading up to the shooting.



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Continued from page 1

Gorham campus in historic Russell Hall.

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Tickets: To purchase tickets, or for more information, visit USM Theatre online at <https://usm.maine.edu/department-theatre/box-office-tickets/> or call the USM Theatre Box Office at (207) 780-5151. Tickets \$10-\$24.

School matinee: USM Department of Theatre offers a special school and community group matinees on Wednesday, April 10, at 10:00am and Friday, April 12, at 10:00 am at reduced ticket prices. To bring your school or class to the school matinee, contact Audiences Services & Outreach Coordinator, Janice Gardner at janice.gardner@maine.edu.

Those needing special accommodations to participate fully in this program, contact Janice Gardner at (207)780-5289



Emma Hall (as Emma Nolan) & Karoline Brechter (as Alyssa Greene)

or janice.gardner@maine.edu. USM's telex / TDD number (207)780-5646. Hearing impaired: call

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UMaine Extension, Sea Grant to host citizen science trainings

BRUNSWICK, ME -- University of Maine Cooperative Extension and Maine Sea Grant will host a series of in-person workshops for individuals interested in participating in the Signs of the Seasons citizen science project. The first training is scheduled for Thursday, April 4 from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. at Stimpson's Point in Brunswick. Additional workshops will be held throughout April and May in Falmouth, Wells, Augusta, Camden and Boothbay. For a full schedule, visit the Signs of the Seasons webpage. A 3-part webinar series is also available for those unable to attend in-person.

Participants will learn how to make scientific observations of phenology (the study of cyclic and seasonal changes of plants and animals), practice making observations, and leave with the tools and knowledge needed to set



Volunteer community scientists practice making phenological observations of common plants during a training session co-hosted by Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens. Courtesy University of Maine Cooperative Extension.



A group of budding citizen scientists learn about rockweed phenology along the coast in Brunswick. Courtesy University of Maine Cooperative Extension.

up their own site to observe and record changes in phenology.

Signs of the Seasons is a statewide effort to recruit volunteers to identify and record changes in more than 20 different indicator species like rockweed, milkweed, loons, butterflies and lilacs, that are important for understanding Maine's changing climate. Data from this network

of volunteers helps build a rich, detailed record of the region's seasonal turns which is made available to collaborating scientists and resource managers.

The workshops are free but registration on the program website is required. For more information or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact Keri Kaczor, keri.kaczor@maine.edu, 207.974.9502 or Beth Bisson, beth.bisson@maine.edu.

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

Our Body and Mind Expo features psychics, craft vendors, experts

WINDHAM, ME -- Our Body & Mind Expo is a transformative event that offers a holistic experience through the participation of psychics, craft vendors, and workshops. This expo provides a comprehensive platform for attendees to explore and nurture both their body and mind in a supportive and immersive environment.

Psychics at the expo offer a variety of services such as tarot card readings, astrology consultations, mediumship sessions, and energy healing. Through these offerings, attendees can gain insights, clarity, and spiritual guidance to support their personal growth and well-being.

Craft vendors showcase their unique handmade products that are designed to promote wellness and mindfulness. From crystal-infused jewelry to organic skincare products, artisanal candles to healing crystals, attendees have access to a diverse range of items that cater to their holistic needs.

In addition to psychics and craft vendors, the expo also features workshops led by experts in various fields such as meditation, yoga, sound healing, and mindfulness practices. These workshops provide attendees with practical tools, techniques, and knowledge to enhance their physical, emotional, and spiritual wellness.

Our Body & Mind Expo is more than just an event; it is a community gathering that fosters connection, growth, and

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exploration. We will be offering beverages and food during the event. By bringing together psychics, craft

vendors, and workshop facilitators, the expo creates a space where individuals *See Expo, page 14*



1 in 3 Mainers 65 and over end up in the emergency room after a fall.
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Southern Maine Agency on Aging's **A Matter of Balance** program provides an in-depth look at falls prevention and management. In 8 sessions over 4 weeks, you will learn to view falls as something you can control so you can stay active and independent.

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- Discuss fall prevention with fellow participants in a safe and comforting environment;
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Paid Family & Medical Leave group holds first meeting

AUGUSTA, ME – Maine’s newly confirmed Paid Family and Medical Leave Benefits Authority met for the first time on March 12, 2024 at 45 Commerce Drive in Augusta. The meeting included introductions, an overview of the Paid Family and Medical Leave statute, and commission training. Members of the public were able to watch the meeting in-person or via Zoom.

During the meeting, the Authority unanimously voted Maria Fox in as Chair of the Authority, and Samuel Hight as Vice-Chair. They also voted to

adopt a remote meeting policy for when members are unable to attend in-person.

The members of the Authority who were appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Maine State Senate are as follows:

Benjamin K. Grant-Member with expertise in issues affecting labor and independent contractors. Organization: Maine Education Association

David Barber-Employer with more than 50 employees. Organization: Barber Foods

Samuel J. Hight-Member who is



Chair Maria Fox, and Vice-Chair Samuel Hight

self-employed. Organization: Owns and operates multiple organizations including Hight Ford, Inc., Hight Chevrolet Farmington, and Hight Properties,

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Christopher J. Washburn-Expertise in issues related to paid family leave benefits and paid medical leave benefits. Organization: Delhaize America

Michelle Corry-An employer in the hospitality industry. Organization: Five fifty-five

Jay Naliboff, MD-Expertise in treating issues affecting maternity and postpartum care. Organization: Retired.

Jenni Tilton-Flood-Expertise in agriculture, a seasonal workforce or a heritage industry. Organization: Flood Brothers Farm.

Sarah Conroy-Expertise in issues affecting elder care. Organization: Androscoggin Home Healthcare + Hospice.

Ranae L’Italian-Ex-

pertise in childcare and early childhood development. Organization: Kennebec Valley YMCA.

Maria Fox- Expertise in employment law representing employee interests. Organization: Murray, Plumb and Murray

The Authority’s next meetings are scheduled for:

Tuesday, May 7 from 9-11 a.m.

Tuesday, June 11 from 9-11 a.m.

The most up-to-date information on Maine’s Paid Family and Medical Leave Program can be found here: <https://www.maine.gov/labor/pfml/>

Maine farms, ag products increase in value

MAINE -- The United States Department of Agriculture recently released results of the 2022 Census of Agriculture, including state- and county-level statistics. The most recent data for Maine show that farms continue to be a driver of economic activity, especially in rural communities. Agricultural land and buildings are worth more than ever before. The estimated market value of land and buildings for the average Maine farm rose to \$649,229, the highest number since 1997 even when accounting for inflation. The average Maine farm also had its largest grossing year in 2022 compared to other census years, with \$123,582 market value of agricultural products sold.

The Census also revealed that Maine has the lowest number of farms

and farmland acreage since 1997. In 2022, there were an estimated 7,036 farms with 1.23 million acres of farmland, down from a peak of 8,173 operations and 1.45 million acres in 2012. Maine lost 564 farms and 82,567 acres of farmland since the last census in 2017.

“As Maine agriculture changes and grows, Cooperative Extension and the University of Maine will continue to be a vital source of evidence-based knowledge to support healthy and sustainable food, fiber and natural resource industries in our state,” said Hannah Carter, Associate Provost for Online and Continuing Education and Dean of UMaine Extension.

Specialty crops, including maple syrup, Christmas trees, hay and nursery and greenhouse

sectors, account for the bulk of agricultural activity in the state. A full 63.1% of the value from agricultural products sales is attributed to specialty crops, totaling \$548.5 million. Livestock, poultry and their products comprise the second largest single USDA commodity group, accounting for 34.3% of sales value in 2022.

“Faculty and staff within Extension are offering new programs every day that support these key sectors including our vegetable and fruit growers, Christmas tree farmers, maple sugaring, livestock and forage producers, and the nursery industry,” said Tori Jackson, Extension Program Leader for Agriculture and Natural Resources. “Through the Maine Farmer Resource Network and other group, we also

coordinate with partners to build across communities and industries.”

Agritourism, direct sales and on-farm value addition remain critical components of Maine’s agricultural economy. Between 2017 and 2022, the income gained by farms from agritourism and on-farm recreational activities doubled, accounting for \$12.2 million despite the number of farms engaged in these activities remaining nearly the same at 241. Nearly 20% of the total value of Maine agricultural products sold in 2022, or \$172.6 million, was sold directly by Maine farms to consumers, institutions, local and regional retailers, restaurants and food hubs.

“The business landscape for Maine agriculture is changing rapidly,” said Jason Entsminger, State Extension Specialist

for Small Business and Assistant Professor of Entrepreneurship and Innovation. “The way farms create and capture value through new market channels, how they staff their operations, and how they make strategic decisions about supply chains, risk management and financing are some of the major challenges we’re working to help operators address every day.”

Labor continues to be the largest expenditure category for Maine farms, with a total expense of \$150.6 million in 2022. Expenditures on farm labor began to replace purchased feed for livestock as the greatest expense for Maine farms around the 2012 census. The gap between the two categories continues to widen, with the ratio of labor expenditures to feed expenditures

on Maine farms more than doubling since 2007.

Conducted every five years, the Census of Agriculture helps tell the story of American producers and the role of U.S. agriculture. The data is the most comprehensive and unbiased across the industry and helps to inform decisions that shape the future of American agriculture for the next five years. The data provides a deeper understanding of producer demographics, farm operations and economics, commodities and decision-making.

For more detailed information about Maine’s statistics, visit the state page on the USDA website. To receive regular updates on programming that supports Maine agricultural producers, visit the website to subscribe to the Maine Farm News.

\$1M for developing Maine’s organic food market

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Susan Collins, Vice Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, and Senator Angus King, announced that 5 Maine entities will receive a combined total of \$1,036,469 through the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Organic Market Development Grant (OMDG) Program. These grant awards will fund the development of new and expanded organic markets to help increase the consumption and production of organic agricul-

tural commodities.

The funding comes during National Agriculture Week, which runs from March 17-23, to celebrate and highlight the farmers, ranchers, fishers, and foresters who work every day to feed Americans and strengthen our economy. In a 2020 study, Maine, per capita, ranked second in the country for the availability of organic food. For every 100,000 Maine people, there are 37 organic farms located across the state – with Maine vegetable farms producing the

most organic produce in the nation.

“Maine’s organic agricultural industry continues to thrive with the support of the USDA’s grant programs,” said Senator Collins. “This investment will give Mainers access to healthier, better quality foods and help strengthen the resiliency of our state’s food supply chain.”

“As Maine’s organic farmers face increasing challenges from changing global markets, climate change, and more, we must continue to provide resources and support to

help them evolve with the times,” said Senator King. “These Organic Market Development Grants will ensure Maine’s organic farmers can continue to respond to these challenges and pave the way for the future of the organic food industry. I am proud to support Maine’s organic farmers as they provide healthy, quality foods to our communities and boost our state and local economy.”

Specifically, the funding has been awarded as follows:

Maine Organic Farm-

ers and Gardeners Association – \$639,449 for strengthening consumer and institutional demand for local organic dairy products.

Aurora Mills & Farm LLC – \$100,000 to expand soybean production capacity, strengthening Maine’s food systems, and for the purposes of nitrogen-fixing soils.

Crystal Spring Community Farm LLC – \$100,000 to increase access to local organic products at large-scale Northeast grocery chains by providing industry standard, cost effective, custom packaging of produce for small organic farms.

Balfour Farm LLC – \$99,511 to expand farmstead milk processing,

which will grow the Northeast organic cheese supply.

Blue-Zee Farm – \$97,509 to create and grow a niche regional market for fresh and frozen edamame, while utilizing the nitrogen-fixing ability of soybeans for soil health.

According to the USDA, the OMDG program focuses on building and expanding capacity for certified organic production, aggregation, processing, manufacturing, storing, transporting, wholesaling, distribution, and development of consumer markets. OMDG aims to increase the availability and demand for domestically produced organic agricultural products and address the critical need for additional market paths.

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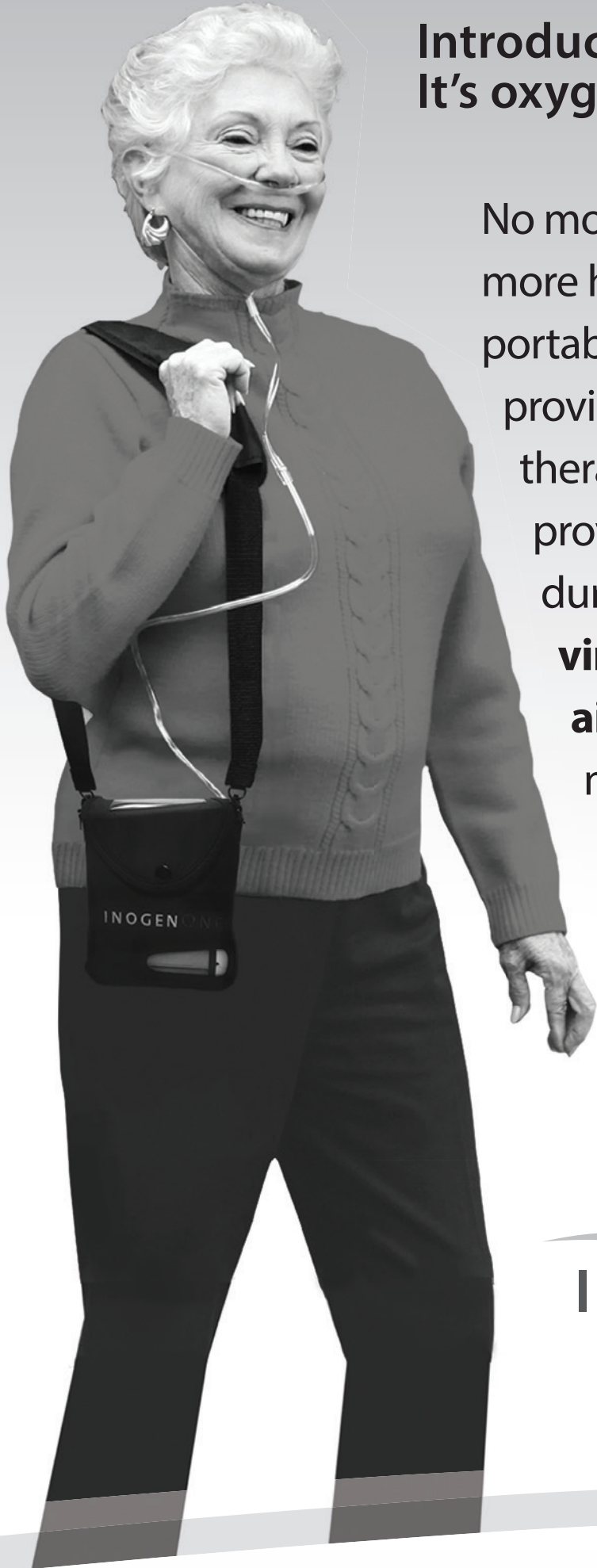
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Maine Wing meets with members of Congress



Maine Wing's National Legislative Day delegation, L to R: Cadet 1st Lt. Felicity Jackson, Col. Blain Cote, Wing Commander, Lt. Col. Robert Asselin, Government Relations Advisor, Maj. Mark Hyland, Deputy Vice Commander



Senator Susan Collins greets Lt. Col. Robert Asselin, Maine Wing CAP's Government Relations Advisor



The Maine Wing delegation poses on the steps of the Supreme Court before meeting with members of congress on CAP National Legislative Day 2024.

AUGUSTA, ME – Maine Wing members travelled to Washington, D.C. on Feb. 29, 2024 as a part of Civil Air Patrol's National Legislative Day to present the CAP Annual Report to Congress and met with Sens. Susan Collins and Angus King, and staffers from the offices of Reps. Jared Golden and Chellie Pingree.

Maine Wing was represented by Wing Commander Col. Blain Cote, CAP, Government Relations Advisor Lt. Col. Robert Asselin, Wing Deputy Vice Commander Maj. Mark Hyland, Assistant Public Affairs Officer 2nd Lt. Amanda Goldman, and Cadet 1st Lt. Felicity Jackson of the Brunswick Com-

posite Squadron.

In addition to the annual report and appropriations request, the delegation discussed Maine Wing volunteers' contributions in 2023 which translated to \$1,297,106 in overall value to the state, including 1 search and rescue mission with a credited find, 219 CAP Cadet, Air Force ROTC and Junior ROTC orientation flights, support local level shelters/warming stations, and training missions.

Jackson, a high school junior, provided a firsthand account of the impacts the Civil Air Patrol cadet program has on young people, including herself, and how it has shaped her as a leader



Members of Maine Wing meet with Senator Angus King on Civil Air Patrol National Legislative Day 2024 to present CAP's Report to Congress.

and influenced her progression towards achieving her goals of attending the U.S. Naval Academy and eventually becoming a U.S. Senator.

"National Legislative Day was an incredible,

eye-opening experience. I had the pleasure of personally meeting both of Maine's senators and meeting with the offices of both of Maine's representatives. It is with confidence that I say that our team showed

Maine's members of Congress the best CAP has to offer, and it was an honor and a privilege to be able to do so," said Jackson. "I learned many things, including what factors can go into the congressional decision-making process, how much of a difference personal connections can make, and how to compose myself in order to ensure that Civil Air Patrol was best represented."

Collins, King, and Golden are members of the Civil Air Patrol Congressional Squadron, each holding the grade of honorary Lieutenant Colonel, and Pingree is in the process of joining. The Congressional Squadron is a non-partisan, volun-

teer membership consisting of members of Congress, Congressional staff, and aviation professionals.

"Maine Wing is extremely fortunate to have the ongoing support of our members of Congress, and meeting on Capitol Hill every February is one of my favorite responsibilities as wing commander," said Cote. "It was a distinct honor to welcome Sen. King to Civil Air Patrol and present his credentials as lieutenant colonel, as well as to receive Rep. Pingree's membership application. Sen. Collins and Rep. Golden are also members of the Congressional Squadron, which is a source of great pride for all Maine Wing volunteers."

ASL performances with Pine Tree Society, Ogunquit Playhouse

BATH, ME - Pine Tree Society has partnered with Ogunquit Playhouse to provide American Sign Language (ASL) for select performances of every show this season. These ASL interpreted performances are made possible thanks to a generous grant from The Roger R. and Theresa S. Thompson Endowment Fund.

"Thanks to this grant, select performances for all five musicals this season will have Pine Tree Society ASL Interpreters performing the show alongside the cast," said

Noel Sullivan, President and CEO of Pine Tree Society.

This tradition began last season when Pine Tree Society's then Director of Interpreting Services, Joshua Seal, coordinated with Ogunquit Playhouse to provide interpreters for The Da Vinci Code in September.

"Josh had the desire to make the arts accessible to the Deaf community," said Sullivan. "Before he was tragically killed in the October mass shooting in Lewiston, plans were already in the works

to provide ASL Interpreted performances for this season. That makes these ASL performances even more meaningful to us all."

Deborah Warren, Ogunquit Playhouse's Managing Director, adds "Our overarching objective has consistently been to enhance the accessibility of our performances. This commitment to inclusivity is at the heart of what we do. Through a valuable and collaborative partnership with Pine Tree Society, an organization dedicated to supporting

individuals with disabilities, we have been able to take significant steps towards this goal. We are immensely grateful to Pine Tree Society for their support and facilitation in making these ASL-interpreted shows possible. Their partnership enriches the cultural landscape by making the arts more accessible to everyone, regardless of their hearing abilities."

The ASL interpreters prepare by studying the script and attending performances. When possible, they also watch video or listen to audio recordings of the production. They make sure they understand the goals of the production first, then they begin to build an interpretation. The whole

process takes many days to achieve.

"Imagine watching TV without sound. That's what watching plays without ASL interpretation is like for Hard of Hearing audience members," concluded Sullivan. "This partnership with Ogunquit Playhouse aligns with Pine Tree Society's mission of providing opportunities for Maine people with disabilities to connect with the community."

ASL Interpreted performances will be held:

Waitress: Wed 5/22 8pm, Sun 5/26 2pm

Crazy For You: Wed 6/26 8pm, Sun 6/30 2pm

A Little Night Music: Wed 7/31 8pm, Sun 8/4 2pm

Little Shop of Horrors: Wed 9/4 8pm, Sun

9/8 2pm

My Best Friend's Wedding: Wed 10/9 8pm, Sun 10/13 2pm

Open Caption performances will be held during these date ranges:

Waitress: Wed 5/29 through Sun 6/2

Crazy For You: Wed 7/2 through Sun 7/7

A Little Night Music: Wed 8/7 through Sun 8/11

Little Shop of Horrors: Wed 9/11 through Sun 9/15

My Best Friend's Wedding: Wed 10/16 through Sun 10/20

Special ASL and Open Caption selected seats are available by calling the Ogunquit Playhouse Box Office at 207-646-5511 (10:00am to 4:00pm weekdays).



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Calendar

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Mar 30
AUBURN -- Sixth St. Church Bean Supper: There will be a baked bean supper at Sixth St. Congregational Church at 109 Sixth St. in Auburn on Saturday, March 30 from 4:30 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. The menu consists of two kinds of beans, brown bread, cole slaw, red and brown hot dogs, assorted casseroles, assorted desserts and beverage. The cost of the meal is \$9 for adults, \$5 for children 5 to 12, under age 5 is free. All are welcome. Take-out is available.

Mar 30
BUXTON -- Try our delicious Haddock Supper Buffet - Saturday, March 30, 2024 - 5:00 pm at Living Waters Church, Parker Farm Road, Buxton. Suggested donation: \$10 Adult, \$5 Child, \$20 Family.

Please note: We will offer the option of takeout containers for those who do not want to come inside for seating. Wearing of face masks for those who wish is optional. Hand sanitizer is available for those who wish to use it.

Apr 2
AUBURN -- Denis Ledoux's memoir, French Boy / A 1950s Franco-American Childhood, will be the subject of a presentation for Senior College at the Auburn Public Library on Tuesday April 2

Fridays Apr 5 – May 10
NORWAY -- Opening

Minds through Art, Fridays April 5 - May 10, 2 pm – 3 pm at Education Center of SeniorsPlus at 9 Marston St., Norway

Through a series of classes, OMA engages adults with dementia in creating free-wheeling art. Contact SeniorsPlus, at 207-795-4010, edcenter@seniorsplus.org.

Apr 6
GORHAM -- Public Bean Supper at White Rock Community Clubhouse, 34 Wilson Road, Gorham on Saturday, April 6, 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

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.

Apr 10-14

MAINE -- DaPonte String Quartet Concerts with guest Amanda Hardy. Oboe

Wednesday, 7 pm, April 10, Portland, Jewish Community Alliance

Thursday, 7 pm, April 11, Rockport, Union Hall

Friday, 7 pm, April 12, Freeport, Meetinghouse Arts

Saturday, 4 pm, April 13, Farmington, Nordica Hall

Sunday, 4 pm, April 14, Boothbay, St. Columba's Episcopal Church

Program: Mozart Oboe Quartet KV 370; Dohnányi Serenade for String Trio, Op. 10; Britten Phantasy Quartet for oboe, violin, viola and cello

Apr 12-13
AUGUSTA -- Maine Homeschool Exchange April 12-13 at the Augusta Armory. Details: www.homeschoolersofmaine.com

HOME's annual convention returns for another year as the Maine Homeschool Exchange! Enjoy shopping for discounted curriculum, resources, and books, attending informative workshops, participating in fun-filled activities, and getting to know homeschooling families around the state of Maine!

Apr 19-21, 25-28
BAR MILLS -- The Original's present A Murder is Announced by Agatha Christie at Saco River Theatre, 29 Salmon Falls Road, Bar Mills, ME, April 19, 20, 25, 26, 27 @ 7:30 PM; and April 21 & 28 at 2:30pm. Tickets: \$15 General Admission at www.sacorivertheatre.org.

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

Fridays June 14 – July 19

LEWISTON -- Opening Minds through Art, Fridays June 14 – July 19, 2 pm – 3 pm, Education Center of SeniorsPlus at 8 Falcon Road in Lewiston

Through a series of classes, OMA engages adults with dementia in creating free-wheeling art. Contact SeniorsPlus, at

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June 15
AUBURN -- On Saturday, June 15th, the Maine Iris Society will hold its 59th Annual Flower Show from 1:30 - 4:00 pm at the Auburn Middle School, 38 Falcon Drive in Auburn. Admission is free. There will be a plant sale of potted perennials. Bare-root iris rhizomes will also be available this year for \$1.00 each. Come and vote for your favorite Iris Bloom, Iris Stalk, Peony and Hosta Leaf.

July 6
GORHAM -- Hosta auctions are coming July 6th when the Maine Hosta Society will offer many exciting hosta varieties at the Treworgy Homestead and Garden at 120 Flaggy Meadow Road in Gorham, Maine. The silent auction will begin at 10:00 a.m. and the live auction at 1:00 p.m. SAVE THE DATE for

this event that is free and open to the public.

Thursdays Aug 1 – Sept 5
WILTON -- Opening Minds through Art, Thursdays August 1 – September 5, 1 pm – 2 pm at Education Center of SeniorsPlus at 284 Main St., Suite 100, Wilton

Through a series of classes, OMA engages adults with dementia in creating free-wheeling art. Contact SeniorsPlus, at 207-795-4010, edcenter@seniorsplus.org.

Expo
Continued from page 9
 can engage in self-discovery, expand their consciousness, and embark on a journey towards holistic living.

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

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- Add scoreboards

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