



TWIN CITY TIMES

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Central Maine Healthcare welcomes new orthopedic provider

LEWISTON, ME -- Central Maine Orthopedics is pleased to introduce its newest provider, Bruce Hamilton-Dick, MD.

Dr. Hamilton-Dick went to medical school at Albany Medical College and completed his residency at Albany Medical Center. He also did a fel-

lowship at the University of Massachusetts in Orthopedics/Sports Medicine.

Dr. Hamilton-Dick is particularly passionate about musculoskeletal care and quality of life for his patients. "My job is to help people get old in the youngest way possible. And you can't be a bystander in that



game. You have to be all-in, and I want to be on your team," he said.

"Dr. Hamilton-Dick is an excellent addition to our staff," said Lauren Adey,

MD, chief of Central Maine Orthopedics. "He brings nearly four decades of experience with him, specializing in both sports medicine and general orthopedics. This will be of tremendous benefit to our patients."

Dr. Hamilton-Dick is certified by the American Board of Orthopedic

Surgery. He was a physician for the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta.

Central Maine Orthopedics has been named a Cigna Center of Excellence for hip and knee replacement. It has also been named a Blue Distinction Center by Blue Cross and Blue Shield.

Step up Lewiston: Board, committee volunteers needed

LEWISTON, ME – The City of Lewiston calls on community-minded residents to step forward to help shape the future of the city by volunteering on the City's boards and committees. With 38 current and upcoming vacancies, primarily due to term expirations, there are numerous opportunities for residents to contribute their time, skills, and experience to strengthen Lewiston.

Openings are available on the following boards and committees:

- Board of Appeals
- Community Development Block Grant Review Committee
- Complete Streets Committee

- Finance Committee
- Historic Preservation Review Board
- Housing Committee
- L/A Community Forestry Board
- Lewiston Area Public Health Committee
- Lewiston Auburn Clean Water Authority
- Library Board of Trustees
- Planning Board

Due to residency requirements in the City Charter, neither the Board of Appeals nor the Planning Board may have more than two members serving simultaneously from the same wards. This provision is to ensure adequate and balanced representation from all sections of the city.

"Our boards and committees play a vital role in guiding city policies and fostering a more connected, innovative Lewiston," said City Clerk Kathy Montejo. "This is an opportunity for residents to get involved, make their voices heard, and help us build a stronger community together."

Serving on a city committee offers both personal and civic rewards, as residents attest. "Joining the Library Board gave me strong relationships, pride in our library's work, leadership and fundraising skills, and a real stake in Lewiston's future," said Mariah Pfeiffer, a Library Board of Trustees member.

Longtime resident Lucy Bisson reflected on nearly three decades of civic service: "Over thirty years ago I realized that I needed and wanted to be come involved with the decisions being made regarding the future of my City, so I decided to serve on one of the many boards which help to guide our City. My first opportunity was the Board of Appeals. Over the years, it has been my privilege to join a few boards, such as the Historical Preservation Board, Personnel Board (no longer exists), Transportation Board and the Planning Board. I also spent many years working at the polls. It has been extremely rewarding serving

with other concerned citizens and working with the knowledgeable City staff. I encourage anyone who is interested in the future of our City to become involved. You won't regret it! I know I haven't."

"For the past 20 plus years, I have served on several of the City boards and committees open to the public," said active city volunteer Paul Robinson. "For me, it's a way of staying current on community issues, contributing my views, and having a vote on the outcome. It gives me a better understanding of the "why" of certain policies and decisions. In short, community involvement adds up to being an

informed and contributing citizen."

To learn more about committee roles, meeting times and responsibilities, visit www.lewistonmaine.gov/learnmore or call the City Clerk's Department (207) 513-3124 during office hours: Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 7:45 AM to 4 PM and Tuesday from 7:45 AM to 5:30 PM.

Applications are available on the City's website at www.lewistonmaine.gov/join. Completed applications must be submitted to the City Clerk's Office by 12 PM on Mon., Dec. 30, although submissions will be accepted until all positions are filled.

Dirigo Reads & Governor's give out books to Maine kids

BANGOR, ME – Dirigo Reads, a program that aims to put a book in the hands of every Maine first grader each month during the school year, partnered with Governor's Restaurant and Bakery for Read a New Book Month earlier this month. At an event on Saturday, Dec. 14 at all Governor's Restaurants, Dirigo Reads estimates they distributed well over 1,000 books to Maine kids for free. Governor's Restaurant also donated a portion of breakfast sales to the Maine non-profit

that morning, culminating in a \$2,500 donation for Dirigo Reads to further its mission to improve childhood literacy.

"Every way you slice it, this was a good day," said Jason Clay, owner of Governor's Restaurant and Bakery. "We had smiling kids and families getting brand new books at no cost to them, and Governor's Restaurant was able to give a meaningful donation to a program that is doing a lot of good throughout our state."

"I've said for years

that the impact of Dirigo Reads is seen in the faces of the kids getting their own new book to take home and keep," said Dan Cashman, co-founder of Dirigo Reads. "We got to see that joy on so many faces spread throughout all six Governor's Restaurants Saturday morning, and the joy spread to the faces of their parents, grandparents, and other patrons enjoying breakfast. We are incredibly thankful to Governor's for the opportunity to engage with their customers in this way, and for the do-

nation to Dirigo Reads."

Dirigo Reads' mission is to improve the health and wellbeing of children in Maine through literacy and share a little optimism along the way. This is accomplished by giving first graders in participating schools a brand new book to keep during every month of the school year. Last year, Dirigo Reads distributed more than 33,000 books to the more than 100 schools involved in the program. Over four school years, Dirigo Reads has distributed

about 88,000 books to first graders in participating schools.

Dirigo Reads founding Dirigo Star partner is Machias Savings Bank.

"Without business partnerships, Dirigo Reads would not exist," said Cashman. "As families full well know, books cost money. Partnerships like this one with Governor's, and with longtime collaborators like Machias Savings Bank, and every partner we've had along the way, ensure that kids have the best possible chance to

fall in love with reading."

Governor's Restaurants are located in Old Town, Bangor, Ellsworth, Waterville, Lewiston, and Presque Isle.

Schools and businesses interested in being a part of Dirigo Reads should visit www.DirigoReads.org and click on "Contact," where a form is available to submit all necessary information. More details about Dirigo Reads participating schools, sponsors, and partners can also be found on the website.

CareerCenter resume workshop offered in Lewiston

LEWISTON, ME -- In partnership with the Lewiston CareerCenter,

the Lewiston Public Library will host a resume workshop on Tuesday, Jan-

uary 14th in the Idea Lab on the second floor from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The CareerCenter will provide professional resume writing and job

connection assistance on a first-come, first-served basis. No registration is required.

The CareerCenter provides a variety of employment and training services at no charge, whether you're looking for your first job, trying to find another job, or striving for a better job. They look at each step of your career-decision process and make recommendations as to which CareerCenter

resources might be most helpful. For more information, please visit <https://www.mainecareercenter.gov/locations/lewiston.shtm>

The Lewiston Public Library is located downtown at 200 Lisbon Street at the corner of Pine Street. More information on this program is available by contacting the Lewiston Public Library at 513-3135 or LPLReference@lewistonmaine.gov.



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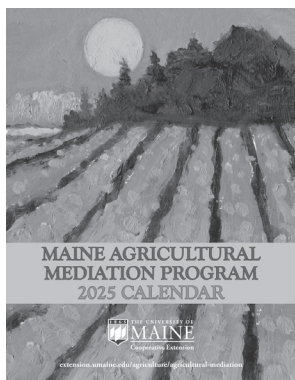
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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Extension calendar celebrates farming artwork by local artists

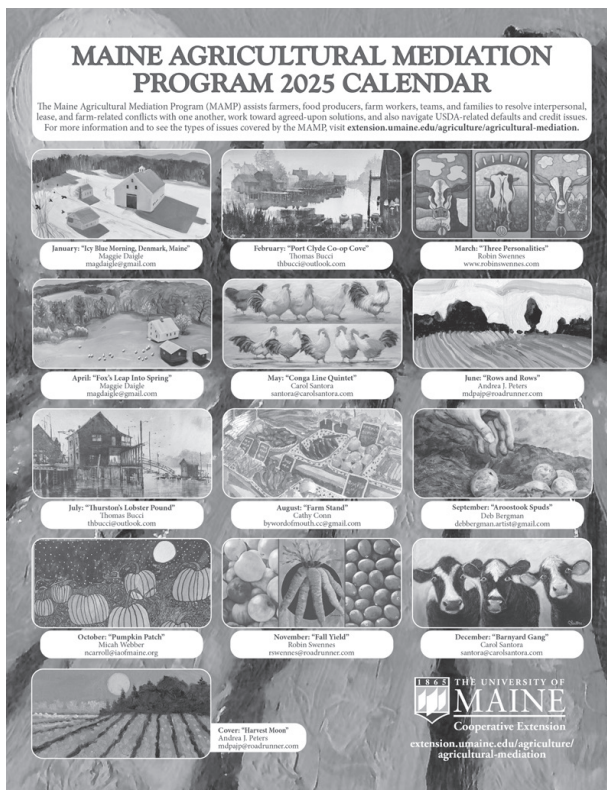
MAINE -- The Maine Agricultural Mediation Program (MAMP) has released its 2025 wall calendar. The calendar, which showcases original artwork by Maine-based artists, celebrates the theme of “Farming and Tending to the Land and Sea Throughout the Seasons” and is available for sale on the organization’s website.

MAMP, a part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Mediation Program, is managed by University of Maine Cooperative Extension. The program aims to support and promote the agricultural community in Maine by providing mediation services and resources.



Images courtesy University of Maine Cooperative Extension.

The 2025 calendar features twelve original images, which capture the essence of farming and the connection between farmers and the land and sea. From vibrant fields of crops to serene coastal scenes, each image tells a unique story of the agri-



cultural journey throughout the seasons.

Measuring 8.5 x 11 inches, the calendar is designed with wire binding for easy hanging. Copies are now available for purchase for \$10, which includes shipping. Visit Extension’s website to order. All proceeds from the calendar sales will directly support the Maine Agricultural Mediation Program and its efforts to assist farmers and promote sustainable agriculture in Maine.

MAMP supports farmers and families in discussions surrounding priorities, goals and decision-making as it relates to changes in the future of the farm, immediate markets and relationships

with lenders. Mediation is voluntary and confidential. 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.

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

Frances Perkins homestead designated a national monument

WASHINGTON, D.C. — On Monday, Dec. 16, Senate President Mattie Daughtry, D-Brunswick, and Sen. Cameron Reny, D-Bristol, attended the ceremony where Pres. Joe Biden designated the Frances Perkins family homestead in Newcastle as the Frances Perkins National Monument. Frances Perkins was the first woman to serve in a presidential cabinet, serving as U.S. Secretary of Labor from 1933 to 1945. She was the driving force behind the New Deal policies that protected American workers and families from economic hardship.

“As the State Senator for District 13, which includes Newcastle, I am honored to represent the area that this American icon considered home,”



Historian and Lincoln County resident Heather Cox Richardson and Sen. Cameron Reny, D-Bristol, with a lifesize cutout of Frances Perkins at the designation ceremony in the U.S. Department of Labor’s Frances Perkins Building in Washington, D.C.

said Sen. Reny. “I am proud to be serving the people of Maine, a state that has a long history of groundbreaking women in politics. Sharing Secre-

tary Perkins’ commitment to safety and fairness for working people, my colleagues and I voted for Paid Family and Medical Leave, so working people won’t have to go broke if they need to care for children, family, and themselves. Maine is proud of the contributions that

Frances Perkins has made to our country and the impact her work still has today.”

The 57-acre Perkins Homestead property, previously designated a National Historic Landmark in 2014, is one of the last nearly untouched saltwater farms along the Damariscotta River. It is here that Frances Perkins and her family, since 1750, spent generations building businesses and being part of the fabric of our communities. Perkins considered the Brick House on River Road in Newcastle home and was buried at Glidden Cemetery after her death in 1965.

The Frances Perkins Homestead National Historic Landmark’s 1837 Brick House, connected ell, and barn are currently operated and maintained by the Frances Perkins Center, a non-profit organization that purchased the property



Pres. Mattie Daughtry, D-Brunswick, U.S. Rep. Chellie Pingree, D-Maine, and Sen. Cameron Reny, D-Bristol, at the designation ceremony in the U.S. Department of Labor’s Frances Perkins Building in Washington, D.C.

in 2020. Earlier this year, the Board of Directors of the Center wished to do-

nate the property to the National Park Service, and Pres. Daughtry and Sen. Reny supported their campaign.

“This is a proud moment for Maine,” said Pres. Daughtry. “Frances Perkins was an American who brought a commitment to improving the lives of workers to her public service. That commitment transformed our country for working people.”

“I have been a Board member of the Frances Perkins Center for many years and am excited to see this national recognition finally happening for this extraordinary woman who continues to have such an important impact on the lives of all Americans,” said Sen. Peggy Rotundo.

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Treats wins Wreaths Around the Holidays People's Choice

WISCASSET, ME – Nine decorated wreaths were on view to the public during Wreaths Around the Holidays 2024, an inspiring event that happens each year during Wiscasset Holiday Marketfest in early December. Local businesses are invited to decorate a wreath, which are then put on display in the Holiday Gift Shop in the Nickels-Sortwell barn. Part of the appeal of this popular feature is inviting shoppers to vote for their favorite, and, at the end of

Marketfest weekend, the People's Choice winner is announced. In 2024, the TREATS wreath won.

Treats employee, Brie Soares, who is frequently behind the counter helping customers, was the designer of the winning wreath. "I think it's a lovely event," she wrote in an email, "and I do some wreath making for friends and family at home. I don't make wreaths except [for] what I find in my backyard and the surrounding forest for neighbors and family."



Wiscasset's Treats won the Wiscasset Holiday Marketfest's People's Choice award for their stunning wreath as designed by Brie Soares. (Tim Peltzer photo)

A striking component of Soares' wreath were the colorful, dried flowers, which, according to the designer, were gomphrena, nigella pods, and hydrangea, about half of which were grown in her summer garden and the rest purchased from a local flower farm. "My design was based on the elements," she wrote, "I tried to include a representation of the 4 elements."

The other eight businesses that submitted stunning wreaths to Wreaths Around the Holidays were

First National Bank, First Federal Savings & Loan of Bath, Friends of Wiscasset Public Library, Garden Club of Wiscasset, J. Edward Knight & Co., Maine Health Primary Care, Water Lily Flowers & Gifts, and Wiscasset Ambulance Service.

At the end of Marketfest, the decorated wreaths were donated to the assisted living communities, Edgecomb Green and Richmond Eldercare. According to Wreaths organizer, Chelsea Taylor-Smith, "when I

dropped off the wreaths at Edgecomb Green the nurse I spoke with was SO appreciative. She couldn't wait to show the residents and said they were going to enjoy them so much."

Photos of all the Wreaths Around the Holidays 2024 wreaths and photos of previous People's Choice winners can be found on www.WiscassetHolidayMarketfest.com. Wiscasset Holiday Marketfest is a program of Wiscasset Creative Alliance.

Auburn man earns highest Civil Air Patrol Cadet award



AUBURN, ME – Civil Air Patrol Cadet Sean Haggerty of the Auburn-Lewiston Composite Squadron has earned the General Carl A. Spaatz Award and promotion to cadet colonel. The Spaatz Award is Civil Air Patrol's highest cadet honor, earned by less than 0.5 percent of cadets nationwide. Since the award's inception in 1964, only 2,547 cadets have become Spaatzes, with Haggerty the 17th cadet in all of Maine Wing to reach this pinnacle achievement.

"I first met Cadet Haggerty at the age of 12 and a half as a new cadet, when I was a new squadron commander myself. I have had the privilege of watching him grow from a shy young man into a confident and effective leader," said Maine Wing Commander Col. Mark Hyland. "Sean has continually impressed me with his ability to lead by example and serve as a mentor and role model for other cadets. I could not be prouder of the man he has become, not only as a member of Civil Air Patrol but also as U.S. Marine. I know he will continue to achieve

greatness throughout his career and look forward to seeing all he accomplishes."

Cadets qualify to undergo the rigorous four-part examination for the Spaatz Award after devoting an average of 4-5 years to progress through 16 achievements in the CAP cadet program. The examination includes a comprehensive leadership test, an essay on moral leadership, a challenging aerospace test, and a demanding physical fitness test based off the U.S. Air Force Academy Candidate Fitness Assessment. Unlike other CAP achievements, cadets may only attempt the Spaatz examination 3 times. Haggerty passed his examination just prior to reporting to U.S. Marine Corps recruit training this fall.

"The knowledge I gained throughout my years in Civil Air Patrol was instrumental in my success on Parris Island," said Haggerty. "Because of my time in CAP, I was promoted to private first class ahead of most new Marines. I want to thank the many members who helped me during my Civil Air Patrol cadet jour-



ney." Haggerty joined Civil Air Patrol in 2017 and advanced through the achievements and awards consistently with an overall commitment to excellence. He has served in leadership roles throughout the country, including staffing encampments and leadership academies in Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Texas. He has earned multiple commander's commendations at wing and region levels, the Civil Air Patrol Disaster Relief Ribbon for service during a federally declared disaster and numerous other awards.

Haggerty was presented with the Spaatz Award by U.S. Rep. Jared Golden at a ceremony on Dec. 14 while on leave following his graduation from recruit training. State Sen.

Bruce Bickford presented Haggerty with an official expression of sentiment from the Maine State Leg-



islature. Congratulatory letters were presented on behalf of Gov. Janet Mills, U.S. Sens. Susan Collins and Angus King, and U.S. Reps. Chellie Pingree and Golden, as well as a certificate of recognition from the Maine Wing CAP State Legislative Squadron. Also

in attendance were Civil Air Patrol National Deputy Commander Brig. Gen. R. Jason Bailey, Civil Air Patrol Northeast Region Commander Col. James Ridley, and other members of the Northeast Region and Maine Wing command teams.

WHY PEOPLE CHOOSE CHAMPOUX INSURANCE



Jonathan Knowlton
Licensed Agent

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 Jonathan to our Team.



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Justice Foundation celebrates fund grant achievements

AUGUSTA, ME – The Maine Justice Foundation is proud to announce the successful completion of its 2023-2024 Racial Justice Fund Grant projects. With grants awarded to six organizations, these initiatives have advanced racial equity for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities across Maine.

Now in its fourth year, the Racial Justice Fund has raised over \$830,000, distributing \$130,000 in grants to address systemic racism and inequities in Maine's institutions and communities. These efforts are made possible through the generosity of individual, corporate, and philanthropic supporters committed to creating meaningful change.

"We are honored to support these organizations working to create racial equity and positive impact for BIPOC communities throughout the state. We are grateful to the many individual and corporate supporters of the Racial Justice Fund for believing in this effort and investing in positive change. Together, we are making a meaningful difference and supporting a culture of inclusion and equity for all," says Mi-

chelle Draeger, Executive Director of the Maine Justice Foundation.

Grant Project Highlights

Maine Inside Out was awarded \$10,000 to empower incarcerated artists through original theater performances. In Spring 2024, Maine Inside Out (MIO) conducted weekly theater workshops with artists incarcerated at Mountain View Correctional Facility, fostering trust, vulnerability, and collaboration through activities like personal story sharing and theater skill-building. The group created an original play, *Life Lost in the Streets*, and prepared for performances scheduled for early June. Following an unanticipated cancellation of the live performance, MIO integrated audio recordings from the artists into a new theater piece, *Broken Clock*, developed by MIO staff and Lewiston community members. The play premiered at Lewiston's Juneteenth festival and is now on a fall tour, with approximately 300 audience members to date. The recordings will also be featured in a short film displaying MIO's work, set for release in late 2024. <https://www.maineinside-out.org/films>

The Ladder to the

Moon Network utilized a \$10,000 grant to produce a successful podcast series aimed at increasing civic engagement and trust in the election process within immigrant communities. Weekly podcasts in English, French, and Kinyarwanda/Kirundi have garnered viewership of 300–500 per episode, with French and Kirundi/Kinyarwanda videos being particularly popular. The organization also collaborated with the ACLU to produce eight videos in different languages after the 2023 election, educating immigrant communities about their rights regardless of immigration status. These videos, alongside a feature video with Rep. Chellie Pingree, have expanded Ladder to the Moon's reach and impact. <https://www.wmpg.org/wmpg-podcasts/am-jambo-time/>

The Maine Commission on Public Defense Services hosted five attorney training sessions with its \$10,000 grant, addressing racial bias and inequities in the courtroom. The Maine Commission on Public Defense Services hosted five highly impactful racial justice training sessions for legal professionals, with a sixth planned for 2025. The trainings, attended by a to-

tal of over 400 attorneys, covered topics such as racial bias in the courtroom, culturally humble representation, and strategies to interrupt bias in the criminal justice system. Recordings of these sessions have been added to the Commission's training library, ensuring continued accessibility for Maine's legal professionals. Feedback from participants highlighted increased knowledge and actionable tools for addressing racial injustice in their practices.

In Her Presence received \$5,000 to provide culturally appropriate, nutritious food for residents at the Frances Warde Home. In Her Presence addressed food insecurity by engaging residents from six different countries in discussions about culturally appropriate and nutritious foods. The project included shopping tours at local ethnic food vendors, the creation of a Maine Immigrant Greens Collaborative Education Program, and ongoing support for new residents without access to TANF or food stamps. The staff learned valuable lessons about cultural attachments to food, food safety practices, and appliance training, which informed a comprehensive approach to improving maternal and child health among immigrant families.

Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project (ILAP) was granted \$10,000 to support its 2024 Racial Justice Fellow. Ange Ishimwe, a senior at Bowdoin College majoring in Africana Studies, Digital and Computational Studies, and Government and Legal Studies, has been named this year's Racial Justice Fellow. With a background in researching the U.S. immigration system's racist roots and interning with the Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition and the Maine De-

partment of Education, Ange brings a strong focus on advocacy and inclusion. As part of her Fellowship, Ange will lead a "Community Conversations" project, conducting outreach to immigrant communities to gather insights on their immigration legal needs and other concerns. These findings will inform ILAP's 2025 strategic plan and future programming. She is currently designing the project, with outreach sessions set to begin in early 2025.

The Alpha Legal Foundation received \$5,000 to launch its Maine Justice Corps initiative, focused on establishing a legal navigators program in courthouses to support underserved BIPOC communities. The Alpha Legal Foundation used its grant to lay the groundwork for the Maine Justice Corps, a legal navigators program in Androscoggin and Cumberland counties. By training and placing AmeriCorps members as legal navigators, the project aimed to address barriers BIPOC communities face in accessing legal services. A key milestone was securing AmeriCorps approval, achieved through the submission of a successful grant application. Achieving AmeriCorps approval was a key milestone, paving the way for expanded access to legal resources. The Foundation documented comprehensive training materials, established formal partnerships, and adapted to challenges posed by off-cycle grant opportunities from Volunteer Maine. This groundwork has positioned the organization to launch the program in 2025, ensuring sustainable impact for underserved communities.

The Maine Justice Foundation remains deeply committed to advancing access to justice and fostering equity throughout Maine. By supporting innovative projects and empowering dedicated organizations, we aim to create meaningful, lasting change in our communities. Together with our partners, donors, and supporters, we continue to work toward a future where justice is accessible to all. We remain grateful to all donors to the Fund, including the founders:

AARP Maine, Androscoggin Bank, AT&T, Baker Newman Noyes, Bangor Savings Bank, Bernstein Shur, Central Maine Power, Cross Insurance, Birchbrook, Drummond Woodsum, Eaton Peabody, F.L. Putnam Investment Management Company, Gorham Savings Bank, HM Payson, Hancock Lumber, Hannaford Supermarkets, Harvard Pilgrim, Northern Light Health, Pierce Atwood, Preti Flaherty, RM Davis, Verrill, and the Stephen and Tabitha King Foundation.

The Fund's Advisory Committee issued a request for proposals, reviewed applications, conducted site visits and evaluated the final project reports. The current co-chairs are Dr. Evelyn Silver and Reginald Parson. The current members of the Advisory Committee are Mary Herman, Francys Perkins, Shelly Okere, Bill Harwood, and Janis Cohen. We are grateful to Professor Marcelle Medford for her past leadership of the Advisory Committee and positive impact on the grant-making process of the Racial Justice Fund.

The Maine Justice Foundation, founded in 1983 as the Maine Bar Foundation, is the state's leading funder of civil legal aid and is committed to ensuring access to justice for all Mainers. Find us online and support the Racial Justice Fund at www.justicemaine.org.



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Seniors Not Acting Their Age

Climbing Secluded Albany Mountain



Hikers carefully navigate around the rim of a beaver pond

Until a couple of years ago, I had never heard of Albany Mountain. While hiking on Caribou Mountain in the Evans Notch area with friends Laurie Wunder and Tom Meredith, they pointed out the nearby 1,930-foot summit and recommended it as another scenic hike in the area.

Northern New Hampshire residents, Tom and Laurie have acquired a vast knowledge of the best hikes in the region so I place high value on their mountain recommendations. Our interest piqued; a few days later, my wife, Nancy, and I joined them for our first ascent of the secluded peak and thoroughly enjoyed the stimulating outing.

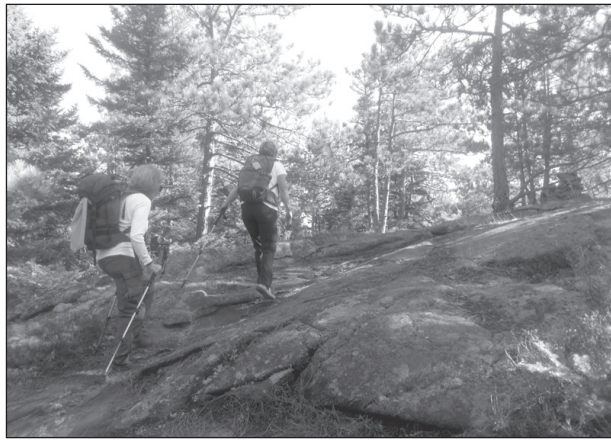
Albany Mountain is located in Albany Township, a mountainous area between West Bethel and Stoneham and part of the eastern sector of White Mountain National Forest. Unlike many hiking

destinations in the area, it doesn't get much foot traffic.

Since Nancy and I are coping with nagging physical ailments, we've been looking for easy to moderate mountain hikes this fall that don't exceed our limitations. In an email conversation with Tom and Laurie, we suggested Albany Mountain for a Halloween Day outing. Tom couldn't make it but Laurie was game.

Getting to Albany Mountain Trailhead is a bit of a chore. The old Maine expression, "you can't get there from here" applies. Leaving Topsham, we drove to Norway and then followed Routes 118 and 5 to Patte Mill Brook Road on the left. We maneuvered down the narrow dirt road to a left onto Crocker Pond Road. The trailhead and small parking area is on the right after traveling .6 mile.

We met Laurie at the



Upsloping ledges lead to the highpoint on Albany Mountain

trailhead on a glorious, warm sunny fall day. When we arrived, I immediately realized we should have planned the trip two weeks earlier as the peak autumn foliage had passed and most of the leaves on the deciduous trees had fallen. Still the downed leaves and dark green conifer trees provided a brilliant array of colors. Since bird hunting season was underway, we wore a combination of hunter's orange vests and bright yellow tops.

Our trek began on a well-worn path covered with leaves and marked with yellow blaze. We hiked easily in a predominantly barren hardwood forest on gentle terrain until reaching a beaver pond.

The pond presented the most challenging hiking conditions of the day. An attenuated muddy branch-infested path leads around the rim of the pond. Our primary concern was keeping footwear dry. A

misstep on one side would soak our feet while an errant move in the opposite direction would result in sinking into ankle deep mud. We carefully negotiated through the maze of obstacles while avoiding any significant accidents.

The trail widened on a gentle hard packed dirt surface covered with a thick carpet of leaves. As we progressed, the gradient steepened and the character of the passageway transitioned to a circuitous route over sometimes slippery granite ledges.

We passed a side trail that leads to an overlook and agreed to explore it during our return. More extensive upsloping ledges led us to a rounded top crowned with a small cairn that appeared to be the highpoint. We did not find a summit marker.

From that location, we descended on an obvious path to exposed ledges that provide expansive



Hikers search for viewpoints south of the Albany Mountain summit

views of the surrounding valley. Based on Laurie's recollection that more panoramic vistas were in the area, we continued searching through narrow passages that led to more scenic revelations.

Satisfied we had experienced the best of the southern views; we returned over the summit and dropped down to the spur trail previously bypassed. The unremarkable path ends at an impressive west facing overlook with spectacular views of the White Mountains. We stopped for a lunch break while trying to identify the various peaks. Laurie ended speculation by retrieving a map of the Whites from her pack.

The warm summer-like weather provided an added incentive to linger. However, concerns about driving after dark with trick-or-treaters on the streets motivated us to move on.

While the majority of our descent was uneventful, we still had to carefully navigate around the problematic beaver pond. Fortunately, our traverse along the edge of the tiny tarn was mishap free.

My book, *Maine Al Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine* narrates nine more exciting mountain hikes around the state.

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

New Paid Family and Medical Leave portal launches

AUGUSTA, ME – The Maine Department of Labor announced today that the new Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) Portal, the online system for employers to register their business information, designate a payroll processor, file quarterly wage reports, and remit quarterly premi-

um contributions, will be launching on January 6.

Starting January 1st, 2025, any employer with at least one Maine-based employee must begin payroll withholdings for their employees. Employers with 15 or more employees will contribute 1 percent of wages and may deduct up to half

of the contribution from the employees' wages. Employers with less than 15 employees will contribute 0.5 percent of wages and may deduct the entire amount from the employees' wages.

All employers must register on the portal to begin wage reporting in April 2025. The portal will also

allow self-employed individuals and tribal governments to elect coverage.

Employers will begin their first quarterly wage reporting and premium payments starting April 1, 2025, and they are due by April 30, 2025.

Stay up to date by signing up for the PFML

Get Notified List and learn more in our FAQ, employer resources, recorded demonstrations, and step by step guides on our website: www.maine.gov/paidleave/

The Department partnered with FAST Enterprises to build the Maine Paid Family and Medical Leave Program's online

contributions portal. FAST Enterprises has previously worked with Maine Revenue Services to create the Maine Tax Portal, as well as the contribution collections system for the Massachusetts Department of Family and Medical Leave.

Benefits are scheduled to begin May 1, 2026.



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Arts & Entertainment

LA Arts hires administrator, appoints board members

LEWISTON, ME -- The LA Arts Board of Directors is pleased to announce that Courtney Reed-Marsh has been selected as its new Arts Agency Administrator. Reed-Marsh joins Gerald Walsh, LA Arts Agency Manager, to support the organization's mission of engaging and inspiring a vibrant community through arts and culture. They began their new role on December 16.

As LA Arts continues to expand its offerings, Reed-Marsh will be responsible for the agency's marketing and communi-

cations initiatives, coordination with partners and constituents, and office management. They will also provide programming, fundraising, and gallery support.

Reed-Marsh has worked with arts and arts-adjacent organizations in the private, nonprofit, and educational sectors. They have run public-facing and back-end operations of programs for writers and visual artists. Most recently, they served as Director of Communications for the performing-arts-focused startup incubator ARTech



Courtney Reed-Marsh. Photo by Molly Haley

in New York City. Reed-Marsh has extensive experience in arts administration, event production, and

implementing marketing, communications, social media, and PR strategies. With an MFA in writing, they bring a broad range of brand storytelling and content development skills to this role. Reed-Marsh is excited to join LA Arts and looks forward to supporting the local arts community.

In addition to this new staff position, LA Arts welcomed three board members in 2024.

Natalie Pollock joined LA Arts in February. She is a Business Development Manager and Branch Manager at Kennebec Savings

Bank.

Todd Savage joined LA Arts in May as Treasurer and Executive Committee member. He is a Commercial Loan Officer and Regional Vice President at Maine Community Bank.

Peggy DeBlois joined LA Arts in August. She enjoyed careers in marketing, journalism, and teaching before devoting her time to writing. The Toll Road North is her first novel.

"At LA Arts we are growing in our capacity to bring the people of our community together in beautiful, stimulating,

and healing experiences of the arts," says Jim Parakellis, Board Chair. "We are fortunate to have found in Courtney Reed-Marsh an arts agency administrator whose experiences and creative skills complement those of our arts agency manager, Gerald Walsh, so that together they can drive our organization forward. And, we are equally fortunate to have added three outstanding members to our board—members who have already brought to our work needed perspectives, along with dedication to the arts and our community."

YMCA receives generous donation from Harcros Chemicals



AUBURN, ME—The YMCA of Auburn-Lewiston, a local organization dedicated to transforming lives and developing the next generation of community leaders, is thrilled to announce the recent donation of \$10,000.00 from Harcros Chemicals.

This generous gift will significantly impact the YMCA's ability to pro-

vide vital programs and services to youth across Androscoggin and Oxford counties. The funds will support critical initiatives such as:

Youth Development Programs: Offering after-school programs, full-day childcare, summer camps, and sports leagues that promote healthy lifestyles, build character, and

foster social-emotional growth.

Scholarships: Ensuring that all children, regardless of their financial background, have access to the enriching opportunities the YMCA provides.

Community Outreach: Expanding outreach efforts to underserved populations and addressing critical community needs.

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Local author publishes last book in trilogy

Local playwright and children's book author Paul Baribault has had released his newest book on Amazon, the last in a Trilogy. A Covenant Books title, it will soon be on the Barnes & Noble website and in its bookstores, and in the New Year it will be available as an e-reader on Apple i-Tunes.

The work's title, "Into the Presence – The Christ Writings" is a compilation of the over 200 messages the author has received "in the Stillness" of God's Presence, these last eight years.

His second book, "Comedy & Grace" closed with 30 such writings, and this one begins where that one concluded.

INTO THE PRESENCE



Received of Our Lord Christ Jesus, October 26, 2022

"Like the fall of rain upon the Earth does My touch of Love fall on everyone, believer and non-believer, while only those who know Me can feel its impress on their hearts.

In their very breath I Am – there to inspire, to uplift or tenderly provide comfort and the Surprise of Beauty.

Below, the partial writing under the Back Cover's image gives an indication of the tenderness and encouragement that will be found in the messages, throughout this work of inspiration. It can be ordered through the

author's website at: [www. Ourbrillianteternity.com](http://www.Ourbrillianteternity.com).

Mr. Baribault with this announcement also wants to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas, and a Healthy and Blessed New Year.

Maine Right to Life names new executive director

AUBURN, ME – The Maine Right to Life Committee appoints the Hon. Michael McClellan as its new executive director. Mike is a husband, father, grandfather, and community member with a passion for life! Notably, he has an award-winning background

as an Executive Director for both the Maine Statewide Independent Living Council and the Greater Bridgton Lakes Region Chamber of Commerce. As a former state representative and as a policy director at the Christian Civic League, Mike also brings with him a wealth of

legislative knowledge.

The Maine Right to Life Committee will formally welcome Mr. McClellan at their 50th Anniversary commemoration, which is scheduled at St. Maximilian-Kolbe Church in Scarborough, Maine on Monday, December 30th at 9am.

What do you think?

We strongly encourage Letters to the Editor, Op/Eds, columns or any other submissions from our readers.

Agree with us or another columnist? Disagree? Write to us and let us know!

Email all submissions, including name, address and phone number, to the editor.

New England McDonald's raise \$1M for families in need

MAINE –As McDonald's and Ronald McDonald House Charities celebrate the 50th anniversary of the nonprofit and their enduring partnership, New England McDonald's Owner Operators are excited to announce their customers have helped raise \$1.26M for the organization year-to-date by rounding up their purchases at restaurants across the region, with \$270,000 of that coming directly from Maine restaurants.

Round-Up for RMHC® provides customers with the opportunity to Round-Up their order totals in-restaurant to the nearest

whole number, with the additional amount being donated to their local RMHC Chapter. Here in Maine, the funds are used to provide a supportive home away from home for families while their children are receiving life-saving medical treatment at local hospitals. The money raised this year equates to 2,700 nights free of charge for those who need it.

Local McDonald's owner operator and one of New England's top contributors, Ronald Lydick, has helped raise more than \$140,000 for RMHCME this year across his 25 restaurants. In addition

to Round-Up, Lydick and his wife Cyndi of Portland offer up the parking lot of their restaurant on St. John Street to Sea Dogs fans on game days in exchange for donations, raising more than \$130,000 since 2004.

"One of the most rewarding parts of being a local business owner is being able to show up for our neighbors in the communities we serve," said McDonald's Owner Operator Ron Lydick. "From Round-Up to golf tournaments, fundraising nights, and donation boxes, Maine McDonald's operators' commitment to RMHC runs deep. We want to thank to staff at each

Maine McDonald's restaurants for their dedication to support the charity and are constantly amazed by the generosity that flows through our community – they've truly shown up this year to offer their support for these programs, enabling us to stand beside families fighting the toughest battles imaginable."

"We are deeply grateful to our lifelong partner, McDonald's, for their unwavering support and dedication to our mission," said Ian Tovell, Development and Marketing Director for the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Maine. "Their commitment to

Maine's children and families is truly unparalleled. The generosity demonstrated by McDonald's customers, owner operators, and staff reflects a profound investment in the well-being of families with sick children. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the McDonald's community for being steadfast champions of our cause and making an immeasurable difference in the lives of those we serve."

These local fundraising efforts make up a portion of the more than \$1 billion dollars McDonald's Corporation, their franchisees and customers have donated to help RMHC

serve tens of millions of families worldwide over the past 50 years. If every U.S. customer rounded up even for just one day, it could equate to approximately 65,000 family night stays at a Ronald McDonald House®, making a huge difference in the lives of families with children who are ill or injured.

The community is encouraged to rally behind RMHC for this golden anniversary. Customers can join in on the celebration by giving a Gift to RMHC the next time they visit McDonald's by simply rounding up their purchase to the nearest whole dollar.

Registration now open for the 2025 WinterKids Downhill 24

CARRABASSETT VALLEY, ME — The countdown is on! Registration is officially open for the 2025 WinterKids Downhill 24, Maine's only 24-hour ski and snowboard challenge. Mark your calendars for February 27-28, 2025, as Sugarloaf transforms into a high-energy, illuminated playground for skiers and snowboarders from across New England.

This year, WinterKids is excited to spotlight a growing movement in our community: philanthropy powered by kids, for kids. From the youngest skiers to seasoned snowboarders, more young people are stepping up, fundraising, and advocating for their peers. The Downhill 24 embodies this spirit of "kids helping kids," ensuring all children can access outdoor winter fun and activities that keep them healthy and thriving.

Here's what you need to know:

What's New in 2025:



Presented by:



Special prizes and challenges just for younger participants to inspire and reward their fundraising efforts, expanded course options, and eco-friendly event tees.

What's Returning: The iconic, lit-up Narrow Gauge trail (thanks to Herc Rentals and Pike Industries!), non-stop skiing and snowboarding, and the chance to ski Sugarloaf at night—the only time you can all year.

Why You Should Join: Whether you're a seasoned athlete, a weekend warrior, or just looking for a fun way to give back, this event is for you. WinterKids is calling on fam-

ilies, friends, coworkers, and thrill-seekers to lace up their boots, hit the slopes, and make a difference. Proceeds from the event support WinterKids' programs, helping over 50,000 participants each year stay active and healthy outdoors during the winter.

This year's Downhill 24 is a unique opportunity to celebrate kids taking the lead in giving back to their communities. It's more than just an event; it's a chance to empower the next generation of changemakers to make a meaningful impact.

How to Register Visit D24.org to sign up. Spots are limited and filling fast, so don't wait!



Camden National Bank receives award

CAMDEN, ME – The Finance Authority of Maine (FAME) presented Camden National Bank with the “Lender at Work for Maine” award at its annual Showcase Maine event on November 21, 2024. This marks the fourteenth time Camden National Bank has received this honor, recognizing the Bank’s outstanding commitment to supporting Maine businesses and its workforce.

Over the past year, Camden National Bank partnered with FAME to

provide 55 loans totaling over \$15 million. This, in turn, helped to create 108 Maine jobs and retain an additional 611 jobs.

“We are a champion for businesses of all sizes while supporting economic vitality; that’s why we’re so honored to receive this recognition for the fourteenth time,” said Barbara Raths, executive vice president of commercial banking at Camden National Bank. “This award is particularly special as we dedicated it to former FAME board mem-



Lender at Work for Maine Awardee (assets over \$1.5 billion) Camden National Bank employees. Barbara Raths, Executive Vice President of Commercial Banking, holds the award (center left), while FAME Director of Business Jenniffer Cummings is center-right.

ber Tim Nightingale, who retired after over 20 years as our commercial banking

director and chief credit officer. Tim steadfastly built relationships based on trust

and understanding throughout his career, helping ambitions become reality while spearheading our robust credit culture.”

A notable recipient of FAME-backed funding from Camden National Bank involved support for A Couple of Koi, LLC, the operating entity for The Hoot restaurant in Northport, Maine. This farm-to-table restaurant sources its produce and meat from local farms. The financing helped to create twelve jobs and retain eight jobs. In addition to being a

top partner in stimulating economic development in Maine, Camden National Bank is actively committed to the communities in which it operates.

FAME is a quasi-independent state agency whose mission is to enrich business and educational outcomes through relevant, timely financial support to Maine’s people. FAME’s vision is a Maine where all people have access to improved economic outcomes through business growth and education attainment.

Electricity Maine customers should watch for refunds

HALLOWELL, ME – Approximately 20,000 former and current Electricity Maine customers will soon receive refunds, the Office of the Public Advocate (OPA) announced.

The refunds are part of a settlement among the OPA, the Staff of the Public Utilities Commission (PUC), and Electricity Maine. The refunds will

cover up to three months of unlawful charges.

“Electricity Maine customers were overcharged by millions of dollars compared with what they would have paid had they simply paid the Standard Offer price for electricity,” said Public Advocate William Harwood. “Customers should keep an eye out for mail from Elec-

tricity Maine containing refunds for those charges.”

Customers will receive refunds via debit cards, which will need to be activated upon receipt. Depending on how many months’ worth of refunds a customer is entitled to, they may receive a second refund, which will be mailed approximately 190 days after the first refund.

The amount of the refund is based on the amount of time customers were charged a variable rate without their consent, and the amount the customer paid above the Standard Offer at the time.

In 2000, the Maine Legislature restructured the state’s electric industry by taking power companies out of the generating

business, allowing them only to deliver electricity. For the supply of electricity, consumers can choose either the Standard Offer rate, which is set annually by the PUC, or consumers may choose a Competitive Electricity Provider (CEP) such as Electricity Maine, whose rates are not subject to PUC review or approval. Maine ratepayers can

choose to switch back from a CEP to the Standard Offer Provider at any time without a penalty by contacting their utility.

The OPA released a Frequently Asked Questions guide at www.maine.gov/MEOPA regarding the refund process, and customers can call 207-624-3687 with any questions or concerns.

Rotary Club supports Zambian education program

LEWISTON, AUBURN, ME -- The Lewiston-Auburn Rotary Club recently presented a check for \$4,500 in continuing support of the WISE Zambia program, which supports

empowerment and economic independence for vulnerable women and children in Zambia through educational, vocational, and agricultural initiatives. The funds come from the club and

Rotary District 7790, which consists of 26 Rotary Clubs in Quebec and 31 in Maine.

Rotarian Joanne Bollinger, who serves on the WISE Zambia board, has made numerous trips

to WISE Zambia’s headquarters in Kaoma, located in West Zambia. Her work in support of this program takes her around the US to raise visibility, funds, and friends for the cause. “The growth of our flagship program in education under the guidance of local leadership in Kaoma has been nothing short of phenomenal. From supporting 28 high school students in 2014, we now have over 630 students in more than 25 schools and

over 90 in colleges and other forms of tertiary education throughout Zambia,” notes Bollinger.

In the photo from left are Rotary board members Christine Wilson (secretary), Larry Delhagen (president), Roger Philippon, Bollinger, Roger Theriault, Peter Kowalski, Stephanie Gelinis, John Belisle, Todd Goodwin, and Peter Arsenault.


More information about WISE Zambia can be


found on their website at wisezambia.org. 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. The club meets every Thursday at noon at the Village Inn Restaurant in Auburn. lewistonauburnrotary.org.


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David Cyr to retire as Skowhegan Savings Bank's president, CEO

SKOWHEGAN, ME -- Skowhegan Savings Bank announced today that David Cyr, president and CEO of the bank, will retire at the end of 2025 and the board of directors have appointed Dan Tilton, executive vice president of sales and customer relations, as the bank's new president. When Cyr steps down, Tilton will also assume the additional role of CEO.

Cyr was appointed president and CEO of Skowhegan Savings Bank in 2019, the year of the bank's 150th anniversary. Under his leadership, Skowhegan Savings has grown from a \$600 million mutual savings bank to over \$850 million in assets with a capital base over \$100 million. In 2021, Cyr led the bank's



expansion into southern Maine with the opening of the it's Portland branch as well as established a \$1 million dollar workforce development fund through the Skowhegan Savings Charitable Foundation. During his tenure, the bank has earned notable accolades, such as being named the Best Bank in Maine and third in the nation by Forbes in 2021. The bank has also received the Large Business of the

Year award from both the Skowhegan Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Sebasticook Valley Chamber, recognition as the Best Bank in the Morning Sentinel's Reader's Choice Awards and has consistently been listed among the Best Places to Work in Maine.

A career in finance Cyr has 40 years of banking experience and has been with Skowhegan Savings since 2005. Pri-



or to joining the bank, he worked in a variety of leadership roles at several financial institutions, primarily within the community banking arena. He also spent several years at the Finance Authority of Maine, where he contributed to initiatives aimed at facilitating financing for businesses in need.

He grew up in Aroostook County and earned his bachelor's degree in public accounting from Husson University. He is a member of the board of directors of Good Will-Hinckley.

"I have been truly honored to lead the ded-

icated and talented team at Skowhegan Savings," said Cyr. "Our employees are our greatest asset and Dan's appointment underscores our commitment to developing internal talent. I have full faith that his leadership will foster positive growth for the bank and a promising future for our customers, community and employees."

New president ready to continue bank's strong legacy

Tilton has been a key figure at Skowhegan Savings since joining in 2015. In his role as executive vice president of sales and customer relations he

leads the retail banking and lending sales teams with focus on providing exceptional customer service.

"Skowhegan Savings' strong legacy has been built on community focus, fiscal responsibility and our dedication to customers and employees," said Tilton. "Our team embodies these values, and I am thankful for this opportunity to work with them to continue in guiding the bank to further success."

In preparation for the leadership change, Cyr and Tilton will work closely together over the next year leading up to Cyr's retirement on December 31st, 2025. On January 1st, 2026 Tilton will assume the role as the 14th president and CEO of Skowhegan Savings Bank.

Lisbon student awarded \$5K grant to build garden

LISBON, ME — Lisbon Community Federal Credit Union is proud to announce that the inaugural George Roy Community Grant has been awarded to Hanna Stevens, School Counselor, of Lisbon Community School. She will use the \$5,000 grant to create a student garden aimed at enhancing outdoor education and fostering a deeper connection to nature. This innovative project will provide students with hands-on learning opportunities, teaching them valuable lessons in patience, teamwork, and the rewards of hard work.

The garden project will allow students to par-



(L to R): Dr. Kristie Morin, LCS Principal, Judy Roy, George Roy, Hanna Stevens, School Counselor, and Sarah Perkins, President/CEO of Lisbon Community Federal Credit Union.

ticipate in the planting, process, giving them the nurturing, and harvesting opportunity to observe

firsthand how plants grow and develop. The hands-on experience will also help students learn about the importance of sustainability, responsibility, and community service. After the flowers bloom and the vegetables ripen, students will be able to share the fruits of their labor with others by donating the flowers to residents, while enjoying the vegetables they helped to grow. "This is a life lesson," Hanna says, "and I am thrilled the students will work hard, give back to others, spread kindness, and see the results."

Lisbon Community School looks forward to seeing the positive impact the student garden will have on students, staff, and the greater community.

The project promises to cultivate not only plants but also the skills, values, and lessons that will last a lifetime. For more information on the George Roy Community Grant or to learn more about this project, please visit the Lisbon Community Federal Credit Union website at www.lisboncu.org/grant.

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

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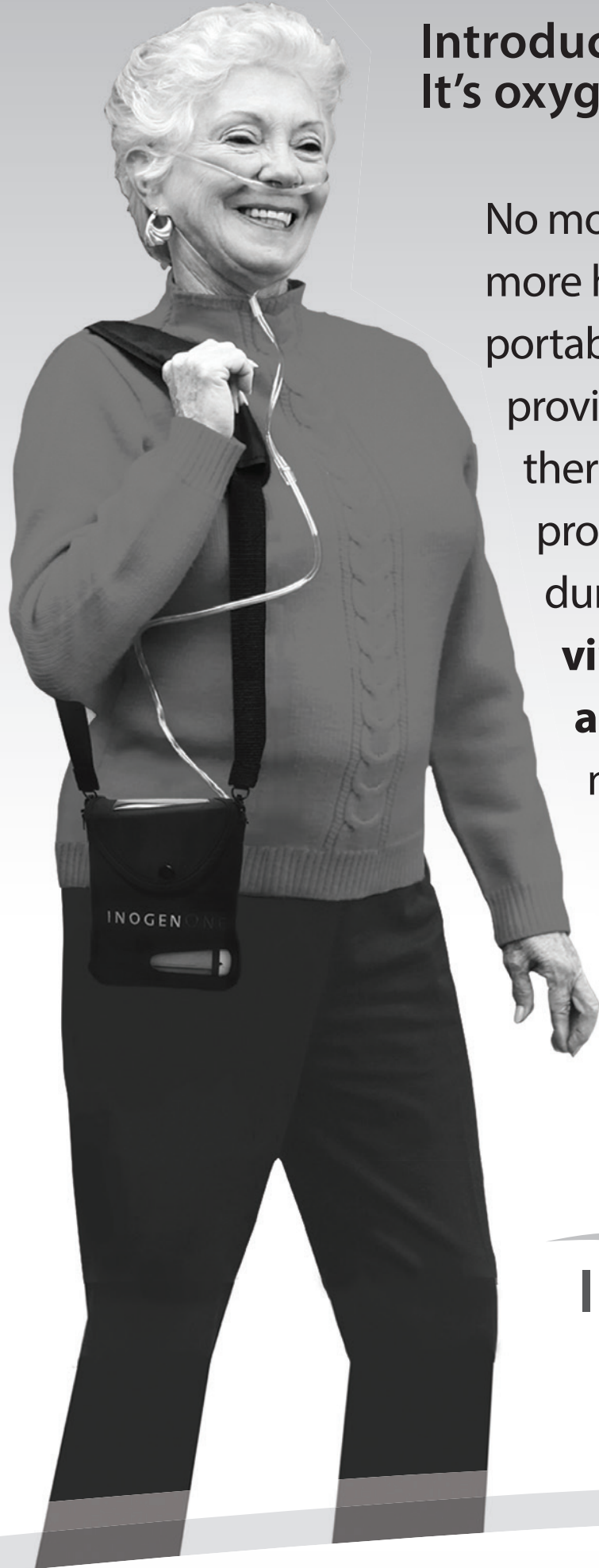
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Maine CASA to hold training March 10-14

MAINE -- Interested in advocating for the best interests of a child? The Maine Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program is holding its next training for volunteer advocates from March 10th through March 14th, 2025.

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

pate in person, the training will be held in Augusta. Accommodations may be available.

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

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

If you are willing to advocate for a child's best interests, we encourage you to apply to become a CASA volunteer. Those interested in the training must complete an application and, if invited to participate, must also com-

plete criminal and child protection services background checks.

For more information about becoming a volunteer, please contact Maine CASA at 213-2865 or by e-mail at casa@courts.maine.gov

4-H launching workshops on climate action, farm animal care

MAINE -- University of Maine Cooperative Extension 4-H Virtual Learning is kicking off 2025 with two opportunities in January, a series on climate civic action and a series introducing farm care and basic animal science. This Extension program leads virtual learning opportunities for young people on a variety of topics

throughout the year. The zoom sessions feature activities that are hands-on, minds-on learning for youth located anywhere in the state.

Farm Animal Care FUNDamentals will be held on Wednesdays, January 22, 29 and February 5 from 4 - 5:15 p.m. Participants ages 9-18 will learn the basics of farm animal care, exploring



Photos courtesy University of Maine Cooperative Extension.

basic animal husbandry, care and nutrition. Registration deadline is January 7, 2025.

Climate Civic Action club will take place on Mondays, January 27, February 3 and 10 from 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. Participants ages 12-18 will learn about climate change from global and local perspectives and explore opportunities for

individual action to make a difference. Registration deadline is January 13, 2025.

Participation is free though donations are accepted. Learn more or register by visiting the event webpage. For more information or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact 207.581.8206; sarah.sparks@maine.edu.

Maine's approach to youth vaping wins national marketing award

LEWISTON, ME -- Rinck Advertising has been honored with a 2024 Silver Davey Award for the "Vape Free Maine: Don't Get Side Effect-ed" campaign, developed in partnership with the

Maine CDC. This groundbreaking campaign is recognized for its innovative approach to addressing the youth vaping epidemic, making it a key player in the cause marketing category.



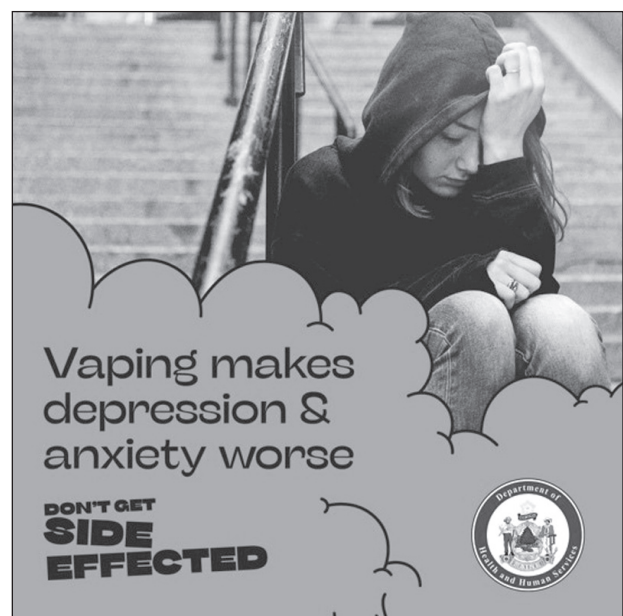
The "Don't Get Side Effect-ed" campaign captures the attention of youth through relatable messaging that directly confronts the short-term health effects of vaping, debunks common myths, and provides actionable resources for quitting. "Winning this award highlights the effectiveness of data-driven strategies in combating public health challenges," said Laura Rinck, President of Rinck Advertising. "We're proud to partner with the Maine CDC on this crucial work, empowering young people to make positive changes in their lives."

Nikki Jarvais, Senior Vice President and subject matter expert in behavioral change marketing, added, "Our campaign contributed to a remarkable

45% reduction in youth vaping rates among high school students, proving that targeted communication strategies effectively resonate with this audience. 'Don't Get Side Effect-ed' exemplifies the effectiveness of tailored behavioral change communication strategies. By engaging directly with teens, we not only raise awareness but also foster a supportive environment for change."

The campaign's success is further evidenced by the 2023 Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey (MIYHS), which found that 15.6% of high school students reported using an electronic vapor product in the past 30 days, a sharp decline from 28.7% in 2019—representing a 45% reduction. This marks the largest decline in youth vaping rates among high school students in the state's history.

Over its 125 days in market, the campaign de-



livered impressive results, generating 40.2 million impressions, 212,000 ad clicks, and 5,950 clicks from teens interested in enrolling in treatment to quit vaping—an average of 47 potential enrollments per day.

As the youth vaping public health crisis continues, 'Don't Get Side Effect-ed' reflects Maine's commitment to addressing the issue. The campaign demonstrates how the strategic integration of media and creative messaging can drive meaningful behavioral change, using in-

novative, targeted media solutions that captured teens' attention and drive conversions.

The Davey Awards is the largest and most prestigious competition exclusively for the "Davids" of creativity—small agencies with big ideas. Judged by the Academy of Interactive and Visual Arts, a body of top-tier professionals from acclaimed organizations like Condé Nast, Disney, and Microsoft, the Davey Awards honor creativity, innovation, and excellence across media, advertising, and marketing.

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Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

Wednesdays

GORHAM – Story Hour every Wednesday from 10:30 to 11:30 at North Gorham Public Library.

Thursdays

LEWISTON -- Baby Sensory Playtime in the Lewiston Public Library's Children's Department every Thursday morning from 10am to 12pm.

Drop-in and join us for Baby Sensory Playtime! Babies and their caregivers will have the opportunity to interact with a variety of sensory toys and socialize with other families with young children. Playtime with sensory toys contributes to a baby's cognitive development, fine motor skills, social and emotional development, creativity, and language development.

Recommended for babies ages birth-18 months and their caregivers. Siblings are always welcome. This program is free, open to the public and no registration is required.

Dec 31

LEWISTON – From 11:15am to 12:00pm at the Lewiston Public Library, enjoy an interactive storytime for some fun with books, songs, and body movement while building early literacy skills.

Recommended for children ages 3 – 5 years old and their caregivers. Siblings are always welcome. Please stay home

if you or your child are sick and not feeling well. This program is free, open to the public, and no registration is required.

Dec 31

BANGOR -- The Maine Discovery Museum is thrilled to invite families to ring in the New Year early at Midnight at the Museum! This fun-filled, family-friendly New Year's Eve event takes place on December 31, from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM, offering kids and parents the perfect way to celebrate the holiday without staying up until midnight.

Jan 3-5

MONMOUTH -- The Monmouth Community Players (MCP) are excited to present our 4th Annual MCP Shorts Play Festival, happening at the start of the new year at Cumston Hall, 796 Main St, Monmouth, ME 04259. January 3rd at 7pm, January 4th at 7pm, and January 5 at 2pm. Tickets will be \$10 general admission and are available online or at the door. Advance tickets can be purchased by visiting our website's home page, www.monmouthcommunityplayers.org or contacting our box office at mcpboxoffice@gmail.com or calling at 207-370-9566.

face@gmail.com or calling at 207-370-9566.

Jan 10

LEWISTON -- On Friday, January 10th at 10am the Lewiston Public Library Children's Department will be offering the program My Little Snowflake Handprint Keepsake. Caregivers and their young children will be able to make a wintery snowflake themed handprint keepsake. This activity is recommended for caregivers with children between the ages of 0-6 years old. Siblings are also welcome to attend and participate. This program will take place in the Children's Department on the third floor of the library. The activity is free and there is no registration required.

Jan 11

BRUNSWICK -- The 2024-25 UUCB Concerts for a Cause Series season will include folk, jazz, blues, celtic, and choral singing for justice. This season's charities receiving 100% of the profits from the concert are Brunswick Area Teen Center and Maine Family Planning. For further details about the concerts, go to <https://www.uubrunswick.org/events/>.

David Mallett - Sat, January 11, 2025 at 7:30 pm. Doors open 7:00 pm.

Maine's own singer-songwriter David Mallett is one of America's true troubadours. In a career that spans four decades, David Mallett has recorded 17 albums and has performed in clubs, concert halls and festivals across the US, Canada and Europe. He has appeared on numerous broadcasts, including National Public Radio's A Prairie Home Companion. Known for his carefully written, poetic offerings, his body of work has provided material for more than 150 artists, including Alison Krauss, Pete Seeger, Hal Ketchum, Emmylou Harris, John Denver and even the Muppets, and his "Garden Song" has become an American folk classic.

Tickets: \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door, \$10 Students/Children. Available at the church office, Gulf of Maine Books, or online at <https://ticketstripe.com/pousette>.

Jan 14

LEWISTON -- In partnership with the Lewiston CareerCenter, the Lewiston Public Library will host a resume workshop on Tuesday, January 14th in the Idea Lab on the second floor from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The CareerCenter will provide professional resume writing and job connection assistance on a first-come, first-served basis. No registration is required.

Jan 18

LEWISTON -- The Midcoast Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Rohan Smith presents "Invigorating Water Music." The performance is on January 18 at 7:00 p.m. at the Franco Center, 46 Cedar St., Lewiston. For info and tickets visit <https://www.midcoastsymphony.org/tickets> or call 207-481-0790. Tickets \$25 in advance or \$30 at the door. Age 25 and under are free. The Audience is also invited to our free "More with Midcoast" "Meet the Instruments" event that begins at 6:00pm.

Mar 15

BRUNSWICK -- The 2024-25 UUCB Concerts for a Cause Series season will include folk, jazz, blues, celtic, and choral singing for justice. This season's charities receiving 100% of the profits from the concert are Brunswick Area Teen Center and Maine Family Planning. For further details about the concerts, go to <https://www.uubrunswick.org/events/>.

Women in Harmony - Sat, Mar 15, 2025 at 7:30 pm. Doors open 7:00 pm. Tickets: \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door, \$10 Students/Children

Women in Harmony

is a Portland-based chorus of 60 women's voices, which has been singing for social justice for over 20 years. It is a diverse group of gay and straight, musically sophisticated and musically untrained women who unite in song and a spirit of fairness. Women in Harmony is dedicated both to musical excellence and social justice.

Tickets: \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door, \$10 Students/Children. Available at the church office, Gulf of Maine Books, or online at <https://ticketstripe.com/womenharmony>

Apr 12

BRUNSWICK -- The 2024-25 UUCB Concerts for a Cause Series season will include folk, jazz, blues, celtic, and choral singing for justice. This season's charities receiving 100% of the profits from the concert are Brunswick Area Teen Center and Maine Family Planning. For further details about the concerts, go to <https://www.uubrunswick.org/events/>.

Guy Davis - Sat, April 12, 2025 at 7:30 pm. Doors open 7:00 pm.

Guy Davis is a two-time, back-to-back Grammy nominee for Best Traditional Blues, a musician, actor, author, and songwriter. Guy uses a blend of Roots, Blues, Folk, Rock, Rap, Spoken Word, and World Music to comment on, and address, the frustrations of social injustice, touching on historical events, and common life struggles.

Tickets are \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door, and \$10 for students/children. Available at the church office, Gulf of Maine Books, or at ticketstripe.com/guy-davis.

May 17

BRUNSWICK -- The 2024-25 UUCB Concerts for a Cause Series season will include folk, jazz, blues, celtic, and choral singing for justice. This season's charities receiving 100% of the profits from the concert are Brunswick Area Teen Center and Maine Family Planning. For further details about the concerts, go to <https://www.uubrunswick.org/events/>.

House of Hamill - Sat, May 17, 2025 at 7:30 pm. Doors open 7:00 pm.

The upcycled Celtic folk trio, House of Hamill,

features Brian Buchanan and Rose Baldino of the Celtic folk-rock band Enter the Haggis. They are both accomplished traditional fiddle players and classical violinists, with over 25 years of writing and performance experience between them. They write unusual new fiddle tunes and exciting, unpredictable original songs while breathing new life into traditional and contemporary songs. A third full-time member, Caroline Browning, recently joined the duo, playing bass, mandolin, and vocals. Their music occupies a space between traditional Irish and sophisticated indie folk.

Tickets are \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door, and \$10 for students/children. Available at the church office, Gulf of Maine Books, or online at ticketstripe.com/house.

June 14

BRUNSWICK -- The 2024-25 UUCB Concerts for a Cause Series season will include folk, jazz, blues, celtic, and choral singing for justice. This season's charities receiving 100% of the profits from the concert are Brunswick Area Teen Center and Maine Family Planning. For further details about the concerts, go to <https://www.uubrunswick.org/events/>.

Susan Werner - Sat, June 14, 2025 at 7:30 pm. Doors open 7:00 pm.

Susan Werner is a singer/songwriter, guitarist, and pianist who has built a reputation as one of the country's most compelling live performers. She has been playing to sold-out audiences across the country for 27 years. Renowned as a charismatic performer, she's known above all for challenging herself to conquer new styles every few years. She writes ambitious concept albums with subject matter and sounds to match. She has produced 18 albums of songs that effortlessly slide between folk/rock, jazz, Tin Pan Alley to gospel, country, and pop, all delivered with sassy wit and classic Midwestern charm.

Tickets: \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door, \$10 Students/Children. Available at the church office, Gulf of Maine Books, or online at <https://ticketstripe.com/swerner>



The rewards of being there for Mainers in crisis

As a mobile crisis worker, Marissa Exchange's role is all about giving back. She provides confidential support, and connects individuals in crisis to resources they need, collaborating with families, mental health providers, and other community partners to ensure that the person has a holistic network of support. Most importantly, she provides a safe, kind space for individuals in crisis to share what they're going through, and ask for help.

And yet when Marissa talks about her work, she gushes about how much she gets from it.

"It's super rewarding," said Marissa. "It feels really good to be able to make a difference, to know that people feel comfortable with me, and trust me to be a safe - or even just a neutral - place where they can say anything without fear of being judged or getting a negative response."

She also loves that she can make her own schedule, work remotely if she needs to, and manage her shifts while pursuing her master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling, and training to become a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor.

Marissa is part of a growing legion of Crisis Responders who are discovering the rewards of working with Mainers experiencing a mental health crisis to assess their needs, and guide them to an appropriate level of care.

There are a wide variety of open positions statewide that offer full-time, part-time and per-diem opportunities. The work is done in the community, outside a hospital or nursing home. Training opportunities are widely available and easy to complete.

Like Marissa, others who are working in this field are finding that it gives back much more than it takes.

"It's just been this incredible journey," said Melanie Grant, a crisis residential services worker, who provides intervention and support to ensure the safety and well-being of patients in a residential treatment facility.

"A lot of it is just working with people who are going through a hard time, whether it has to do with substances, or past trauma or loss of a loved one. It's people needing people. And we've all needed people."

To learn more about full-time, part-time and per-diem opportunities in your community, go to Mainecareerswithpurpose.org. Follow @MaineCareerswithPurpose on Facebook and Instagram.



"It feels really good to be able to make a difference."



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SENIOR TRIPS

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

MAY 29 - JUNE 4, 2025 - WASHINGTON, D.C.

- NATION'S CAPITAL – Trip includes 7 days and 6 nights lodging, 6 breakfasts and 4 dinners. A guided tour of Washington, D.C. which includes the US Capitol, the White House, the National Archives, Embassy Row and Georgetown. We will also visit the Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Memorial. We will also have a

guided evening tour of all the Memorials. We will have a Guided Tram Tour of inspirational sights such as Arlington National Cemetery, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Kennedy Graves and the Iwo Jima Memorial.

We will visit the Smithsonian Museum and the Museum of the Bible which contains some of the oldest and most important biblical artifacts in human history. On our way home we will stop and enjoy the National Harbor which is a unique waterfront wonderland of shopping, dining and more. **A \$75.00 deposit is due when signing up for this trip. The price is \$985.00 per person double occupancy. Add \$305.00 for single occupancy. Final payment is due 3/22/25.**

SEPTEMBER 11-19, 2025 – BLUEGRASS COUNTRY & THE SMOKY MOUNTAINS

- Price includes round trip air from Logan International Airport, hotel transfers, and all transportation while on tour, 9 days, and 13 meals.

Highlights of this tour are Louisville and Lexington, Kentucky – Churchill Downs, Kentucky Derby Museum, Louisville

Slugger Museum, Buffalo Trace Bourbon Distillery, Lexington Horse Farm.

Gatlinburg, Tennessee – Dolly Parton's Smoky Mountain Theme Park, Guided tour of the Great Smokey Mountain National Park (UNESCO), Cherokee, Old Smoky Moonshine Distillery.

Asheville, North Carolina – Blue Ridge Mountains, tour of the Biltmore Estates Mansion and manicured grounds.

Deposit for this trip is \$698.00 per person and due by March 11, 2025. Early bookings save \$100.00 per person. For more information on pricing call Claire.

OCTOBER 6 – 10, 2025 – ATLANTIC CITY, CAPE MAY, & PHILADELPHIA

- Trip includes 5 days and 4 nights lodging, 4 breakfasts and 4 dinners and a free casino bonus for those who want to gamble.

Guided tour of Philadelphia including Liberty Bell, Independence Hall, Betsy Ross House, the Federal Reserve and Mint. Then off to Cape May with a Trolley Tour of the Victorian Mansions of Cape May and a walking tour of a historic Victorian Home. We travel to Cape May Point and the

famous Cape May Lighthouse. Our next day is a free day in Atlantic City to do as you please. Take in a show, do some gaming or just stroll down Atlantic City's Famous Boardwalk. **A \$75.00 deposit per person is due upon signing up. The price for this trip is \$849.00 per person double occupancy. Add \$210.00 for single occupancy. Final Payment is due 7/30/25.**

NOVEMBER 16-26, 2025 – CLASSICAL GREECE

- Price includes round trip air from Logan International Airport, hotel transfers and all transportation while on tour. Trip also includes 16 meals (9 breakfasts, 1 luncheon, and 6 dinners).

Highlights of this tour are Athens, the Acropolis and Parthenon, Delphi, Olympia and Ancient Mycenae. You will visit a Greek Farm, have a Cooking Class, Greek Dance Class, and visit two remote monasteries. We will also have a tasting of local wines, olive oil and sweets.

If you are interested in any of these trips or for more information, please contact Claire at 784-0302 or Cindy at 345-9569.

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Camden National Bank shines a light on local nonprofits

CAMDEN, ME – Camden National Bank proudly reveals its 2024 Leaders & Luminaries Awardees, granting their respective organizations \$22,000 in unrestricted funding. Since the recognition initiative launched in 2011, Camden National Bank has donated nearly \$264,000 to 68 Maine nonprofits across the state through the Leaders & Luminaries program. Over the years, hundreds of board directors have been nominated by fellow board members and nonprofit staff, highlighting countless stories of these unsung heroes going above and beyond as stewards for positive community change.

“We recognize the significant role that board members play in advancing a nonprofit organization’s mission and impact through innovative thinking and outstanding board governance,” said Renée Smyth, chief experience and marketing officer of Camden National Bank. “We’re excited to honor this group of outstanding leaders for their dedication to address critical needs and create meaningful and lasting change in our communities.”

Camden National Bank’s independent selection committee narrowed the pool of nominations down to four Leaders & Luminaries Award winners. Each will receive a \$5,000 grant in unrestricted funding for their nonprofit organization. Camden National Bank is also recognizing a Spotlight Award winner who will receive a \$2,000 grant. Donations were funded through the bank’s private charitable foundation, The Bank of Maine Foundation.

2024 Leaders & Luminaries Award Winners:
 Alan Caron, Founder, ClimateWork Maine (Portland, Maine)

ClimateWork Maine serves as a support network for businesses and business leaders acting on climate change to meet its challenges and seize the opportunities it presents to build a more sustainable economy. Alan has been foundational in bringing Maine businesses together to help mitigate emissions from buildings, electricity, and vehicles while ensuring that Maine’s most vulnerable and rural communities are not left behind in such challenging times.

His continued leadership, both as a financial supporter and volunteer, has been instrumental in shaping the organization’s success and positioning it as a key player in Maine’s climate future.

Chris Houle, Treasurer of the Board, Maine Academy of Modern Music (Portland, Maine)

Maine Academy of Modern Music is committed to universal access to music education for all Mainers and using the power of music to inspire students, foster creative collaboration, and strengthen community connections. Chris’ leadership ensures that all students across Maine have access to meaningful musical experiences, regardless of their background or circumstances. As the organization’s Treasurer, Chris has been instrumental in navigating significant organizational changes and dedicated to empowering the board with financial literacy sessions, which has truly inspired informed decision-making and strengthened our community.

Katie Weiler, Board Member, Saltwater Classroom (Camden, Maine)

Saltwater Classroom’s mission is to foster an ethic of ocean stewardship in young students and learners of all ages through hands-on ocean education, tech integration, and global collaboration. Katie has played a pivotal role in shaping Saltwater Classroom’s strategic vision, particularly in the development of their Phase II online learning platform. Katie’s leadership has implemented sound board governance through a structured approach and accountability.

Mike Wilson, Board Member, The Center for Grieving Children (Portland, Maine)

The Center for Grieving Children’s mission is to provide loving support to grieving children, teens, families, and the community through peer support, outreach, and education. Mike’s personal experience led him to join and eventually help lead this nonprofit organization. Under his leadership, the organization successfully navigated transitions in leadership and evolved from in-person meetings to virtual formats. This shift expanded the organiza-



tion’s reach and services and ensured that safety and compliance were prioritized.

Additionally, the bank granted a Spotlight Award to William “Bill” Buckley, the founding president of the Challenger Learning Center of Maine, with a \$2,000 grant. Bill rallied local support and worked tirelessly to establish the state of Maine’s only center, which opened in 2004 and aims to engage students and teachers in dynamic, hands-on exploration and discovery opportunities that strengthen knowledge in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), inspire students to pursue careers in these fields and provide an outlet to learn and apply important life skills. His leadership, hands-on involvement, and dedication have

helped the center serve over 8,000 students annually, providing them with transformative STEM experiences.

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