



# TWIN CITY TIMES

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## Budget Document Technology honored as Elite Dealer

LEWISTON, ME – ENX Magazine announced that Budget Document Technology (BDT) is among the 118 companies chosen as 2024 Elite Dealers. This is the fifth time that BDT has been cited among the nation's top office technology dealerships.

“We're honored to once again be recognized as a 2024 ENX Elite Dealer. This distinction highlights the dedication and passion of our entire BDT team—from administrative staff to sales and service support—who work tirelessly to serve our clients and give back to the community” says Tom Ouellette, president

and founder of BDT. All Elite Dealer applicants are judged by several metrics each year, including growth factors, marketing strategies, product/service enhancements, vendor/partner awards and charitable contributions/support. The select dealerships that qualify for the list are

celebrated with a profile in the December issue of ENX Magazine.

“Our Elite Dealers roster continues to establish new, higher standards year after year, and 2024 is no exception,” said Susan Neimes, publisher and managing editor of ENX Magazine and ENX The Week In Imaging.

“While last year's growth was considered an outlier due to pent-up market demand, annual revenues continue to soar. From managed services to product diversifications, Elite Dealers continue to redefine themselves as solutions providers rather than being pigeon-holed as mere purveyors of

copiers and MFPs. These dealers also continue to step outside their comfort zone in taking on non-traditional products that can be offered across their full client list. These companies are the ideal, the standard-bearer for what it means to be an impactful office technology dealer.”

## NSB donates to Trinity Jubilee Center in Lewiston



Pictured (L to R): Heidi Brooks, Customer Relations Representative at NSB's Auburn Branch; Jessica McKenzie, Volunteer Coordinator for Trinity Jubilee Center; Lin Dehetre, VP, Branch Manager and Retail Lender at NSB's Auburn Branch; Yasmine Barkad, Refugee Integration Program Staff Member at Trinity Jubilee Center.

LEWISTON, ME--Over the past 30 years, Trinity Jubilee Center in Lewiston has touched the lives of tens of thousands of people in Lewiston and across Androscoggin County through serving the hungry, homeless, and others in need. The center is dedicated and driven by a call to not only help neighbors get through difficult times but also discover a road to self-sufficiency.



The center provides a variety of services, from free meals to groceries to job and life coaching to medical care. A warm welcome and the offer of hope for a better life to visitors.

Norway Savings Bank is proud to have played a small role in Trin-

ity Jubilee Center's massive impact, including a \$25,000 donation in 2024. At the end of 2025, NSB contributed an additional \$2,000 to the organization, a donation in the season of giving to an organization that has given Lewiston and beyond so much.

## Lewiston legislative delegation to host public office hours

AUGUSTA, ME – Members of Lewiston's delegation to the State Legislature will hold constituent office hours at the Lewiston Public Library on Saturday, January 25th, from 10:30 a.m. until noon to provide local residents a chance to meet with their elected officials and discuss legislative and state

government matters. The delegation will give updates on their work on various policy areas, including the state budget, law enforcement, insurance and financial affairs, taxes, transportation and veterans issues. Office hours are scheduled for the fourth Saturday of every month during the legislative ses-

sion. Constituent Office Hours with Sen. Peggy Rontundo, Rep. Kristen Cloutier, Rep. Julia McCabe, Rep. Mana Abdi and Rep. Michel Lajoie on Saturday, Jan. 25th, 2025 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at The Couture Room, Lewiston Public Library, 200 Lisbon Street

## All aboard for the 2025 Great Falls Model Railroad Club Train Show!

TOPSHAM, ME -- Get ready to immerse yourself in the world of model railroads at the Great Falls Model Railroad Club Train Show in Topsham, ME! With over 100 tables featuring new and used trains, tracks, buildings, books, and more, you'll find something for every enthusiast. From N to HO, S, O, and G scales, there's something for everyone to enjoy.



Explore incredible displays and operating layouts that bring miniature trains to life, and discover

hidden gems from local and visiting dealers. Enjoy free parking and mouth-watering food while you explore.

Looking for a table? Email Margo at margo@greatfallsmodelrrclub.org to reserve yours today!

Don't miss out on

this fantastic event — it's the perfect chance to meet fellow hobbyists and add to your collection. See you there!

For more info, visit [www.greatfallsmodelrrclub.org](http://www.greatfallsmodelrrclub.org).

Date: April 26th, 2025

Hours: 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Location: Mt. Ararat High School, 68 Eagles Way, Topsham, ME 04086 (Handicapped Accessible)

Admission: Just \$5 per person (kids under 12 free with an adult)

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

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# Newsmakers, Names & Faces

## DHHS awarded \$17M to support maternal care

**AUGUSTA, ME** — The Maine Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) Office of MaineCare Services has been selected as one of 15 state Medicaid programs to participate in the Transforming Maternal Health (TMaH) Model, an initiative from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) designed to improve maternal and newborn health outcomes for people enrolled in Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

CMS has awarded DHHS a nearly \$17 million grant, to be administered over 10 years, that will be used to enhance the full range of Maine's maternal

health care services through increased access and quality of supports, improved data infrastructure, and advancing equity-focused initiatives.

The TMaH Model award will help MaineCare address maternal health across the state, by focusing on improving access to care, advancing patient safety, and fostering whole-person care delivery. MaineCare, the state's Medicaid program, will lead the effort in collaboration with the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) and a wide range of community partners.

"Creating a system of care where every pregnant

person has timely access to the perinatal care and support they need, regardless of their circumstances or where they live, is fundamental to ensuring the best outcomes for pregnant people and their babies so that families can thrive," said DHHS Commissioner Sara Gagné-Holmes. "The Transforming Maternal Health Model allows DHHS, in partnership with CMS, to build on existing work in the state and ensure that perinatal health care in Maine sets a national example for equity, quality, and safety."

CMS's TMaH Model is a 10-year program and consists of a three-year pre-implementation phase followed by seven years of

implementation. The State of Maine will receive federal funding and technical assistance to achieve key milestones including improving maternal health data infrastructure, facilitating rural regional planning networks, and supporting birthing hospitals in quality improvement initiatives across Maine.

During the first phase of this initiative, Maine DHHS will work with hospitals, health systems, maternal health providers, community organizations, pregnant people, and other partners to develop comprehensive plans for care improvement, workforce expansion, and payment reform. The State aims to im-

plement a new value-based payment model for maternity care by 2028.

This award builds on Maine DHHS's ongoing work to improve maternal and child health outcomes. In recent years, the Department has expanded postpartum coverage to 12 months after birth. Since 2022, DHHS has supported all birthing hospitals to implement the Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health evidence-based patient safety bundles, or "AIM" bundles, and advanced initiatives to address behavioral and social health needs for pregnant and postpartum individuals through programs such as the MaineCare MaineMOM program.

The TMaH funding will build on previous funding awarded to the State of Maine to continue strengthening the perinatal system of care including grants to the Maine CDC for the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Grant and the State Maternal Health Innovation (SMHI) and Data Capacity Program. In the fall of 2024, DHHS' Office of the Health Insurance Marketplace also received a two-year grant from CMS, the Expanding Access to Women's Health Grant, focused on supporting State efforts to enhance and expand coverage of, and access to, reproductive health care and maternal care.

## CAFAM celebrating Lunar New Year

**WESTBROOK, ME** — The Chinese and American Friendship Association of Maine (CAFAM) will ring in the Year of the Snake, Saturday, February 15, 2025, at the Westbrook Performing Arts Center, 471 Stroudwater Road, Westbrook, ME.

This always popular and exciting event is in its 34th year and is the oldest and largest Lunar New Year celebration in Maine.

Dance Performance by students from Bates College and other local performers. The Bangor Chinese School will also perform a dragon dance and a harvest dance.

There will be a Chinese Cultural Village:

Open from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. with teaching calligraphy, crafts for kids, vendors, and more. Karen Morency will demonstrate tai chi and talk about fermented Chinese food. Steve Wong of Bangor will do lion dance performances most of the day. There will also be a demonstration of dumpling making. The village will also be open during performance intermission.

Chinese food from the Panda Garden Restaurant will be available beginning at noon.

Admission prices: Adults \$15, Children 12 to 5 \$5, Children under 5 Free. The discounted price for CAFAM members is

\$10 for adults. Tickets are available in advance from Eventbrite.com. Day of event tickets: Only cash or check. No credit or debit cards! .

**PLENTY OF FREE PARKING.**

If the live event is cancelled all of the tickets purchased from Eventbrite will automatically be fully refunded.

Sponsored the Chinese and American Friendship Association of Maine (CAFAM). For more information go to [www.cafam-maine.org](http://www.cafam-maine.org).

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

## 100+ Women Who Care Southern Maine to meet Feb. 10

**MAINE** -- The next meeting of 100+ Women Who Care Southern Maine will be held on Monday, February 10, 2025, at The Elks Lodge on Congress Street in Portland. Networking begins at 5:45 PM, with the meeting starting at 6:30 PM. Guests are welcome to attend and learn more about the group.

For more details, visit: [www.100womenwhocaresouthernmaine.com](http://www.100womenwhocaresouthernmaine.com).

Founded in November 2014, 100+ Women Who Care Southern Maine is a growing community of women who raise funds for local nonprofits. With 488 members, the group has raised over \$660,000 for a wide variety of causes, including support for veterans, children with disabilities, domestic abuse survivors, animal welfare, and more.

Members commit to donating \$50 each quarter to a nonprofit chosen at each meeting. Three non-



Deb Bergeron, founder of 100+ Women Who Care Southern Maine. Deb Maxfield, Camp No Limits. Photo by: LeBel's Lens Photography.

profits present 5-minute pitches followed by a 5-minute Q&A, and the group votes on which nonprofit will receive the donations.

At the November 2024 meeting, Camp No

Limits was chosen as the recipient of donations. The organization will present at the February 10th meeting on how the funds were used. Camp No Limits provides specialized camps for children with limb loss and limb differences, offering mentorship, support, and education in a community-focused environment.

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# Newsmakers, Names & Faces

## Antiques Roadshow making first-time stop in Maine

**BOSTON, MA** — It's an anniversary year for ANTIQUES ROADSHOW! Part adventure, part history lesson and part treasure hunt, PBS's most-watched ongoing series heads out for its 30th Tour in 2025 to capture tales of family heirlooms, flea market finds, and items saved from attics and basements.

The pop-culture phenomenon series will film for Season 30 in five cities including a stop in Boothbay, Maine on Wednesday, June 18! Do you have ROADSHOW's next big find?

"I look forward to every new season of ROADSHOW but there is something extra special about

making our very first stop in Maine visiting Boothbay as part of our Season 30 tour," said executive producer Marsha Bemko. "Celebrating three decades of making television with people across the country and their treasures as stars of the show is magical — the items might be old, but the stories never are!"

ANTIQUES ROADSHOW 2025 Production Tour Dates and Cities:

Wednesday, June 18 — Boothbay, ME

ROADSHOW will reveal the distinctive and historic venues for each event in the coming weeks.

At each appraisal event, guests will receive free verbal evaluations of

their antiques, art, and collectibles by experts from the country's leading auction houses and independent dealers. Each ticketed guest is invited to bring two items for appraisal.

From each of the 2025 events, three episodes of ROADSHOW per city will be created for inclusion in the 22-time Emmy® Award-nominated production's 30th broadcast season, to air on PBS in 2026.

Admission to ANTIQUES ROADSHOW is free but tickets are required and must be obtained in advance. Fans can enter for a chance to win one pair of free tickets per household. The 2025 AN-



TIQUES ROADSHOW Sweepstakes opens Monday, January 13. To enter for a free pair of tickets to a 2025 ROADSHOW event and to see complete entry rules, go to [pbs.org/roadshowtickets](https://pbs.org/roadshowtickets). Deadline for entries is Monday, March 24, 2025, at 11:59PM PT. Information about ANTIQUES ROADSHOW and the 2025 Tour is available by calling toll-free 888-762-3749.

A small number of free tickets will also be available on social media

to fans who enter on Instagram. Social media entries will be accepted beginning January 13, with an entry deadline of Thursday, February 13, 2025, at 11:59PM PT.

For both sweepstakes, no purchase is necessary, restrictions apply, you must be 18 or age of majority. For the ANTIQUES ROADSHOW Sweepstakes you must be a resident of US or Canada (excluding Quebec). All Social Media Sweepstakes entrants must be US residents only. Void

where prohibited.

More information and complete rules can be found at the 2025 Tour Complete Rules page.

To see FAQs about ANTIQUES ROADSHOW events, go to: [pbs.org/wgbh/roadshow/tour-faq/](https://pbs.org/wgbh/roadshow/tour-faq/).

Produced by GBH, ANTIQUES ROADSHOW reaches more than 5 million loyal weekly viewers on TV, streaming, online, and social media. ROADSHOW airs Mondays at 8/7c PM on PBS.

## Jaime Brochu joins Fontaine Family Team

**MAINE** -- Fontaine Family - The Real Estate Leader is proud to announce Jaime Brochu as the newest addition to their growing Auburn team.

Jaime, a long-time resident of the area, brings with her a wealth of experience, a deep connection to the community, and an unwavering passion for helping clients navigate their real estate journeys.

Jaime grew up in Greene and now resides in Auburn. She attended Leavitt High School before embarking on a successful 11-year career with Norway Savings Bank, where she served as the Loan Operations Assistant Manager and AVP for Mortgage Originations. Throughout her career, she managed various aspects of the mortgage process, including processing, underwriting, construction, and closings. With a team of up to 30 members reporting to her at various times, Jaime's leadership and ability to think outside the box have helped countless clients close loans in a timely and efficient manner.

Jaime's extensive knowledge of the lending process, combined with her dedication to finding



creative solutions, makes her an invaluable asset to her clients in the real estate industry. Now holding her Sales Agent license, Jaime is excited to assist both buyers and sellers in achieving their real estate goals.

Jaime is also a devoted mother to her two children, Ethan and Kalyn. Her family is passionate about sports—Ethan, has been playing hockey since he was three years old and currently plays for the Islanders Hockey Club Premier team in Massachusetts. Kalyn, is equally driven, having been part of

the Element All Star High Travel Cheer team for the past four years. When not at the rink or traveling for cheer competitions, Jaime enjoys hiking, going to concerts and relaxing at the beach. She also loves spending time with her two dogs, Griffin and Bailey.

Jaime is eager to apply her skills and dedication to real estate, helping families and individuals find the perfect home or investment. Whether you're looking to buy or sell, Jaime's expertise and

personalized approach will ensure a smooth, successful experience.

For real estate opportunities with Jaime Brochu, she can be contacted by phone at 207-240-4831 or email [Jaime@fontaine-team.com](mailto:Jaime@fontaine-team.com)

Fontaine Family – The Real Estate Leader is a highly skilled real estate team of licensed professionals dedicated to focusing on the client. Fontaine was awarded 2019 Maine

Family-Owned Business of the Year, voted Best Real Estate Company in the Greater Lewiston/Auburn Area and Greater Portland Area year after year, recognized by Real Trends as America's Top 250 Real Estate Team and published in the Wall Street Journal in the Top 250 Real Estate Professionals ranking in the top 1/2 of 1% of Realtors outperforming 99.9% of the nation's Realtors.

The Fontaine Family Team serves 8 counties – Androscoggin, Cumberland, York, Sagadahoc, Oxford, Kennebec, Franklin and Somerset – in two locations, 336 Center Street in Auburn and 432 US Route One in Scarborough. For more information visit [FontaineTeam.com](https://FontaineTeam.com), download their free home search mobile app "Fontaine Family Real Estate" or call (207)784-3800 or (207)289-3830.

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## Seniors Not Acting Their Age

# Wintry Conditions on Ragged Mountain



A hiker begins the final push to the summit of Ragged Mountain

One of the many benefits of membership in my outdoor club, the Penobscot Paddle & Chowder Society (PPCS), is the ability to network with a large number of outdoor enthusiasts. We have more than 300 adult members so finding companions for an outdoor adventure is often a phone call or club email away.

When I recently announced a proposed last minute December club hike on Ragged Mountain in West Rockport, I received an immediate response from a new member. Yet another advantage of PPCS affiliation is the opportunity to make new friends with similar interests. That was true

in this instance when Art Durity signed on to my trip.

Ragged Mountain is situated near the southwestern terminus of a range of small coastal mountains called the Camden Hills. The Georges Highland Path (GHP), developed and maintained by the Georges River Land Trust, traverses the summit. The 1,288-foot peak provides several spectacular panoramic views of the surrounding mountains and dozens of islands in Penobscot Bay.

We met at the Route 17 GHP Trailhead near Mirror Lake on a cool, partly sunny, December morning. When we ar-



An overlook provides unobstructed views of Spruce and Pleasant Mountains

rived, ours were the only vehicles in the small parking lot. Observing snow and ice in the area and on the summit, we packed micro spikes for use if icy conditions were encountered.

We descended steep steps next to a kiosk on the GHP and hiked easily on hard-packed snow and sporadic ice in a low area. After crossing an ancient stonewall, we followed the trail as it angled northwesterly in a predominantly hardwood forest and passed over a rocky ridge towards towering cliffs.

Continuing over rolling hills, we intersected Round the Mountain Trail and crossed a small

stream. Round the Mountain Trail is a relatively new biking, walking, and running path that partially circumnavigates Ragged Mountain. Shortly after, we arrived at the base of the cliffs.

The trail turned right and we advanced easterly along the foot of the precipice in uneven boulder-strewn terrain. In the past, the path continued in that direction until nearing Mirror Lake before beginning a steep northerly climb towards the summit. However, since my last visit the trail has been rerouted and turns northeasterly earlier and rises more gradually. The change is an improvement.

Ascending steadily, we rejoined the old path before veering northwest past a large rock formation. The trail narrowed and continued along the edge of south facing cliffs providing sporadic glimpses of Mirror Lake below. We followed the attenuated passage as it rose gradually to an overlook that offered unobstructed views of Spruce and Pleasant Mountains, the southwestern-most peaks in the Camden Hills Range.

Turning right, the trail enters a stunted hard-



South facing cliffs provide sporadic glimpses of Mirror Lake

wood forest and follows a moderate incline to steep ledges. We scaled the prominence and emerged onto a wide sloping observation point that provided expansive views of Penobscot Bay in the east.

Leaving that scenic location, we passed through a stand of conifer trees and then scrambled over a massive granite protuberance partially covered with ice and snow. Using blue blazes on the rocks as a guide, we skirted along the rim of the lofty escarpment. The prevalence of ice heightened the risk of falls in this potentially hazardous area so we stopped to attach micro spikes to our boots.

Benefiting from improved traction, we clambered abruptly upwards past a sign that directs hikers to the summit. The views in this area were phenomenal. Aptly named Mirror Lake was seemingly at our feet and much of western Penobscot Bay could be seen in the distance.

We completed the final push to the summit and passed a communications tower to another exceptional viewpoint. From that eastern perspective, we enjoyed a stunning panoramic vista

of the northern Camden Hills and much of Penobscot Bay.

Following a brief snack while savoring the wonderful views, we began our return. The micro spikes were invaluable during the precipitous higher elevation descent. We continued to wear them for added security during the remainder of the trek. Our pleasurable return was otherwise problem-free.

My book, *Maine Al Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine* relates nine more challenging Maine mountain hikes including several winter ascents of Mount Katahdin, Traveler Loop and the Marston Range in Baxter State Park.

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

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# New Ventures Maine launches competition for small businesses

**AUGUSTA, ME**—New Ventures Maine (NVME) has announced open applications for their statewide Marketing Mini-Grant competition.

The NVME Marketing Mini-Grant Program aims to strengthen access to markets for small businesses by supporting the development of marketing tools, materials, and activities. NVME will award cash mini-grants—up to \$1,000 per region (defined below)—to microenterprises for new or expanded business marketing and promotion projects through a competitive application process. Applications are due by Fri-

day, February 28, 2025 at noon.

Eligible applicants include individual micro-business owners, business partners, or groups of business owners. Businesses apply to the region in which they are based (see below for details).

Application criteria include: 1) Five or fewer full-time equivalent employees; 2) sales in the past 12 months; and 3) gross annual sales of no more than \$150,000 (previous calendar year).

Terrill Waldman, co-owner of Tandem Glass with Charlie Jenkins, winners of a 2023 marketing mini-grant, said of its



NVME Microenterprise Program Manager Alicia LaFosse accepts a \$3,000 donation from Duncan Mixer, AVP & Commercial Loan Officer at Norway Savings Bank.



impact, “This grant gave us the energy to pursue and invest in a new logo and a ‘suite’ of marketing goodies. We are so proud of the work we have done. Overall, we are currently up 15% in sales over last year. Traffic to our web site is steady and traffic to our brick and mortar shop is up!”

Regions and contacts for the 2025 Winter/Spring contest are:

Cumberland & York Counties: Martha Leonard, 207-245-3663, martha.leonard@maine.edu

Androscoggin, Oxford & Franklin Counties: Gina Platt, 207-753-6581, gina.platt@maine.edu

For more information, contact the region representative listed above or visit the New Ventures Maine website.

Marketing mini-grants are sponsored in part by Norway Savings Bank, Katahdin Trust Company, and Kennebec Savings Bank.

“We are excited to sponsor mini-grants that empower small businesses to boost their marketing efforts and overall success,” said Duncan Mixer, AVP & Commercial Loan Officer at Norway Savings Bank. “Bringing financial support to the communities we serve is an important priority for us.”

# MaineCF grants available to nonprofits

**PORTLAND & ELLSWORTH** —Non-profit organizations throughout the state may be eligible for grants from the Maine Community Foundation’s (MaineCF) Community Building Grant Program.

The grant program

invests in local projects and organizations that help build strong communities in all 16 counties. Community Building supports projects and organizations that invest in people, engage with the people served and strengthen community resources.

In 2024, MaineCF’s county and regional committees awarded \$1.97 million in grants through the Community Building Grant Program. Learn more about the Community Building Grant Program and application process at [www.mainecef.org/community-](http://www.mainecef.org/community-building)

[building](http://www.mainecef.org/community-building).

The deadline to apply is Friday, Feb. 14.

The Community Building Grant Program is MaineCF’s largest grant program. It is one of the only grant programs in the state that supports a broad range of interest areas, in-

cluding arts, education, environment, economic development and human services.

The grant program offers two types of funding: project grants and general support. Project grants are only available to larger organizations for new projects. General support grants

are geared towards smaller organizations and this flexible funding may support new, expanding or ongoing programs as well as operational needs.

For a list of 2024 Community Building grants by county, visit [www.mainecef.org/recentgrants](http://www.mainecef.org/recentgrants).

# Lung Association: Radon detected in 36.5% of Maine homes

**AUGUSTA, ME** – Radon remains the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States and the latest American Lung Association “State of Lung Cancer” report reveals that in Maine, about 37% of radon test results equal or exceed the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) action level of 4 pCi/L. During January for National Radon Action Month, the Lung Association in Maine strongly urges all residents to test their home for radon and take immediate steps to mitigate the threat if high levels are found.

Radon is a colorless, odorless and tasteless naturally occurring radioac-

tive gas emitted from the ground. Radon can enter a home through cracks in floors, basement walls, foundations and other openings. Radon can be present at high levels inside homes, schools and other buildings. It is responsible for an estimated 21,000 lung cancer deaths every year and is the leading cause of lung cancer in people who have never smoked.

“Radon levels appear at dangerous levels in too many homes. High levels of radioactive radon gas have been found in every state, but too few proactively work to protect their homes and families from the potentially devastating effects

of exposure,” said Lance Boucher, Director of Advocacy for the Lung Association in Maine. “Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in people in the U.S., and testing is the only way to know if your home is safe. The bright spot is that testing is easy, affordable and readily available at home improvement stores and through trusted online services.”

For National Radon Action Month, the Lung Association offers facts and tips to protect families from radon exposure:

Testing is the first step in reducing the risk of radon-induced lung cancer. Elevated levels of radon are found in homes

in every state, and in some states, radon levels are elevated in as many as 1 in 3 homes. The only way to detect radon in a home is to test your home. Do-it-yourself test kits are simple to use and inexpensive. As a part of a partnership with Protect Environmental, the Lung Association is offering free radon test kits in select markets nationwide. Learn more and request a test kit here.

Always test when buying a home. Testing for radon is always recommended when buying a home. Resources are available for new homeowners here, and are available for real estate professionals here.

Use test results to mitigate the risk. Radon is measured in picocuries per liter (pCi/L). The Environmental Protection Agency recommends taking action to reduce radon if levels are 4.0 pCi/L or greater, and to consider similar actions when the radon level is between 2.0 and 4.0 pCi/L. The goal is to lower the radon level in your home to the lowest possible level. Contact your state radon program for a list of certified mitigation professionals in your state. Some state programs offer financial assistance or low interest loans for radon mitigation.

Your actions could save your family’s lives.

Beyond being the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S., radon exposure is the number one cause of lung cancer in people who have never smoked. Both smoking and radon can cause lung cancer, but exposure to both increases the risk by about 10 times. If you smoke and are ready to start your journey to quit for good, the Lung Association offers resources at [Lung.org/quit-smoking](http://Lung.org/quit-smoking).

To learn more about radon testing and mitigation, visit at [Lung.org/radon](http://Lung.org/radon) and take the Lung Association’s free Radon Basics course at [Lung.org/radon-basics](http://Lung.org/radon-basics).

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# Arts & Entertainment

## Portland Public Library presents 'Ideas for a Better Democracy'

**PORTLAND, ME --** For the finale of Portland Public Library's Camden Conference Community Event Series, in partnership with the 38th annual Camden Conference, the Library will host Anna Kellar, the Executive Director of the League of Women Voters of Maine for a presentation entitled "Ideas for a Better Democracy from Maine and Away."

After working with democracy and anti-corruption campaigns in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Kellar brings an international perspective to their work in Maine. "We hear all the time about how the decline in democracy and rise in authoritarianism is a global phenomenon, but we should be encouraged that the efforts to renew and rebuild democratic principles also

have an international dimension. Americans can learn a lot from innovative strategies and successful movements in other nations. What's more, Maine, and even Portland has a lot to teach the world about ways to restore representative government and citizen participation," says Kellar.

Kellar grew up in Maine and holds a Bachelor's in Political Science

from Yale University and a Masters in Conflict Studies from the London School of Economics. Their professional experiences cover a wide range of work, from civic engagement to designing institutions to withstand polarization.

Portland Public Library's Camden Conference Event Series was organized by Myles Robert, Business & Government Librarian, who shared that

"Anna Kellar is such an engaging person. I get the sense that we are witnessing someone who is just beginning to establish their legacy in serving their community in intelligent and creative ways and that we will one day proudly say, 'I met Anna when they were just starting their career'."

Join Portland Public Library, in-person or via ZOOM, for this free event.

Registration is required. Please visit: <https://www.portlandlibrary.com/events/ideas-for-a-better-democracy-from-maine-and-away/> for more information and registration form.

The 38th Camden Conference will be held in Camden on February 21-23, 2025. The topic of this year's conference is titled: Democracy Under Threat: A Global Perspective.

## Painting class: Paint a winter scene

**LEWISTON, ME --** Join us at the Lewiston Public Library for Painting Class: Paint a Winter Scene in the 2nd floor Idea Lab on Monday, January 27th at 4pm. Recommended for children ages 10 - 14 years old.

Come learn how to paint a winter scene with

step-by-step instruction by local artist, Nicole Ann. Get creative by painting a snowy landscape scene using acrylic paints on canvas panels. All materials are provided.

This program is free, open to the public, and no registration is required.

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 513-3133 or [LPLKids@lewiston-maine.gov](mailto:LPLKids@lewiston-maine.gov).

**Painting Class:**  
**Paint a Winter Scene**

Monday,  
January 27th  
4:00PM  
located in the  
Idea Lab  
Second Floor

Lewiston PUBLIC LIBRARY

Recommended for children ages 10-14

taught by local artist,  
Nicole Ann

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The Ball will be held at the Kora Shrine Temple, Lewiston

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# Salvation Army supports California wildfire survivors

**PORTLAND, ME** – As fast-moving wildfires continue to devastate communities across Southern California, The Salvation Army has ramped up efforts to support survivors, temporary evacuees, and emergency responders. Teams are on the ground providing meals, emergency supplies, and emotional and spiritual care to those affected.

The Salvation Army's Emergency Disaster Services (EDS) teams are actively assisting at five emergency shelters and the Family Assistance Center in Pasadena. Comprised of dedicated officers, employees, and volunteers, these teams are offering hot meals, coffee, and a listening ear to those

in need.

Current EDS Support Locations Include:

El Camino Real Charter High School – Woodland Hills

Westwood Recreation Center – Los Angeles

Ritchie Valens Recreation Center – Pacoima

The Fairplex – Pomona

Pan Pacific Recreation Center – Los Angeles

Family Assistance Center – Pasadena

As of January 12, 2025, The Salvation Army has served over 2,500 meals and remains prepared to serve for as long as needed. Once conditions permit, the organization will deploy 13 mobile response canteen units to the hardest-hit



neighborhoods, including those affected by the Eaton Canyon and Palisades fires. These units will provide comfort, food, hydration, and practical assistance to impacted residents.

**How to Help**

The best way to support The Salvation Army's wildfire relief efforts is

through financial donations, which allow the organization to obtain the most-needed resources for immediate relief.

To donate, visit: [www.salarmy.us/socalfires](http://www.salarmy.us/socalfires)

For in-kind and corporate donations, please contact Katherine Fukuda at [Katherine.fukuda@usw.salvationarmy.org](mailto:Katherine.fukuda@usw.salvationarmy.org).



# WinterKids Winter Games kick off with outdoor learning fun



**MAINE** — Let the Games begin! WinterKids is thrilled to announce the official start of the 8th Annual WinterKids Winter Games! From January 13 to February 7, students across Maine will step outside, and embrace the joy of outdoor winter learning. This year's theme, "Weather" invites over 10,000 students and educators to become young scientists, observing and documenting Maine's

winter climate in real time.

Opening ceremonies happened at participating schools across the state today, setting the tone for a month of dynamic challenges and community-building activities.

**Program Highlights:**

16 schools will compete in the Competitive Track, vying for cash prizes up to \$5,000.

75 schools will participate in the Play Along



Track, enjoying activities tailored to their own pace.

Weekly themes—Temperature, Precipitation, Wind, and Clouds—will guide students through engaging outdoor lessons.

What's in store for this year?

The WinterKids Winter Games is not just about education—it's about transformation. The WinterKids Winter Games inspire teamwork by encouraging students to collaborate on outdoor challenges, fostering a sense of camaraderie and shared achievement. Through activities such as weather observations, data collection, and creative projects, students and

teachers will be outdoors participating in hands-on lessons.

Jon Morrill of Kittery Trading Post, a proud WinterKids Supporting Sponsor, shared why this program resonates with the community: "Kids are the future of our business, our economy, and the state resources. Anything that we can do to enrich the lifestyle of our children, we're all about that." His words reflect the shared commitment of WinterKids and its partners to nurture healthy, vibrant communities through outdoor engagement and education.

Schools report tangible benefits during the four-



week program, including increased attendance and fewer visits to the nurse, demonstrating the positive impact of active, outdoor learning on students' overall well-being. WinterKids provides weekly incentives like keychain thermometers, tape measures, sunglasses, and weather notebooks for added inspiration!

WinterKids encourages local media outlets to join us in sharing this in-

credible story of community, learning, and resilience. Find a participating school near you and celebrate the energy of winter learning in action!

The Winter Games are sponsored in part by Aroma Joe's, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, MMG Insurance, and the Stockhouse Station.

For a detailed map of partner schools and more information, visit [winterkids.org/winter-games/](http://winterkids.org/winter-games/).

# DAR Scholarship accepting applications by Jan. 31

**WASHINGTON D.C.** – Undergraduate and graduate students studying music can apply for the DAR Marian Anderson Legacy Scholarship through January 31, 2025. Sponsored by the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), the scholarship provides a one-time \$5,000 award to one student annually who is pursuing undergraduate or graduate study in music.

Marian Anderson (1897-1993) was a groundbreaking African American contralto and an inspiration for civil rights. "This scholarship pays tribute to Marian Anderson's life, and the Daughters of the American Revolution seeks to honor her legacy through today's aspiring musicians. Her legacy lives

on in others who aim for excellence in musical studies, are committed to their communities, and willing to stand up for what is right," said Pamela Wright, DAR President General.

Applicants should be accepted or currently enrolled in an accredited university or college in the United States and have a concentration in music in their course of study. Music performance, composition, theory, or education are all areas that students may be specialized in to qualify for the scholarship. They should have a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale or the equivalent GPA on the scale used by the institution.

Applications require references sent through the application system, so



students need to request their references ahead of the Jan. 31st application deadline.

In honor of Ms.

Anderson's commitment to the community throughout her life and her willingness to share her incredible talent with

the world, applicants are asked to write a personal statement describing their humanitarian or volunteer contributions on behalf of

their community and/or country.

To recognize the city Marian Anderson called home, preference will be given to students from the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania metropolitan area, even if they are not pursuing music studies in the Philadelphia area.

This scholarship is not automatically renewed. However, recipients may reapply for consideration each year for up to four consecutive years.

The scholarship is supported by the Daughters of the American Revolution's Marian Anderson Legacy Fund. Learn more about the relationship between Marian Anderson and the DAR, and the organization's on-going efforts to honor her memory at [www.dar.org/MarianAnderson](http://www.dar.org/MarianAnderson)

# Stanton Bird Club monthly educational meeting February 3rd

**AUBURN, ME** -- On February 3rd, the Stanton Bird Club will be hosting the third in its 2024- 25 lecture series presenting "Birding in the Falkland Islands" with Loring (Danny) Danforth, PhD.

Situated 300 miles off the coast of South America, the remote Falk-

land Islands (Islas Malvinas) are a destination for nature and wildlife enthusiasts. The islands are considered one of the great penguin capitals of the world with as many as a million penguins nesting there every summer. But beyond penguins, over 230 species of birds have been recorded including



Loring "Danny" Danforth PhD

70 breeding birds, 20 regular migrants, and more than 130 vagrants.

Having taught at Bates for 40 years and retiring in 2022 as the Charles A. Dana Professor Emeritus of Anthropology, Danforth has been a member of the Stanton Bird Club and an avid birder for over 35 years

traveling widely to see birds and wildlife all over the world.

The talk will be held on Monday, February 3rd from 4-6pm at the Auburn Public Library. The public is welcome. The lecture series is free of charge.

The Stanton Bird Club, a leader in environmental awareness, owns

and manages the Thorncrag Nature Sanctuary in Lewiston as well as the Woodbury Nature Sanctuary in Monmouth and Litchfield.

More information about other activities of the Club can be found at [www.StantonBirdClub.org](http://www.StantonBirdClub.org) and on its Facebook page.

## MEMIC promotes Kaila McCracken

**PORTLAND, ME**— The MEMIC Group, a leading super-regional workers' compensation insurance company, has promoted Kaila McCracken to Vice President of Business Intelligence and Analysis.

In her new role, Kaila will lead a team tasked with delivering comprehensive business intelligence and analytics to MEMIC's CFO, Senior Leadership Team, and Board of Directors. Additionally, she will oversee the prioritization and implementation of crucial technology solutions across the business.

"Kaila was the natural choice to lead this new body of work for The MEMIC Group as she recognizes the importance of business intelligence and analysis to our future growth and the correlation to The Group's strategy," said Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer & Treasurer Eileen Fongemie.



Since joining MEMIC in 2017, Kaila has demonstrated exceptional leadership and analytical capabilities. She earned an advanced certificate in Accounting from the University of Southern Maine and is currently pursuing studies through the Maine Development Foundation's Institute for Civic Leadership. Kaila also holds a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Southern Maine.

"I am thrilled to step into the role of Vice President of Business Intelligence and Analysis," said Kaila McCracken. "Our teams have been instrumental in delivering high quality analytics and technological advancements. I look forward to working with my new teammates and stakeholders to build upon that legacy and realize our vision of a more dynamic, data-driven MEMIC."

In addition to her role, Kaila serves on the Finance and Investment Committee of the American Association of State Compensation Funds (AASCIF) and chairs the United Way Campaign Committee at MEMIC.

Kaila resides in Portland, Maine and enjoys activities such as reading, traveling, and hiking.



## Rotating Art Gallery at CMMC features new paintings



"Canoes at Long Lake" by Michael Everett (photo supplied by artist)

**LEWISTON, ME** -- The Woman's Hospital Association (WHA) Rotating Art Gallery at Central Maine Medical Center in Lewiston is proud to display the paintings of Michael Everett and Judy Haas during the months of January and February.

Everett took up oil painting to capture his impressions of the remote places of northern Maine. Many of his paintings are scenes from the Allagash and Saint John Rivers. He has become more intrigued with the simple enjoyment of painting, especially in capturing the vitality of color. He paints (mostly) land-

scapes of (mostly) familiar places. When not traveling throughout the Maine woods by canoe, snowshoes, or cross-country skis, he can be found painting outdoors in his North Auburn neighborhood. He is a member of the Western Maine Art Group and is a frequent exhibitor at its Matolcsy Art Center in Norway.

Haas is a self-taught abstract watercolor/mixed media artist based in Richmond, Maine. She has been working with watercolor since 2022 the same year that she received her cancer diagnosis. During recovery from her surgeries and treatment, watercolor was a means to work through the emotions and struggles that came with it. Watercolor has since become a means by which to process the world around her and at the same time serve as a catalyst for change.

The works on display may be purchased through the WHA Gift Shop located



"Balance" by Judy Haas

adjacent to the main lobby at Central Maine Medical Center. A percentage of sale proceeds benefits patients of CMMC.

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# Long-term effects of trafficking, what you can do to prevent it

By Enough is Enough  
The lifelong impact of human trafficking is very real. Angelea Valenti said she was trafficked at the age of 17. She shared the following in a recent Sarasota Herald-Tribune editorial:

Like many victims, I was vulnerable and isolated, making me an easy target for predators. One of the most painful aspects of being trafficked was the feeling of invisibility. I remember walking through the streets with tears streaming down my face, which was sometimes beaten and bruised. People saw me, but no one ever asked if I needed help.

She said the trauma took everything from her - her childhood, her ability to trust, and her sense of self-worth. The impact of trafficking can create devastating, long-lasting trauma that permeates every aspect of a survivor's life.

In addition to the impact of physical violence and abuse, survivors carry deep psychological wounds that can persist indefinitely. Trauma can manifest as severe anxiety disorders, PTSD, depression, and substance abuse issues. Trafficking victims face brutal exploitation, being sold 15-40 times daily, with shortened life expectancies due to violence, disease, overdose, and untreated medical conditions.

Sex trafficking can happen in any community, and to anyone. It occurs when someone uses force, fraud or coercion to cause a commercial sex act with an adult or causes a minor to commit a commercial sex act. The average age a child becomes involved in sex trafficking is 12 years

old, and more than half of sex trafficking victims are lured into their situation online, making the internet the most common place where victims are recruited.

Education and awareness can lead to prevention. Some of the physical and behavior indications that someone is being trafficked include the following:

- Unexplained absences from school
- Changes in usual attire, behavior or relationships
- Suddenly has more expensive material possessions
- Shows signs of injuries and abuse
- Chronically runs away from home
- Fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, tense, or nervous and paranoid
- Sex Trafficking 101

## Quick Guide

Be sure to download a complimentary copy of EIE's Sex Trafficking 101 Quick Guide for Parents and Educators at [https://internetsafety101.org/objects/Sex\\_Trafficking\\_101\\_Quick\\_Guide\\_-\\_Copyright.pdf](https://internetsafety101.org/objects/Sex_Trafficking_101_Quick_Guide_-_Copyright.pdf). It contains helpful facts, information about vulnerabilities that make children/youth targets by predators, the grooming process and more.

See Enough Is Enough's Sex Traffickers 101 section containing greater detail about human trafficking, which the F.B.I says is the 2nd largest criminal industry per illicit revenue generated -- just behind drug trafficking. Be sure to review provided "conversation starters" designed to help you initiate an open and frank discussion with your child.

Make sure that those discussions take place often! Finally, remind your child to NEVER arrange to meet with someone that he/she has only met online, and to come to you if a request for an in-person meeting has been made.

## REPORT HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Call 1-888-373-7888 | Text BeFree (233733) - The National Human Trafficking Hotline is a national, toll-free hotline, available to answer calls, texts, and live chats from anywhere in the United States, 24 hours a day, 7

days a week

*Enough Is Enough® is a national non-partisan, non-profit organization who has led the fight to make the Internet safer for children and families since 1994. EIE's efforts are focused on combating internet p\*rnography, child sexual abuse material, sexual predation, sex trafficking and cyberbullying by incorporating a four-pronged prevention strategy with shared responsibilities between the public, corporate America, government and faith community.*

## SAPARS, community partners host film on sex trafficking

AUBURN, ME -- Join Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Services, along with several community partners, Thursday, Jan-

uary 30th from 5-7pm at the Auburn Public Library for a special screening of Sexploitation and an engaging discussion to follow.

Sex trafficking is here. It's happening in Maine. In this special film, you'll meet 4 brave Mainers who not only survived their experi-

ences with sex trafficking, but have thrived in the aftermath, choosing to now serve others with similar experiences.

## National Human Trafficking Prevention Month 2025

By Antony J. Blinken, Secretary of State  
January 16, 2025

January marks National Human Trafficking Prevention Month, an important opportunity to raise awareness, strengthen advocacy efforts, support survivors, and engage communities in a collective call to action to combat human trafficking. Human trafficking exploits individuals, fractures communities, undermines the rule of law, and threatens national security. Govern-

ments should lead on developing strong anti-trafficking responses.

Over the course of the past four years, we have sought accountability for individuals and organizations profiting from forced labor and launched innovative partnerships with foreign governments to prevent trafficking, protect survivors, and prosecute traffickers. We have also worked to help foreign governments and communities engage trafficking survivor-leaders

and establish formal ways for survivors to shape and inform anti-trafficking efforts.

As we look ahead to 2025, we acknowledge both the gains made in the fight against this terrible crime and the need for sustained, joint efforts to eliminate human trafficking, in all its forms, around the world. Together, we can create a world where human trafficking is no longer tolerated and every individual can live in dignity and freedom.

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# Volunteer as a helpline advocate

The statewide sexual assault helpline is Maine's only dedicated helpline for survivors of sexual violence and their allies.

It's a place for people to call when they need short-term, immediate support or information related to sexual violence and its im-

pacts.

This free and confidential resource operates 24 hours a day, 365 days per year and relies on volunteers, called volunteer advocates, to help answer calls. Volunteer advocates listen, provide emotional support, talk about options, help with planning for safety, and make referrals to other services. In some areas, volunteer advocates also meet with survivors and families at hospitals and police stations.

If you're interested in becoming a volunteer advocate, we'd love to talk to you! We're always looking for dedicated people who care about issues of sexual violence and want to make a difference.

Volunteer advocates are supported at the sexual assault support center in their area, and although every center does things a little differently, all volunteer advocates must:

## mecasa MAINE COALITION AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT

be 18 years of age or older,

have access to a reliable phone,

pass background checks, and

successfully completing the Foundations of Advocacy training.

It's preferred that volunteers also have access to an email account.

To learn more about becoming a volunteer advocate, contact the sexual assault support center in your area.

York or Cumberland\* County:

Sexual Assault Response Services of Southern Maine (SARSSM)

Learn more and fill out their application form here: <https://sarssm.bamboohr.com/careers/22>

\* SARSSM serves all of Cumberland County EXCEPT: Brunswick, Harpswell, Harpswell Neck, Great Island, Bailey Island, & Orrs Island (which are served by SASSMM) AND Bridgton & Harrison (which are served by SAPARS).

Androscoggin, Franklin, or Oxford County, and Bridgton & Harrison in Western Cumberland:

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Services (SAPARS)

Learn more here:

<https://www.sapars.org/get-involved.html> or contact Jamie at [jamie.de-mers@sapars.org](mailto:jamie.de-mers@sapars.org)

Eastern Cumberland (Brunswick and Harpswell), Sagadahoc, Lincoln, Knox, or Waldo County:

Sexual Assault Support Services of Midcoast Maine (SASSMM)

For more information, email [outreach@sassmm.org](mailto:outreach@sassmm.org). You can also fill out the Volunteer interest form on SASSMM's volunteer page here: <https://www.sassmm.org/volunteer.html>

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### WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

**HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS...**

- Exploiting a person through force, fraud, or coercion
- Anyone under the age of 18 involved in a commercial sex act
- Sex trafficking, forced labor, and domestic servitude
- A highly profitable crime
- Exploitation-based and does not require movement across borders or any type of transportation

**THERE ARE DIFFERENT TYPES OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

- SEX TRAFFICKING**: Victims are manipulated or forced against their will to engage in sex acts for money.
- FORCED LABOR**: Victims are made to work for little or no pay. Very often, they are forced to manufacture or grow products that we use and consume every day.
- DOMESTIC SERVITUDE**: Victims are hidden in plain sight, forced to work in homes across the United States as nannies, maids, or domestic help.

**HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS HAPPENING IN THE UNITED STATES**

SUBURBS, RURAL TOWNS, CITIES

**IT CAN HAPPEN TO ANYONE**  
NO MATTER AGE, RACE, GENDER IDENTITY, SEX, ETHNICITY, NATIONALITY, IMMIGRATION STATUS, AND SOCIOECONOMIC CLASS

**RECOGNIZE AND REPORT HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

- To report suspected trafficking to federal law enforcement, call 1-866-347-2423 or submit a tip online at [www.ice.gov/tips](http://www.ice.gov/tips)
- Get help from the National Human Trafficking Hotline by calling 1-888-373-7888 or text HELP or INFO to 233733 (BEFREE).
- Call 911 or local law enforcement if someone is in immediate danger.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO**

- Visit the Blue Campaign website to learn more about the indicators of human trafficking: [DHS.gov/BlueCampaign](http://DHS.gov/BlueCampaign)
- Use Blue Campaign materials to raise awareness of human trafficking in your community.
- Follow @DHSBlueCampaign on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter

**BLUE CAMPAIGN**  
One Voice. One Mission. End Human Trafficking.

**OUT OF THE SHADOWS EXPOSING THE MYTHS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

- MYTH: HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS ONLY SEX TRAFFICKING** | **TRUTH: 28% OF THE 20.9 MILLION VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING SUFFER FROM FORCED LABOR**
- MYTH: HUMAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS WILL SELF IDENTIFY** | **TRUTH: 50% OF VICTIMS DO NOT CONTACT A HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL**
- MYTH: HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS NOT IN MY COMMUNITY** | **TRUTH: 30,000+ CASES OF PORN INDUSTRY TRAFFICKING REPORTED IN ALL 50 STATES, DC & UC TERRITORIES**
- MYTH: HUMAN TRAFFICKING ONLY AFFECTS THE VICTIM** | **TRUTH: THE CRIME OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS A SYMPTOM OF A SOCIETAL PROBLEM**
- MYTH: HUMAN TRAFFICKING ONLY HAPPENS TO CHILDREN** | **TRUTH: SINCE 2010, NATIONAL HOTLINE CASES REPORTED: 62% ADULTS**
- MYTH: HUMAN TRAFFICKING ONLY HAPPENS TO WOMEN** | **TRUTH: SINCE 2010, NATIONAL HOTLINE CASES REPORTED: 18% MEN**

**Human Trafficking is a crime and you can make a difference.**

Since 2007, the National Human Trafficking Hotline has received over 108,304 calls and identified over 20,540 potential cases of human trafficking. You can receive help, report a tip, or request information or training by calling:

**National Human Trafficking Hotline**  
888-373-7888  
[act.hhs.gov/endtrafficking](http://act.hhs.gov/endtrafficking)

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# BBB scam alert: Road toll collection services text messages

**EASTERN MA, ME, RI & VT** - If you've been on a road trip, you're probably familiar with modern tolling systems that allow you to pay your toll fees online. If you anticipate paying for any outstanding tolls, watch out for this text message phishing scam. Fraudsters are impersonating toll collection services, trying to trick consumers into paying for fake outstanding tolls. They may even use AI technology to create more convincing fake websites or personalized messages to include your personal information.

How the scam works  
You receive a text message from what appears to be a state tollway collection service, like the Illinois Tollway, the Florida Turnpike (Sunpass), Georgia Peach Pass, or EZ Drive

MA. The text message says you owe a road toll fee of \$11.69 or around \$12, but you need to pay it immediately to avoid a late fee of \$50. Other variations are in Massachusetts for \$6.99, Georgia Peach Pass for \$3.75, the Ohio Turnpike for \$7.60 or even \$97.50, with a \$150 penalty, and Texas Toll for \$7.79.

The message includes a link to settle your balance, which appears to be from the state's toll service, making the message look legitimate. However, if you click the link, you may notice they are asking for sensitive personal information, like your Social Security number. If you proceed and provide your personal and payment information on the website, scammers could now have access to that information, and you may have lost some

money.  
BBB Scam Tracker has received reports of text messages that appear to be from toll-collection services. One consumer recently shared, I received a text from EZDrive MA Alert - 63 964 942 8797 with the message: "Your vehicle has an unpaid toll bill. To avoid excessive late fees on your bill, please settle it promptly. Thank you for your cooperation! Total amount: \$6.99 Now Payment: <https://ezdrive-map.xin/vip> Please reply Y, then exit the SMS and open it again to activate the link, or copy the link to your Safari browser and open it)" I did not pay the bill because I know I have an auto pay on my EZDriveMA account. However, at first I thought it was legitimate.

Another consumer shared, "Text received say-

ing my vehicle has outstanding toll invoices, to avoid excessive late fees settle your balance in a timely manner. Then a link was provided."

How to avoid text message phishing scams

Verify your outstanding toll balance with the legitimate agency. Instead of clicking on the link in the text message, go to your web browser, find the toll service's actual website, and log in to your account to verify if you have any outstanding toll payments. Another way to verify this is by calling the toll service's customer service line. Do not call the phone number that texted you or any phone numbers included in the text message. Instead, find the toll service's legitimate phone number on their website.

Know the warning

signs of a fake text. If you receive an unusual text message, there are several things to look for to help you identify if it's fake. Read BBB's tips on spotting the red flags of fake text messages.

Don't click on links or download files that are unexpectedly texted to you. It may be hard to identify if a link sent in a text message is safe. Scammers can disguise a URL to appear legitimate when it isn't.

Don't give out your personal information. Phishing scams often ask you to provide personal information like your birthdate, Social Security number, and more. Never give out this information unless you are 100% certain you're talking or working with a legitimate person or agency you can trust.

Block the number and

delete the message. Do not engage with the scammer if you think you received a fake text message. Instead, block the phone number and delete the text message. Refusing to engage and blocking the phone number can help prevent scammers from contacting you again.

If you receive a text message impersonating a road toll collection service, report it. You can file a report with BBB Scam Tracker to help warn others about this new scam, and you can search for other reports of the scam in your area. In addition, file a report with the FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) at [ic3.gov](http://ic3.gov). Reporting scams helps consumers become aware of scams and helps law enforcement track down scammers.

# Tips for safer generator usage for home & business owners

**MAINE** -- If your electricity goes out, a generator can keep power flowing to your home or business. The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI), an international trade association representing manufacturers and

suppliers of outdoor power equipment, small engines, battery power systems, portable generators, utility and personal transport vehicles, and golf cars, reminds home and business owners to keep safety in mind when using genera-

tors this winter.

"Not having power when you need it is frustrating, so a generator can provide emergency backup power at a reasonable cost," says Kris Kiser, President and CEO of OPEI. "It's important to follow all manufacturer's instructions, and never place a generator in your garage or inside your home or building. It should be a safe distance from the structure and not near an air intake."

More tips include:

#1 - Take stock of your generator. Make sure equipment is in good working order before starting and using it. Do this before a storm hits.

#2 - Review the directions. Follow all manufacturer's instructions. Review the owner's manuals (look manuals up online if you cannot find them) so equipment is operated safely.

#3 - Install a battery operated carbon monoxide detector in your home. This alarm will sound if dangerous levels of carbon

monoxide enter the building.

#4 - Have the right fuel on hand. Use the type of fuel recommended by the generator manufacturer to protect this important investment. It is illegal to use any fuel with more than 10% ethanol in outdoor power equipment. (For more information on proper fueling for outdoor power equipment visit <https://www.opei.org/programs/ethanolwarning/>). It's best to use fresh fuel, but if you are using fuel that has been sitting in a gas can for more than 30 days, add fuel stabilizer to it. Store gas only in an approved container and away from heat sources.

#5 - Ensure portable generators have plenty of ventilation. Generators should NEVER be used in an enclosed area or placed inside a home, a building, or a garage, even if the windows or doors are open. Place the generator outside and away from windows, doors, and vents that could allow carbon monoxide to drift indoors.

#6 - Keep the generator dry. Do not use a generator in wet conditions. Cover and vent a generator. Model-specific tents or generator covers can be found online for purchase and at home centers and hardware stores.

#7 - Only add fuel to a cool generator. Before refueling, turn the generator off and let it cool down.

#8 - Charge & use battery-powered generators/inverters properly. Recharge only with the charger specified by the manufacturer. A charger that is suitable for one type of battery pack may not be compatible with another battery pack. Follow all charging instructions and do not charge the battery pack or equipment outside the temperature range specified in the instructions. Charging improperly or at temperatures outside the specified range may damage the battery.

#9 - Plug in safely. If you don't yet have a transfer switch, you can use the outlets on the generator. It's best to plug in appli-

ances directly to the generator. If you must use an extension cord, it should be heavy-duty and designed for outdoor use. It should be rated (in watts or amps) at least equal to the sum of the connected appliance loads. Make sure the cord is free of cuts, and the plug has all three prongs.

#10 - Install a transfer switch. A transfer switch connects the generator to the circuit panel and lets you power hardwired appliances. Most transfer switches also help avoid overload by displaying wattage usage levels.

#11 - Do not use the generator to "backfeed" power into your home electrical system. Trying to power your home's electrical wiring by "backfeeding" - where you plug the generator into a wall outlet - is dangerous. You could hurt utility workers and neighbors served by the same transformer. Backfeeding bypasses built-in circuit protection devices, so you could damage your electronics or start an electrical fire.

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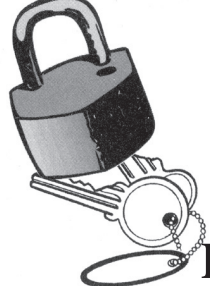
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# Calendar

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.

## Jan 25

**AUBURN** -- There will be a baked bean supper at Sixth St. Congregational Church at 109 Sixth St. in Auburn on Saturday, January 25th 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 \$10 for adults, \$5 for children 5 to 12, under age 5 is free. All are welcome. Take-out is available.

## Jan 25

**GRAY** -- The First Congregational Church of Gray Saturday Night Church Supper on Saturday, January 25, 2025 at 5:00 at the Parish House, 5 Brown Street, Gray. Handicapped Accessible.

Meals are single-sized and are \$10.00 each. Please pay at the door. The Menu includes: Variety of Casseroles & Salads, Baked Pea Beans & Red Kidney, Red Hot Dogs, Breads, Assortment of Desserts & Beverages

## Jan 25

**LISBON FALLS** -- Dine In/Take Out Bean Supper, Saturday, January 25th from 4:30pm - 5:30pm or SOLD OUT

Lisbon United Methodist Church, 14 School Street, Lisbon Falls, ME

Sponsored by the Methodist Women Adults \$9.00

Menu: Pea Beans, Hot Dogs, Potato Salad, Cole Slaw, dinner roll and a slice of pie!

## Jan 25

**BUXTON** -- Try our delicious Haddock Supper Buffet - Saturday, November 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.

## Jan 27

**LEWISTON** -- Lewiston Public Library for Painting Class: Paint a Winter Scene in the 2nd floor Idea Lab on Monday, January 27th at 4pm. Recommended for children ages 10 - 14 years old.

Come learn how to paint a winter scene with step-by-step instruction by local artist, Nicole Ann. Get creative by painting a snowy landscape scene using acrylic paints on canvas panels. All materials are provided. This program is free, open to the public, and no registration is required.

The Lewiston Public Library is located downtown at 200 Lisbon Street at the corner of Pine

Street.

## Jan 27

**AUBURN** -- FILM SCREENING & DISCUSSION -- ELECTIONS, POPULISM, AND DEMOCRATIC BACKSLIDING IN THE AMERICAS with Dr. Clarisa Pérez-Armendáriz, Associate Professor of Politics and Chair of the Latin American and Latinx Studies Program, Bates College, Monday, January 27, 2025 -- 4:30-5:30 p.m., Androscoggin Community Room, Auburn Public Library

## Jan 30-Feb 2

**HERMON** -- Celebrity Egg Riders are revved up for the 52nd annual Dysart's Snowmobile Ride-in Weekend to benefit Pine Tree Camp.

Thursday, January 30: Live WABI-TV5 Telethon and Dysart's Spaghetti Dinner, 4:00pm at Dysart's Restaurant & Truck Stop, 530 Coldbrook Road, Hermon

Friday, January 31: Live and Silent Auction - Hosted by Maine Cabin Masters Jedi and Dixie, 6:00pm at Morgan Hill Event Center, 82 Morgan Hill Lane, Hermon

Saturday, February 1: Celebrity Egg Ride and Poker Run, 9:30am at Dysart's Restaurant & Truck Stop, 530 Coldbrook Road, Hermon

Sunday, February 2: Penobscot Snowmobile Club Radar Run, Noon at the Penobscot Snowmobile Club, 795 Bog Road, Hermon

## Feb 3

**AUBURN** -- On February 3<sup>rd</sup> from 4-6 at the Auburn Public Library, the Stanton Bird Club will be hosting the third in its 2024-25 lecture series presenting "Birding in the Falkland Islands" with Loring (Danny) Danforth, PhD.

## Feb 13

**AUBURN** -- BOOK DISCUSSION -- DEMOCRACY AWAKENING: NOTES ON THE STATE OF AMERICA by Heather Cox Richardson. Thursday, February 13, 2025 - 4:00-5:00 p.m., Auburn Public Library

## Feb 15

**WESTBROOK** -- The Chinese and American Friendship Association of Maine (CAFAM) will ring in the Year of the Snake, Saturday, February 15, 2025, at the Westbrook Performing Arts Center, 471 Stroudwater Road, Westbrook, ME

## 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

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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/>.  
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 at [ticketstripe.com/guydavis](https://ticketstripe.com/guydavis).

## Apr 26

**TOPSHAM** -- "All

Aboard for the 2025 Great Falls Model Railroad Club Train Show! 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM, Mt. Ararat High School, 68 Eagles Way, Topsham, ME 04086 (Handicapped Accessible). Admission: Just \$5 per person (kids under 12 free with an adult).

Get ready to immerse yourself in the world of model railroads at the Great Falls Model Railroad Club Train Show in Topsham, ME! With over 100 tables featuring new and used trains, tracks, buildings, books, and more, you'll find something for every enthusiast. From N to HO, S, O, and G scales, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

## 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/>.

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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](https://ticketstripe.com/house).



## 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](http://Mainecareerswithpurpose.org). Follow @MaineCareerswithPurpose on Facebook and Instagram.



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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**

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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.**

## Classified Ads UP TO 40 WORDS!

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**NUMBER OF WEEKS TO RUN:** \_\_\_\_\_

# CLT presenting *Heart and Music Valentine's* weekend

AUBURN, ME -- Introducing Ashleigh St. Pierre's directorial debut at Community Little Theater (CLT)! Heart and Music is sharing the love

between each other, albeit complicated, romantic, or platonic. Shows are February 14th & 15th.

L/A Community Little Theatre, located at 30

Academy Street in Auburn, has been producing live theatre since 1940. A volunteer, non-profit organization, our goal is to provide affordable and

quality entertainment in the performing arts as well as education, training, and experience in theatre for area youth. [www.laclt.com](http://www.laclt.com).



From Left to Right: Gregory Judd, Justin Morin, Sara Chaloux (stage manager), Samantha Harriott, Adrian Morneau (music director), Ashleigh St. Pierre (Director), Eileen Messina, and Jacob Sutherland. Not pictured Anthony M. DeLorme. Photo credit to Sophie Wood, prior editing done by Benjamin Simpson

## Auburn Public Library Chess Club Tournament

AUBURN, ME -- The Auburn Public Library Chess Club is hosting a chess tournament on Saturday, January 25th starting at 10 AM in the Conference Room.

This will be the club's first tournament which is meant to be both a friendly and social competition. Players will be paired at random. Ratings are not required and will not apply. There will be approximately 4 rounds in single-elimination style. Prizes will be awarded to both the 1st and 2nd place winners at the end of the tournament. First place will win a brand new chess set along with a \$20 Hannaford gift card. Second place will win a \$10 Hannaford gift card.

This program will take place in the Conference Room at the Auburn Public Library. Registration is required



to guarantee your spot in the tournament, walk-ins welcome only as space allows.

The Auburn Public Library Chess Club, a new program that started in October of 2024, meets every Wednesday on the second floor of the library from 4 to 5:30 PM each week. The club is open to all and is a space for friends and neighbors to gather and play chess together, learning from one

another and practicing strategy.

For more information about this and other programs offered at the Auburn Public Library, visit their website at [www.auburnpubliclibrary.org](http://www.auburnpubliclibrary.org) or call the Reference Desk at 207-333-6640, ext. 4.

Saturday, January 25, 2025 - 10 AM to 3 PM

Auburn Public Library: Conference Room

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

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