



TWIN CITY TIMES

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Mom, baby doing well after unexpected delivery at CMH

LEWISTON, ME -- A Central Maine Healthcare (CMH) family medicine doctor recently found himself in the baby delivery business, unexpectedly.

Jan. 15 was a typical day at Minot Avenue Family Medicine in Auburn with the team taking care of respiratory illness cases, injuries and other common healthcare issues. But after the last patient of the day went home, the team faced an unexpected challenge.

Nathan Raby, DO, was finishing up paperwork after 5 p.m. when team member Alexis Libby, a medical assistant at the family practice, suddenly went into labor.

An ambulance was called, but the baby wasn't waiting. Dr. Raby and the team were quickly pressed into service. They called the Central Maine Medical Center (CMMC) maternity team right away, knowing they would have expert help on the line.



"I noted the look on Alexis' face. I had seen it before, and I knew what it meant. I told her we needed to get her into a room and onto a table," Dr. Raby said.

Just a few short minutes later, Alexis became a new mom. Dr. Raby

and Alexis could hear the CMMC maternity team cheering in the background.

Dr. Raby said, "Instinct kicked in and I gently pulled down on the head to expose the upper shoulder, pulled gently again and out slid the entire baby, a boy. He came out singing, much



to my relief, moving all his extremities with great tone and color.

"We don't deliver babies at Minot Avenue Family Medicine. This was the first for our team and my first delivery since residency, 19 years ago.

"The ambulance team arrived, and I used their maternity kit to suction out the baby's mouth. I clamped and cut the cord and handed the baby to his mother."

Dr. Raby is more than grateful for the support from the CMMC maternity team.

"I talked him through the delivery; he really just



needed moral support because he knew just what to do," said Janice Locke, CMN, the midwife on call at CMMC that afternoon. "I recall him chuckling, 'I haven't delivered a baby in 19 years!' It was a jovial conversation with people laughing and celebrating in the background!"

The mother and baby were then taken by ambulance to CMMC for postpartum care.

Alexis has named the boy Logan. Mom and baby are doing fine.

"I'm very thankful I was in the right place at the right time and very thankful for Dr. Raby who made me feel calm during the whole experience," she said. "I can't wait to tell Logan his birth story when he gets older!"

Minot Avenue Family

Medicine has named the exam room where the boy was born "Logan's Room."

Minot Avenue Family Medicine consists of six family practice professionals as well as clinical and clerical staff who work together to provide care for patients of all ages in the greater Lewiston-Auburn area.

U.S. News & World Report has recognized CMMC as "High Performing in Maternity Care." Last year, Newsweek also named CMMC one of the best hospitals in the nation for maternity.

Additionally, CMMC received a near-perfect 97 (out of 100) score on the Centers for Disease Control's (CDC) Maternity Practices in Infant Nutrition & Care survey which evaluates categories such as immediate postpartum care, breastfeeding education, and support after patient discharge. The national average score was 82.

Dueling Pianos coming to Franco Center Feb. 8

LEWISTON, ME—Dueling Pianos will perform at the Franco Center at 7 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 8. Two pianists, Jim Tyrrell and Amy Thomason, will play songs from a variety of genres simultaneously on two pianos. The pianists will take requests from the audience, making the show interactive.

The piano players act as "ring masters" responsible for maintaining enthusiasm and maximizing laughs. Hand-picked from only the finest regional talent, they're experts on keeping audience members involved, happy and content.

Pianist Jim Tyrrell has been a mainstay in the New Hampshire music scene for over 30 years. His repertoire is vast and covers all genres, but he's a child of the 1980s at

heart. The music of Billy Joel, Elton John, and Steely Dan are among his favorites to perform.

Amy Thomason has been having a blast working and traveling as a dueling pianist since 2016. Thomason also works as an actor, music director, and educator in the Boston area. She is a regular at all the Dueling Piano venues around New England. "Her ability to work the crowd into her set is something to see. Whatever request comes in she does her best to play it and even look it up on the fly," said one of the show's promoters, Rob Steen.

What are dueling pianos? From the show's promoter comes this information:

"It is a massive 'to the top of your lungs' sing along with all your



Amy Thomason and Jim Tyrrell. Photo credits: Facebook page photos.

friends! Two grand pianos are center stage with a team of outrageously talented pianists who seem to know every song ever written. Each show is different because it's all request and you or your friends might even get called up on stage for a bit of good-humored fun and some unforgettable moments. Think YOU won't sing along? Just TRY not to, I dare ya!" said show



promoter Bill Connors.

Dueling piano shows are request-oriented, interactive sing-a-long shows wherein two piano players sit across from each other and trade songs. The dueling piano audience is used for the dueling aspect of the show. Audience members are pitted one-side-against-the-other. Examples of rivalries include country vs. rock, men against women, etc.

"This dueling piano interactive concept has grown rapidly the past few years and shows no sign of letting up. Why? One very simple reason: people love to interact and have fun," said Steen.

Dueling piano shows often take unexpected turns. Tangents may include involving wait staff members, changing song lyrics or roasting popular audience members.

"We are appreciative of the businesses that come forward to sponsor shows to help cover the costs of events," said Theresa Shanahan, executive director of the Franco Center. "Maine Community Bank is this show's event sponsor and they are a great local business."

Shanahan added that the venue will offer concessions along with a cash bar.

Tickets are \$25 in advance and \$30 at the door and can be purchased through the Franco Center's box office in person from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays or call 207-689-2000. Ticket purchases can be made online at www.franco-center.org/shows.

Season underwriter is Maple Way Dental Care; media sponsors are Sun Journal, Uncle Andy's, and Bennett Radio Group. Event sponsor is Maine Community Bank.

Doors and cash bar open at 6 p.m. Concert is at 7 p.m. The Franco Center is at 46 Cedar Street, Lewiston. Parking is in the mill lot on Oxford Street, the Lincoln Street corner parking lot, and Chestnut Street parking garage. Handicap access is on the Lincoln Street Alley side of the building.



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

Newsmakers, Names & Faces

AARP News You Can Use – February 2025

By Joyce Bucciantini, AARP Maine Community Outreach Volunteer

February is one of the most beautiful times in Maine. Gone are the super short days of early winter, leaving us with more daylight to enjoy the great outdoors in Maine. Many cities and towns have winter-themed celebrations which might include snow sports, ice fishing, or maybe an opportunity for hot cocoa. These are great ways to fight off cabin fever and reconnect with our neighbors and friends. For those who enjoy warmer activities, there is always excitement to be found at

the state high school basketball tournaments during the February school vacation week.

In between enjoying the bright winter weather and fresh air, we must also keep in mind a yearly task that we all must do, but few enjoy: get our taxes done! Yes, as surely as the new year moves forward, it is important to start making a plan for gathering our financial information and completing our tax forms. However, there is good news! The AARP Foundation Tax-Aide program offers free tax preparation services in 47 locations in Maine. Last year, 240



Tax-Aide volunteers filed 13,671 Federal returns helping Maine taxpayers receive \$10.4 million in Federal refunds. They also filed thousands of state tax returns, all at no cost!

This remarkable program offers free tax prepa-



ration services, focusing on taxpayers who are over 50 years old and have low to moderate incomes. AARP Foundation Tax-Aide is offered by AARP Foundation in partnership with the Internal Revenue Service. All Tax-Aide volunteer counselors are IRS-trained and certified to prepare and file most types of federal and

state tax returns for Maine taxpayers.

The online Tax-Aide Site Locator tool will help you find the Tax-Aide location nearest to you. This website provides the locations, the operating schedules and who to contact for making tax preparation appointments. Visit

https://www.aarp.org/money/taxes/aarp_taxaide/locations/ or call 1-888-227-7669 for more information.

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide appointments fill up fast. It is a good idea to make your appointment early in the tax season. Then you can rest

easy and enjoy all that the great Maine outdoors has to offer, or for indoors fun, check out an AARP Maine coffee social near you. Perhaps I'll see you there!

Joyce Bucciantini is a retired middle school educator. She currently coordinates Delta Kappa Gamma's Read to Me program, is a tutor with Literacy Volunteers-Androscoggin, and is an active AARP Maine volunteer. In her spare time, she enjoys her gardens, being outdoors and traveling.

Please use the following QR Code or web address to find more information about AARP Maine and events near you:

OUT Maine accepting college scholarship applications

ROCKLAND, ME— As of January 10th, OUT Maine is now accepting applications for its annual college scholarship fund for Maine students.

Thanks to a generous anonymous donor to the organization, OUT Maine is able to offer substantial renewable scholarships to help Maine LGBTQIA2S+

and allied students bridge the gap between financial aid and need at a college, university, or vocational school of their choice. The scholarships available can be worth up to \$25,000 every year for four years of schooling.

The goal of this scholarship fund is to uplift queer and allied youth seeking a



LIFTING UP
MAINE'S
QUEER YOUTH

post-secondary education, especially those who originate from underserved re-

gions of Maine or demonstrate financial need. First generation college students

are also highly encouraged to apply.

In order to apply, students must be Maine residents at the time of application, and send in materials such as a short essay, two letters of recommendation, and financial aid award information from the student's school and/or Free Application for Federal Student Aid

(FAFSA). There is no fee to apply for this scholarship. Submissions will be reviewed by volunteers from OUT Maine's Board of Directors and several internal staff members.

Applications are due by April 1st, 2025. Students can visit OUT Maine's website for further eligibility details and requirements.

Give the gift of time as a Red Cross volunteer

PORTLAND, ME — The American Red Cross asks you to consider giving the gift of your time in 2025, resolving to help people in need as a volunteer in Maine – and throughout the Northern New England Region.

"Our volunteers make up 90% of our work force and are the beating heart and soul of the Red Cross," said Stephanie Couturier, regional CEO, Red Cross

of Northern New England. "Their support is immeasurable. Their precious gift of time builds our capacity to help people in what can be their darkest days."

Depending on your interests, the Red Cross offers a variety of volunteer opportunities — from supporting a family after a home fire, helping a military member during an emergency, or helping us ensure blood is available



for patients in need.

Disaster Action Team (DAT): Help families in your community after a home fire or other disaster. DAT team members provide emotional support, emergency financial assistance and information to help families begin to recover.

Hero Care Caseworker: Support members of the military, their families and our veterans. Become a casework volunteer and

help provide emergency communications and critical services to military families all over the world.

Blood donor ambassadors: Engage with blood donors by greeting them at blood drives, helping them register, answering questions, providing information and assisting them at the refreshments table.

Blood transportation specialists: Volunteer transportation specialists support hospital patients by delivering blood from our facilities to local hospitals. If you have a little free time, love driving and

enjoy meeting new people, the Red Cross has a great volunteer spot waiting for you.

In 2024, 600 Red Cross volunteers in Maine logged nearly 42,000 hours supporting the region's humanitarian needs.

"Red Crossers aren't volunteering for a paycheck. We give our time because we are passionate about the mission," said Maryellen Tarling, a Red Cross volunteer from Cape Elizabeth, Maine.

Tarling joined the Red Cross more than three years ago after searching

for a way to make a positive impact in her community. She currently serves on the Southern Maine Disaster Action Team, responding to and helping Mainers recover from home fires and other disasters. She also leads the region's preparedness team.

"You often see people at their worst, but as a Red Cross volunteer you can take comfort knowing, that through your role, you will be providing hope when people need it most. It's a rewarding experience and I highly recommend it."

The need to help has never been greater. Join us to provide relief and hope when it matters most. Visit redcross.org/Volunteer-NNE and get started today.

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Ryan Foss joins Fontaine Family Team

MAINE -- Fontaine Family - The Real Estate Leader is proud to announce Ryan Foss as the newest addition to their growing Scarborough team.

With an extensive background in sales, business ownership, and entrepreneurship, Ryan brings a wealth of experience and a deep commitment to assisting buyers in their home search.

A Kennebunk native, Ryan now resides in South Portland and holds a master's degree in business from Husson University. His professional journey includes nearly two decades as a sales represen-

tative for WEX Telematics, followed by executive leadership roles in various Maine-based companies. Transitioning from corporate life, he successfully acquired and operated three laundromats, demonstrating an entrepreneurial mindset and a strong dedication to customer service.

With a career built on fostering strong client relationships, Ryan's adaptability across different industries has strengthened his skills in negotiation, sales, and business development. His extensive experience positions him well to provide a seamless and personalized home-buying experience for his clients.



Beyond his professional accomplishments, Ryan enjoys a wide range of personal interests. As an avid traveler, he has explored some of the world's most renowned rivers, including the Amazon and the Nile, and has spent time in Asia, Mexico, and Central America. Thailand, Bali, and Meri-

da, Mexico are among his favorite destinations. His creative pursuits include a passion for horror, fantasy, and graphic novels, as well as painting and drawing. In addition to his love for 80s movies and music, he remains actively engaged in exploring new business opportunities and entrepreneurial ventures.

Ryan will focus on assisting buyers in finding the right home while leveraging his extensive sales and business background to offer a tailored and knowledgeable approach. His expertise, combined with a passion for helping people, strengthens the company's commitment

to providing exceptional service.

For real estate opportunities with Ryan Foss, he can be contacted by phone at (207) 332-5806 or email Ryanfoss@fontaineteam.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, download their free home search mobile app "Fontaine Family Real Estate" or call (207)784-3800 or (207)289-3830.

Skowhegan Savings welcomes vice president & commercial lender

SKOWHEGAN, ME -- Skowhegan Savings is pleased to announce that Michael Pietroski has joined the bank's commercial lending team as a vice president and commercial lender. He comes to the bank with over 12 years of experience in business lending and customer service in the financial sector, having been a business banker, vice president retail regional manager and branch manager in prior



positions. "Mike is an experienced commercial lender, who is passionate about helping his cus-



Skowhegan SAVINGS

tomers achieve their financial goals," said Steve Thomas, senior vice president and senior commercial lender. "His addition will enhance our team's commitment to offering outstanding personalized service and hands-on support to local businesses."

Pietroski will be based out of the bank's Augusta branch and looks to use his extensive experience to focus on assisting business customers in the greater Kennebec County region with their banking needs.

"I am excited to join a bank committed

to building long-term relationships and providing an exceptional experience for customers," said Pietroski. "I look forward to helping local businesses with their financing needs in a manner that will help them grow."

Pietroski grew up in the Augusta area and obtained his bachelors in business administration from Husson University. Active in his community, he is a board member of the Auburn Business As-

sociation, recent graduate of the Kennebec Leadership Institute 2.0 and volunteers for the Special Olympics. Pietroski lives in Winthrop with his wife and daughter.

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

Androscoggin Retired Educators' Association offers scholarship

MAINE -- The Androscoggin Retired Educators' Association is offering a \$2000.00 scholarship to a graduating high school senior, who lives in Androscoggin County, is going on to college and planning to enter the field of education. The scholarship

is awarded on the basis of scholarship, citizenship, and need. All candidates must complete and submit the following application materials: the AREA Scholarship application form; an essay on "Why I wish to be an educator and need financial assistance," a 4-year

high school transcript and a letter of recommendation from a Guidance Counselor or School Administrator. For more information or to receive the application packet contact your high school guidance office or contact Jean Roy at jroy99244@gmail.com. The completed application packet is due by March 25, 2025.

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Seniors Not Acting Their Age

Icy Canyon Hiking in Quebec



Canyon hikers arrive at Jean Larose Falls



A hiker descends ice-encrusted stairs while holding a fixed line



Hikers cross an icy bridge over a deep chasm

Over the recent New Year's week, seven Mainers traveled to the Mont Sainte Anne area of Quebec for several days of Nordic skiing. We rented a beautiful condo at the foot of the mountain in the village of Beaufre.

Primed for an awesome week of skiing, we were confronted with adversity. Heavy rains the day we arrived forced the Mont Sainte Anne Cross Country Ski Center to close on New Year's Eve for trail maintenance. Seven eager skiers were left staring out Condo windows with no obvious place to go.

Consideration was given to a climb of Mont Sainte Anne, an alterna-

tive several of us had exercised during a prior visit. Enthusiasm for a mountain hike was tepid, so we explored the possibility of a trek through a nearby bird sanctuary called Cap Torment. Alas, the trail system was closed.

Upon further investigation, we determined there is an extensive trail network in the area called Sentier Mestachibo. The western end begins in Beaufre and continues east along the Sainte Anne du Nord River for several miles to Sainte-Ferreolles-Neiges. Particularly appealing was a canyon trek to Jean Larose Falls in the Beaufre sector.

After a short drive, we arrived at the trailhead

on Route 360 opposite the Mont Sainte Anne alpine ski area on a cloudy, breezy day. Several vehicles were parked in the icy lot and numerous hikers were coming and going. The apparent popularity of the outing was reassuring.

Icy trail conditions were a concern from the outset. Since skiing was the primary focus of the trip, some members of the group lacked micro spikes or had inferior traction devices.

A study of the map at the trailhead kiosk indicated the western end of the Mestachibo Trail led down to the waterfall in about a mile. However, a side trail that traveled in

the opposite direction provided a 3.2 mile loop. We separated into two groups. Four of us wearing quality micro spikes decided to complete the longer clockwise route while the other three chose the shorter option.

Extensive ice was encountered on the loop. We carefully negotiated steeply downhill on a twisting passage while selecting the most secure footing possible. Even with micro spikes, this was a challenging endeavor.

Dropping deeper into the canyon, we came upon a precipitous ice-encrusted wooden stairway which was immediately followed by a narrow bridge over a deep chasm. A safety line had been affixed to trees next to the stairs and we cautiously descended gripping the line for security.

We crossed more ice-covered bridges as the attenuated path wrapped precariously around the side of a cavernous ravine. In order to safely proceed while avoiding a hazardous fall required inserting our spikes firmly into the frozen surface on every step.

Persisting over more icy terrain, we finally connected with the main Mestachibo Trail and

turned right. Soon after, an obvious but unmarked path on the right declined abruptly on a forested slope. Exploring part way down, we could see the turbulent Jean Larose River flowing below. We met a group of Quebec hikers who advised us that we had rejoined Mestachibo Trail and continuing our descent would lead us to the falls.

Persevering to the bottom of the canyon, we converged with the fast-moving Jean Larose River and hiked upstream along the shore. Rounding a bend, we were astounded with our first view of the magnificent waterfall. Our friends arrived from the other direction almost simultaneously.

Jean Larose Falls plummets for almost 200 feet. We lingered to savor the impressive spectacle. A 400-step wooden stairway that leads to the top of the cliff next to the falls is a manmade marvel. After a strenuous ascent, we completed our trek back to the trailhead on a wide, snow and ice covered path.

Four of us drove north on Route 360 to a colorful church in Sainte-Ferreolles-Neiges that marks the start of the eastern end of the Mestachibo Trail. Dropping down precipitously on slippery

snow and ice, we completed another canyon descent to the Sainte Anne du Nord River, a section of whitewater some of us paddled more than two decades ago. Two excellent canyon hikes behind us, we were ready for skiing.

My book, *The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine* narrates numerous exciting hikes around the State of Maine and an exhilarating kayak trip plunging over the waterfalls of Gulf Hags, known as the Grand Canyon of Maine.

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

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Upcoming DaPonte String Quartet concerts

MAINE -- DaPonte String Quartet Concerts upcoming program begins with Haydn's Quartet in D, Op. 20, no 4, written in 1772, and concludes with Erich Korngold's String Quartet in Eb Major, Op. 26 no 2, composed in 1932.



February 14 @ 7:00 pm - 8:45 pm. Union Hall, 24 Central St., Rockport, ME

February 15 @ 3:00 pm - 4:45 pm Lemont Hall 2 Pleasant St., Brunswick, ME

February 16 @ 3:00 pm - 4:45 pm. St. Colum-

ba's Episcopal Church 32 Emery Lane, Boothbay Harbor, ME

February 20 @ 7:00 pm - 8:45 pm. Maine Jewish Museum 267 Congress Street, Portland, ME

February 22 @ 3:00 pm - 4:45 pm. Sanford

Springvale Historical Society 505 Main Street, Springvale, ME

February 27 @ 7:00 pm - 8:45 pm. First Church in Belfast, UCC 8 Court St., Belfast, ME

February 28 @ 4:00 pm - 5:45 pm. Eagle Hill

Institute 59 Eagle Hill Rd, Steuben, ME

March 1 @ 3:30 pm - 5:15 pm. The Barn at Woodlawn 19 Black House Drive, Ellsworth, ME

Tickets and additional information available from dapontequartet.org

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

AARP Maine releases 2025 legislative priorities

PORTLAND, ME -- With the First Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature now underway, AARP Maine announces its 2025 legislative agenda which includes strengthening caregiver support resources in Maine, as well as a focus on fair and affordable utility rates.

"On behalf of our more than 200,000 members statewide, AARP Maine looks forward to working with Governor Mills and our legislative leaders in Augusta from both sides of the aisle," said Noël Bonam, AARP Maine State Director. "We know that Mainers 50-plus continue to experience the strain of providing care for loved ones, the state's affordable housing crisis, and unaffordable electricity rates. It is critical that both elected and appointed leaders work to address these important issues that affect Mainers 50-plus and their families."

AARP's overarching vision is a society that allows all people to live with dignity and purpose as they age and to fulfill their goals, ambitions and dreams.

AARP Maine proudly puts forward the following legislative priorities and calls upon Maine's lawmakers to work in support of Mainers 50-plus and their loved ones.

Financial Support for Family Caregivers: AARP Maine urges Maine legislators to take action this session to lessen the financial burden on Maine's 166,000 family caregivers. Unpaid family caregivers are the backbone of Maine's long-term care system. A recent AARP Maine survey found that nearly 85 percent of caregivers have spent their own money to help care for a loved one. A national AARP report found that caregivers assume out-of-pocket care costs that average \$7,200 a year. These costs can lead to financial repercussions for family caregivers' economic security.

Maine lawmakers have an opportunity to create a lasting, positive impact for Maine's family caregivers by codifying Maine's Respite for ME program. Launched in the fall of 2022 and funded by the Maine Jobs and Recov-

ery Act, the Respite for ME pilot program provided eligible family caregivers with grants that enabled caregivers to access services such as respite care, assistive technology and other resources.

The program provides important support to Maine's caregivers whose collective financial contributions reach a value of \$2.9 billion annually in the Pine Tree State. AARP Maine calls on our lawmakers to work together to reinstate the Respite for ME program since the pilot program ended in the fall of 2024.

Fair Utility Costs: Another issue that affects many Maine families is volatile utility costs. AARP Maine continues to fight to keep utility rates fair and reasonable in the state with the country's oldest population. High utility rates, coupled with rising housing, food, and medicine expenses, force many vulnerable, older adults to make tough choices. Mainers need more consumer protections, and AARP Maine is committed to ensuring that all Mainers

have access to fair and reasonable electric rates. Any discussion of rate changes must be transparent and allow for public engagement. AARP Maine will continue working to address current laws that cause undue burdens to electricity customers. Any costs, particularly those covering government subsidies, etc., which are transferred to ratepayers, should be re-evaluated and re-structured in a fair and reasonable manner.

Affordable Housing: People of all ages and ability levels need safe, decent, and affordable housing that will enable them to continue living safely in their homes and communities as they age. Policy solutions to create affordable housing in Maine must also prioritize opportunities that will ensure long-term equity, safety, choice, stability and accessibility. AARP Maine encourages solutions that offer a sustainable range of housing sizes and types suitable for all forms of neighborhoods, and age-friendly housing designed for people of all ages and ability levels, including those with disabil-

ities.

Home and Community-Based Services: AARP Maine's 2024 Vital Voices survey found that 87 percent of Mainers 45-plus say that it is extremely or very important to be able to stay in their own home as they get older. Many older Mainers will need support through either a family caregiver or home and community-based services to facilitate aging in place. AARP Maine calls on lawmakers to fund the services needed to meet individuals' long-term services and support needs that will enable them to remain, in a meaningful manner, in their own communities which is preferred both socially and financially.

High-Speed Internet Service and Digital Equity: AARP is fighting for Mainers to have affordable, reliable high-speed internet access in their communities and to have the skills, technology and capacity needed to succeed in today's digital economy. While federal investments will bring much-needed Internet service to many parts of Maine over the

next several years, there is still work to be done to ensure older adults and other vulnerable populations are able to make the most of the service once it is available to them. AARP Maine will engage with lawmakers, municipal officials, and local advocacy groups to work towards digital equity so that all Mainers are able to use the internet to learn, connect, and succeed in today's digital world.

"AARP Maine and all of our member advocates look forward to productively engaging with the 132nd legislative session to ensure that Maine continues to be a place where people 50-plus want to live, work, retire and thrive," Bonam said. "In 2025, we will be in Augusta on a regular basis with our AARP Maine Tuesdays at the State House program. We invite more volunteer advocates to join our efforts as we speak up for Mainers 50-plus and their families on these critical issues."

For more information about AARP Maine, visit www.aarp.org/me and follow us on social media @aarpmaine.

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Arts & Entertainment

Waterville Opera House raises curtain on 2025 season

WATERVILLE, ME—The Waterville Opera House (WOH) kicks off its 2025 theatrical season January 31–February 9 with *The Cottage*, a hilarious new comedy by Sandy Rustin.

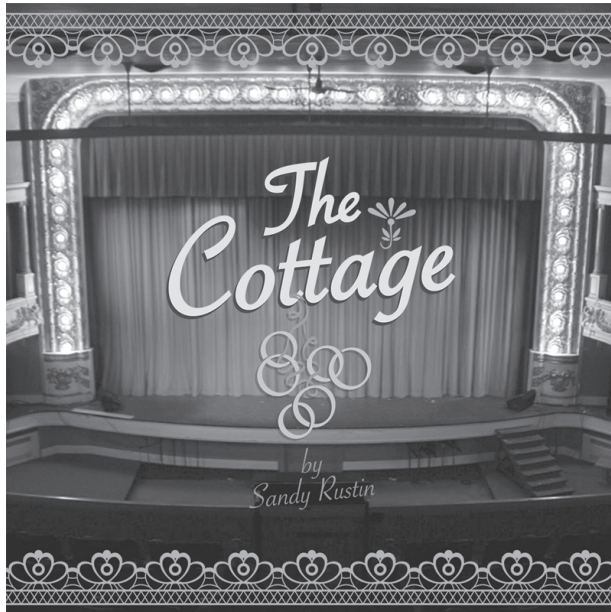
This brand-new, side-splitting romp is an outrageous tale of sex, betrayal, and desire. A series of revelations cascades in a domino effect as one woman decides to expose her latest affair to both her husband and her lover’s wife. The true meanings of fate and faith, identity and infidelity, love and marriage are all called into question as a surprising and hilarious web of secrets unravels in this ridiculously funny romantic comedy.

Playwright Sandy Rustin also penned the stage adaptation of *Clue*, which the Opera House produced in 2021. Fans of

that production will find the same rapid-fire comedic timing, clever turns of phrase, and well-placed occasional slapstick in *The Cottage*. A tight cast of six characters gallivants through an increasingly outrageous situation in a script that seems to set a new world record for twists-per-minute.

The Cottage first premiered on Broadway in summer 2023 with a powerful cast and under the direction of Jason Alexander (of *Seinfeld* fame). For the Waterville Opera House to have the opportunity to stage such a new work so soon after its Broadway debut is a point of excitement for many working on the production.

“*The Cottage* feels fresh,” said actress Sarah Harlow, who leads the six-player ensemble in the role of Sylvia. “It’s got a



lot of twists and turns, and each character has many dimensions to them, which is not always the case for a farce, and certainly not always the case for female characters in a farce.”

Rustin’s play cleverly spins and subverts sever-

al tropes and attributes of the classic farce and comedy-of-manners subgenres to create a work that feels fresh and is undeniably original.

“It’s equal parts fun romp, comedy of manners, and a feminist take

on the traditional British farce,” said actress Lindsay Hammes, returning to the WOH stage for the first time since starring in a previous farcical comedy, *Drinking Habits*, a year ago. “On its face it may not immediately come across as complex, but beyond the bad behavior and typical tropes found in a farce there’s a bit of commentary that we might do well to continue considering today, nearly 100 years after the setting for this show.”

The Cottage opened January 31. Evening performances follow February 7 and 8 at 7:30pm, with a 2pm matinee on February 9.

This production is sponsored by Mid-Maine Restoration and Marie Cormier.

The Cottage is presented by special arrangement with Broadway Li-

censing, LLC, servicing the Dramatists Play Service collection.

Season Pass

The 2025 theatrical season continues April 25–May 4 with Roald Dahl’s *Matilda the Musical*, followed by mystery/thriller *Deathtrap* August 29 – September 7, and then concluding with the beloved classic musical, Irving Berlin’s *White Christmas*, November 14–30. Season Passes are now on sale at operahouse.org. Theatregoers can enjoy a 20% discount off their purchase when they reserve tickets to all four 2025 productions in one transaction.

Tickets are available now. Go to operahouse.org, call 207.873.7000, or visit the Ed Harris Box Office in the Paul J. Schupf Art Center, 93 Main Street, Waterville, to make reservations.

Auburn Public Library presents Death Café L/A

AUBURN, ME -- On Monday, February 10th, from 5:15 to 6:30 PM, the Auburn Public Library will be hosting a new, monthly program entitled Death Café L/A.

Death Café L/A is a free, monthly group-directed discussion about death and dying. Co-presented by the Auburn Public Library and run by volunteer facilitators Elaine Gammon and

Ilse Thompson, Death Café L/A has no specific agenda, objectives, or themes. It’s simply an open forum intended to bring awareness to the topics surrounding death and promote healthy discussions around end-of-life and beyond.

Death Café L/A offers a respectful space for death-curious individuals to share personal insights, consider new perspec-

tives, engage in thoughtful conversation, and ponder big questions about this often-taboo, yet universal topic.

First introduced in concept by Bernard Cretaz, a Swiss sociologist in the United Kingdom in 2004, Death Cafes are recognized as a non-profit “social franchise.” This unique discussion group has spread quickly, spark-

Death Cafe

L/A

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Feb 8

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

ing interest in death awareness and end-of-life contemplation. Today, there are over 9600 in-person and online Death Cafes in the U.S.

Ilse Thompson is a writer, Spirituality Coach, and Death Doula who counsels individuals facing grief, loss, and death. Ilse received her master’s degree in Buddhist studies from Maitripa College, where she trained in contemplative practices and

focused specifically on interfaith chaplaincy and pastoral care.

This calling led her to earn an End-of-Life Doula Professional Certificate through the University of Vermont Lerner College of Medicine. As a gifted facilitator and empathetic practitioner, Ilse enjoys holding space and offering guidance for people navigating their end-of-life decisions and plans.

Elaine Gammon is

a marketing professional and art enthusiast who is new to the field of modern death care and end-of-life planning. Elaine recently earned her End-of-Life Doula Professional Certificate through the University of Vermont Lerner College of Medicine. She plans to continue her training to become a Death Doula, legacy planner, and end-of-life educator. With openness, curiosity, and a “begin-

See Cafe, page 14

Applications open for UMaine Fellows Program

ORONO, ME — The University of Maine’s Foster Center for Innovation has opened applications for the 2025 Innovate for Maine Fellows Program. This premier internship initiative will connect up to 60 Maine college students with the state’s most innovative companies, offering paid, hands-on internships that drive growth and impact.

Innovate for Maine is looking for students who are passionate about innovation and entrepreneurship. Those who are eligible for the program

include undergraduate and graduate students at Maine colleges and universities, Maine residents attending out-of-state schools and individuals with strong ties to the state. Selected students tackle exciting projects such as product development, market research, computer programming, prototyping, videography and social media marketing, all while building professional networks and preparing for future success. Since its inception in 2012, Innovate for Maine has helped 360 students gain invaluable experience

with more than 280 Maine businesses.

Participating businesses — from startups to larger companies — gain access to motivated, top tier interns ready to bring fresh ideas and energy. For-profit Maine businesses of any size developing innovative products, services or processes can participate

Full Funding for Eligible Companies

Through funding from the Maine Jobs and Recovery Plan (MJRP), which were provided to the University of Maine

System for workforce development, eligible Maine businesses with fewer than 250 employees that delayed business formation or were negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic can host an intern at no cost. The funds will help support Maine startups and small businesses as they recover and grow post pandemic.

MJRP was proposed by Gov. Janet Mills and approved by the Legislature to invest the state’s share of federal American Rescue Plan relief funds.

“Our two Innovate

for Maine interns helped fast track one part of our product that now reaches over 15,000 Maine students,” said Helen Cohen, chief operating officer of Reach My Teach. “Watching them gain real world experience — using Figma, building websites and conducting user interviews — was incredibly rewarding. Their work is making a real difference for schools,

The program handles recruiting the students, and fellows are carefully selected and matched with projects to ensure that company needs are met.

Interns participate in a four-day boot camp that trains them to be ready to contribute to their host company on day one. The Innovate for Maine team then continues to supervise and mentor them throughout the summer. Fellows can work full time or part time during the summer with opportunities to continue part time during the academic year.

Applications for both students and companies close on Feb. 16. To apply or learn more, visit the Innovate for Maine Fellows Program website.

USM, DEA partner on decal to warn against fentanyl

PORTLAND, ME -- The Department of Public Safety at the University of Southern Maine (USM) has transformed one of its cruisers into a rolling billboard to educate the community about a dangerous drug and prevent overdoses.

A decal with the slogan One Pill Can Kill now graces the rear third of the SUV used by the department’s three campus safety officers. The United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) coined the slogan. One Pill Can Kill is a warning about the potential of fentanyl contamination in

bootleg medication. Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that can kill in even small doses. As part of a multi-pronged strategy to raise awareness using digital and traditional communications outlets, the DEA covered all costs associated with the decal.

“The partnership with the University of Southern Maine and their willingness to apply decals on a campus cruiser in support of the campaign shows their continued commitment to the community and solidifies a partnership between the DEA and the University,” said Acting Special Agent



in Charge Stephen Belleau, DEA New England Field Division.

The project’s point person for USM Public Safety was Lt. Paul Cox. He worked with the staff at M & H Signs in West-

brook to design the decal using a list of DEA-approved graphics and fonts. M & H Signs then printed the decal and completed the application within two hours. The invoice of \$1,400 went directly to the

DEA for payment. With the return of students from winter break last week, the cruiser’s new look is poised to get more attention on USM’s campuses in Gorham, Portland, and Lewiston, along with all the roads in between.

“The general public thinks fentanyl is something you inject with a needle. They don’t realize that these pills are out there, and one of the leading causes of overdoses is counterfeit prescription pills,” Cox said. “We want people to realize, you don’t know what’s in that pill unless you get your pills from a pharmacy.”

USM Public Safety is the first law enforcement agency in Maine to feature the DEA campaign on a cruiser. That partnership is poised to grow. Grainne Perkins, USM’s chief of police and vice president of public safety, is developing a community policing initiative to reinforce the One Pill Can Kill message. In collaboration with the DEA, she plans to set up tables on all three campuses where an attendant can provide visitors with more detailed information and resources. The dates and locations of the tabling events are still being finalized.

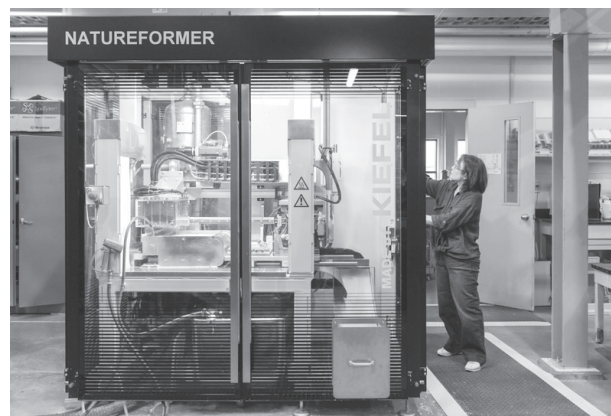
UMaine advances new forest bioproducts program

ORONO, ME — Following the recent announcement by Gov. Janet Mills and Maine’s Congressional delegation that Maine’s Forest Bioproducts Advanced Manufacturing Tech Hub will receive an additional \$22 million to position Maine as a global leader in forest-based biomaterial production and manufacturing, the University of Maine is advancing plans to launch its Forest Bioproducts Technology Maturation Program, a critical component of the Tech Hub.

The Forest Bioproducts Tech Hub’s goal is to accelerate research and development of natural polymers and other wood fiber bioproducts that can sequester carbon and replace plastics and toxic chemicals, while bolstering “Made in America” supply chain goals. Launched in 2023, the Tech Hub is led by the Maine Technology Institute and the Mills Administration, and supported by more than 70 partners, including Sappi, IDEXX, Thornton Tomasetti, FOR/ Maine, the Maine Forest Products Council, the Manufacturers Association of Maine and the Maine Venture Fund.

As a primary Tech Hub partner, UMaine will provide world-class innovation expertise, cutting-edge bioproducts equipment and infrastructure, and intellectual property to build talent pipelines and help private sector companies rapidly accelerate product commercialization and operational growth.

“Maine’s Forest Bioproducts Advanced Manufacturing Tech Hub represents the future of sustainable innovation, building on two centuries of forest industry leadership and 160 years of University of Maine excellence in research, development and education along with world-class facilities,” said Joan Ferrini-Mundy, president of the University of Maine and its regional campus, the University of Maine at Machias, as well as vice chancellor for research and innovation for the University of Maine System. “This investment will transform cutting-edge ideas into real-world solutions, powered by the expertise of our talented faculty, staff and students. Together with our partners, we are charting a bold course to position Maine as a global leader in sustain-



Process Development Center senior scientist Seongkyung Park showcases a fiber thermofforming machine, and how it can be used to make sustainable dinnerware, at the Process Development Center in July. Photo courtesy of the University of Maine.

able materials, economic growth and innovation.”

UMaine’s Forest Bioproducts Technology Maturation Program, funded at \$10.5 million in the award announced this week, will support startups and established companies in the forest bioproducts space.

“The technology maturation program will provide companies with the talent, expertise and access to equipment to demonstrate new technologies and manufacturing processes at commercial scale, unlocking the potential for forest biomaterials to reach new high-value markets such as plastics and fuels replacements, textiles,

building materials, biomedical applications and packaging, and create new economic development opportunities in Maine and beyond,” said Renee Kelly, associate vice president for Strategic Partnerships, Innovation, Resources, and Engagement.

From tailored work plans that include specific technical and business development milestones to access to a robust network of companies and research institutions and facilities, companies who participate in the Technology Maturation Program will receive wraparound support from UMaine. In addition to facilitating technology de-

velopment for individual companies, UMaine will work with companies with similar technical barriers to help reach new markets. The opportunity to work directly with experts at UMaine facilities, including the Advanced Manufacturing Center (AMC), Advanced Structures and Composites Center (ASCC) and Process Development Center (PDC), will allow companies to test and validate new bioproducts and processes, focusing on scaling production and meeting safety standards. Finally, students, including undergraduate-, graduate- and doctoral-level innovation fellows, will be embedded with participating companies to support their growth.

“UMaine’s near-commercial scale Process Development Center has a decades-long history of advancing biobased technologies,” said Colleen Walker, director of the PDC. “Our team is very excited to expand our work with emerging companies and offer access to our expertise and facilities to propel the development of forest-based bioproducts through the Forest Bioproducts Technology Maturation Program.”

“Tanbark is excited to be part of the Tech Hub network,” said Melissa LaCasse, co-founder and CEO of Tanbark Molded Fiber Products. “We see many opportunities to accelerate new forest biomaterials applications in collaboration with UMaine, and to work with talented students who are the future of our skilled workforce.”

Maine is one of just six Tech Hubs selected to receive an award under new funding for the Tech Hubs Program included in the Fiscal Year 2025 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

More about Maine’s Tech Hub can be found at www.mainetechhub.us.

Best Source for Arts, Music and Theater! Your Hometown Paper.

MCP announces cast of "The Odd Couple, Female Version"

MONMOUTH, ME -- The Monmouth Community Players, alongside Marquis Season Sponsor Great Falls Federal Credit Union and Season Sponsors Winthrop Area Federal Credit Union and Readfield Insurance Agency, wish to announce the cast of their upcoming production of Neil Simon's "The Odd Couple, Female Version". The play, under the direction of Josie French, will run March 14-23, 2025 at historic Cumston Hall in Monmouth. Other production staff include Vanessa Glazier as Assistant Director, Tim MacLeod as Producer, Kyle Mansur as Stage Manager and Keith Mercik as Sound Operator.

When Florence Unger's (Karen Lipovsky of Monmouth) marriage breaks up, her friend Olive Madison (Melissa Record of N. Monmouth) offers to let her move in

with her. Before long, tensions rise between the two friends, as Florence is a neat freak and Olive is, well, not. They are joined by their Trivial Pursuit playing friends - Vera (Jane Mitchell of Greene), Mickey (Ginger Smith of Winthrop), Sylvia (Emily Willett of Clinton), and Renee (Nancy Kenneally of Lewiston) as they brave this new roommate situation and the trials that come with it. Olive soon convinces Florence to double-date with two handsome men in the building. Manolo (Nick Farrand of Lewiston) and Jesus (Danny Gay of N. Monmouth) only add flame to the fire in this story of how opposites do not attract. Tempers flare and food flies. Will these two be able to put their differences aside or is there another break-up on the horizon?

Audiences will en-



Cast of Odd Couple: Front Row: Melissa Record & Karen Lipovsky; Back Row: Danny Gay, Nick Farrand, Jane Mitchell, Ginger Smith, Emily Willett and Nancy Kenneally



Girls at the bathroom: Melissa, Emily, Jane, Ginger & Nancy



Karen Lipovsky as Florence Unger and Melissa Record as Olive Madison



Karen Lipovsky as Florence, Danny Gay as Jesus, Melissa Record as Olive and Nick Farrand as Manolo

joy the snappy dialogue between the characters and the pure feelings that are shown. The author holds nothing back and shows a real throw down of emotions and how even good friends can feel the stress of spending too much time together. This cast has great chemistry and will have you laughing in your seats.

Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$17 for students and seniors. Showtimes are 7:30 pm on March 14th, 15th and 21st, and 2pm on March 16th, 22nd and 23rd. On March 16th, the production of the show will additionally provide ASL interpretation of the performance. This show does contain adult language and mild adult themes. For more information, or to reserve tickets for this show, please visit www.monmouthcommunityplayers.org

TCST swims to second place at NNE District Championships

AUBURN, ME -- The YMCA of Auburn-Lewiston is excited to announce results from our Twin Cities Swim Team (TCST) at the YMCA Northern New England District Championships held in Goffstown, NH, January 25-26, 2025. This meet was attended by eight different teams representing YMCAs from Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Massachusetts. TCST swimmers recorded first-place finishes in 30 different events over the

weekend, breaking several team records and two state records in the process.

Sebastian Pambo, Owen Robinson, Eli Vandeventer, and Caden LaPlante set a new state record in the 13-14 Boys 200-Yard Freestyle Relay with a time of 1:36.40, besting the previous record by half a second. Caden LaPlante also broke the state record in the 13-14 Boys 100-Yard Butterfly with a time of 54.00, edging out the previous record of 54.27. While it was

the Granite YMCA Tiger Sharks who took top spot, TCST put forth a strong runner-up showing, notching a second-place finish overall.

About the Twin Cities Swim Team

The YMCA of Auburn-Lewiston has offered competitive swimming programs since the 1920s, with the name Twin Cities Swim Team being established in the 1990s. In 2021, we expanded our program to partner with the YWCA of Central



TCST members (left to right) Sebastian Pambo, Owen Robinson, Eli Vandeventer, and Caden LaPlante set a new state record in the 13-14 Boys 200-Yard Freestyle Relay.

Maine. Currently, there are 86 swimmers between the ages of 5 and 18 competing on the team. For further information about TCST, parents can email

Head Coach Matt Reed at mreed@alymca.org.

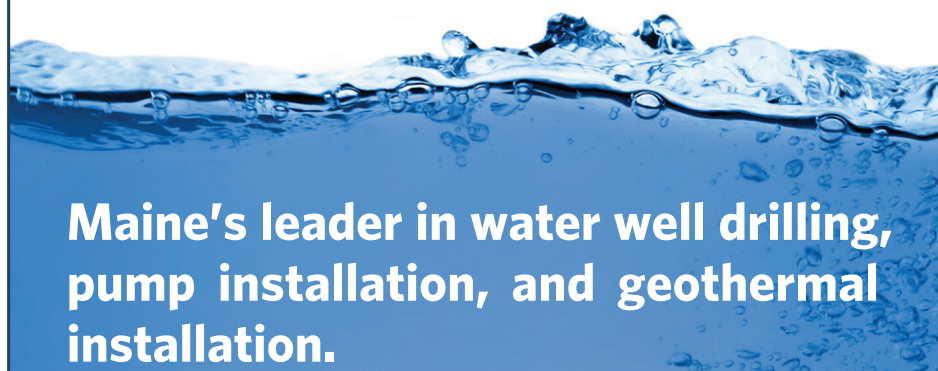
About the YMCA of Auburn-Lewiston

Serving the greater L/A communities since 1868, the YMCA of Auburn-Lewiston is a 501(c)3 charitable educational organization that seeks to strengthen the foundations of local communities through collaborations and services that focus on youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. Each year, the YMCA serves more than 800 individual children in youth sports, camp, and childcare programs, along with over 4,000 active members taking part in health, wellness, and fitness programs.

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Rotating Art Gallery at CMMC features new paintings

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) landscapes of (mostly) familiar plac-



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

es. 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



"Balance" by Judy Haas

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

Androscoggin Bank gifts \$50K to Trinity Jubilee expansion

LEWISTON, ME - Androscoggin Bank presented a \$50,000 contribution to the Trinity Jubilee Center, a Lewiston-based non-profit organization that offers food, diapers, groceries, job assistance, medical care, and a day shelter. This gift will aid Trinity in the expansion of their new facility. "By contributing \$50,000 to the Trinity Jubilee Center, we are not just supporting a great organization; we are investing in our community's growth and well-being. This gift reflects our commitment to creating a stronger and more empowered Lew-

iston," said Neil Kiely, CEO of Androscoggin Bank.

In December 2024 the Trinity Jubilee Center broke ground on their new facility at 123 Bates Street in Lewiston. With the construction of the new building, the Center will be able to expand its services to help those experiencing homelessness, hunger, and other challenges. The improved facility features an expanded floor plan, a dedicated doctor's office and waiting room, rooms for mental health and substance misuse services, and a shower, washer, and dryer among other resour-

es. The capital campaign has raised approximately 92% of the \$5.13 million budget to date.

The Bank believes that non-profit organizations play a crucial role in identifying innovative solutions to the complex challenges faced by the community. Androscoggin Bank is honored to have Trinity Jubilee Center as one of its seven Empowerment Partners. The facility's new Employment Center will be named in honor of Androscoggin Bank. The Center currently helps 100 people find jobs each year and will be able to help even more people in their



larger space.

Androscoggin Bank is deeply thankful for all that Trinity Jubilee Center does to strengthen the community and is committed to supporting their mission to create a more equitable and inclusive community.

For more information about the Trinity Jubilee Center and how to support its mission, visit www.trinityjubileecenter.org.

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AARP Community Challenge grant now accepting applications

AARP Maine is thrilled to announce that the 2025 AARP Community Challenge grant program is now accepting applications. We hope that all eligible nonprofits and government organizations will apply for this once-a-year opportunity!

The AARP Community Challenge grant program is part of the nationwide AARP Livable Communities initiative, which supports the efforts of communities to become great places for people of all ages,

especially people 50-plus. The grants fund quick-action, innovative projects related to public places, transportation, housing, digital connections, community resilience, and more. Here in Maine, we've seen tangible, long-term results from

previous grantees. Recent local projects have included disaster preparedness initiatives, transportation improvements, community park and open space enhancements, and much more.

We encourage eligible

organizations to apply by the March 5, 2025 application deadline. For more information, to submit an application or view past grantees, visit www.AARP.org/CommunityChallenge. Since 2017, AARP has invested \$20.1 million toward

1,700 projects – including 70 projects in Maine. Apply now and make sure your local project is considered for a grant this year!

Jane Margesson
AARP Maine Communications Director
Portland

UMA professor demystifies American yoga in new book

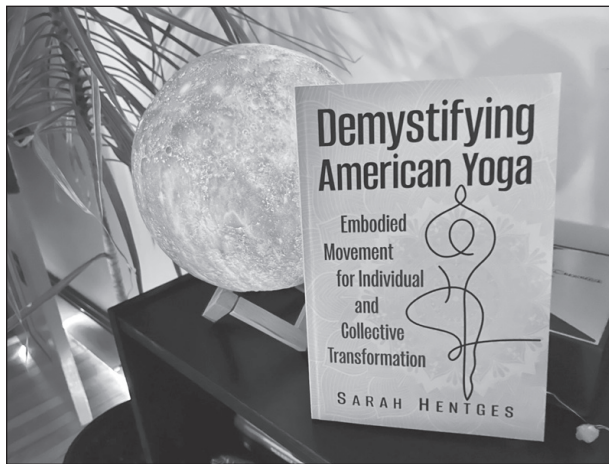
AUGUSTA, ME – Sarah Hentges, professor of transdisciplinary cultural studies at the University of Maine at Augusta (UMA), has released her fourth book, “Demystifying American Yoga: Embodied Movement for Individual and Collective Transformation.”

Part storytelling, part cultural critique, part innovation and part practical application, “Demystifying American Yoga” is about more than yoga — it’s about American culture and our past, present and collective future. It is about how we care for ourselves and others amidst a toxic culture of individualism, perfectionism, consumption, exploitation, compe-

tion and other destructive ideas and behaviors.

Despite its popularity in the U.S., we are mostly unaware of yoga’s ancient roots as well as its contemporary applications. Numerous misunderstandings surround American yoga. It is often seen as simple stretching, or a religious practice. Others feel it is an example of cultural appropriation, and that it is elitist and exclusive — a fitness trend for flexible, aesthetically ideal bodies.

Focusing solely on the physical aspects of yoga overshadows its core elements: conscious breathing, mindful meditation, deep philosophy, and transformative healing. However, for Hentges,



American yoga “is about the power of embodiment to connect us with ourselves and others,” she says. “It is about hope and joy and the ways in which yoga has evolved in the U.S. — how American yoga is full of promise and

potential despite the ways it has been used to sell myths and bypass spirituality.”

Drawing from her experience as a professor and yoga teacher, Hentges explores the marginalized, feminist, queer, grassroots,

underground, interconnected, creative, innovative and somatic elements of yoga. In “Demystifying American Yoga,” she offers exploratory embodied practices, mines diverse sources, and asks critical questions about identity, culture and power.

Hentges has over 25 years of experience teaching college courses and fitness classes, including 20 years of teaching yoga. Previous books by Hentges include “Women and Fitness in American Culture” and “Girls on Fire: Transformative Heroines in Young Adult Dystopian Literature.” Her work spans a variety of fields and themes, most recently centered around embodied

social justice and transformation.

A popular professor at UMA, Hentges teaches several courses including American studies, women and gender studies, and interdisciplinary studies as well as the courses Girls on Fire, Hip Hop America, American Fitness, and Cultural Criticism and Theory. She is also UMA’s program coordinator for interdisciplinary studies.

In addition to her academic credentials, Hentges holds certifications in trauma-informed yoga and JourneyDance facilitation. She is also the founder and lead curator of The Spiral Goddess Collective, a Center for Mind/Body Movement in Bangor, Maine.

BBB: Scammers posing as loan processors

Scammers are at it again, posing as representatives from loan processing companies to trick consumers into sharing personal information. This advanced fee loan phishing scam often comes in the form of harassing phone calls and voicemails. The caller insists they need to verify minor details, such as your income, to finalize your loan application. While the message may sound convincing, it’s a ruse to steal your private information.

How the scam works
You receive a call

or voicemail from someone claiming to be from a loan processing team, often using a common name, like “Jessica.” The caller says they’ve been trying to contact you about your loan application and need to verify some final details to complete your approval, although more than likely, you never applied for a loan. They provide a callback number and application ID to make the message seem legitimate. The voicemail emphasizes urgency, requesting you call back before a specific deadline to finalize the

loan.

Better Business Bureau (BBB) has received over 500 Scam Tracker reports of this scheme from across the United States in between November 2024 and January 2025, indicating that scammers are aggressively targeting consumers. People report receiving multiple calls per day, often from different phone numbers but with nearly identical voicemail scripts. Realistically, there is no loan, and returning the call could lead to scammers collecting sensitive information, such as your

Social Security number, bank account details, or other personal data.

Tips to avoid the scam

Verify the company’s legitimacy: If you’re contacted about a loan application you don’t recall submitting, hang up and do your research. Look up the company name online and contact them directly using verified contact information.

Never share personal information with unsolicited callers: Scammers often ask for details like your Social Security number or

bank account information. Avoid sharing sensitive information over the phone unless you initiated the call.

Watch for red flags in voicemails: Be wary of messages with vague details, generic names, or urgent demands for a callback. Scammers often use scripted messages to target as many people as possible.

Avoid calling unknown numbers back: Resist the urge to call the number back. Returning calls to unknown or suspicious numbers could con-

nect you to scammers or result in unexpected fees.

Check for scam reports: Look up the phone number or details of the voicemail online. Many victims post about similar scams to warn others.

Report suspicious activity: If you believe you’ve been contacted by a scammer, report the incident to BBB Scam Tracker at BBB.org/ScamTracker.

Stay vigilant and cautious to protect yourself from falling victim to phishing scams like this one. If an offer seems too good to be true, it likely is!

Grant to fund recycled forest product manufacturing

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Senators Susan Collins and Angus King, and U.S. Representatives Chellie Pingree and Jared Golden, are announcing the Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration’s (EDA) decision to award \$22 million in funding for Maine’s Forest Bioproducts Advanced Manufacturing Tech Hub, led by the Maine Technol-

ogy Institute. The grant will support the advancement of two projects that aim to further position Maine as a global leader in forest-based biomaterial production and manufacturing.

“Maine is a leader in the forest products industry — both here at home and around the globe,” said the Delegation. “An investment in our forestry sector is a direct investment into

Maine’s economy and future. This \$22 million award for the Forest Bioproducts Advanced Manufacturing Tech Hub will be critical in ensuring we have the tools to strengthen the workforce, spur innovation and further build upon the industry’s success.”

The grant will support implementation of two projects that include:

Connecting forest bioproducts technological innovations with the commercialization resources and partnerships necessary to successfully bring that intellectual property to market at a globally competitive scale and serving as the backbone organization for the consortium, coordinating governance, strategy, evaluation, and community engagement; and

Strengthening a pipe-

line of innovations (functionalized feedstocks, applications, and manufacturing technologies), de-risking these innovations with technical assistance, and leveraging new commercialization, advanced manufacturing, and workforce resources of the Tech Hub to accelerate the most promising innovations.

Last March, the Delegation wrote a letter to the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development expressing their support for Maine’s application for a Tech Hubs Implementation grant. In addition to the Delegation letter, Senator Collins sent a follow-up letter advocating for this program to receive Tech Hubs grant funding. Previously, the Forest Bioproducts Advanced Manufacturing Tech Hub received

a \$500,000 Consortium Accelerator Award to continue implementing their strategies, including the pursuit of additional capital, and was among six Tech Hubs across the country to receive awards from additional funding through the Fiscal Year 2025 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

The Forest Bioproducts Advanced Manufacturing Tech Hub is among 31 Tech Hubs designated in October 2023 designated by the Department of Commerce to scale up the production of critical technologies, create jobs in innovative industries, strengthen U.S. economic competitiveness and national security, and accelerate the growth of industries of the future in regions across the United States.

In 2016, Senators

Collins and King called on the U.S. Department of Commerce to establish the Economic Development Assessment Team (EDAT), that would work across agencies and sectors to create strategies for job growth and economic development in Maine’s rural communities. The creation of the EDAT and its subsequent studies and research led to the EDA and the U.S. Forest Service providing funding for the Forest Opportunity Roadmap Maine (FOR/ME) Initiative. The FOR/ME Initiative is a participant-led initiative that is helping to diversify the state’s wood products businesses, attract investments, support research and development, and develop greater economic prosperity for rural communities impacted by mill closures.

Jason Hodsdon Masonry

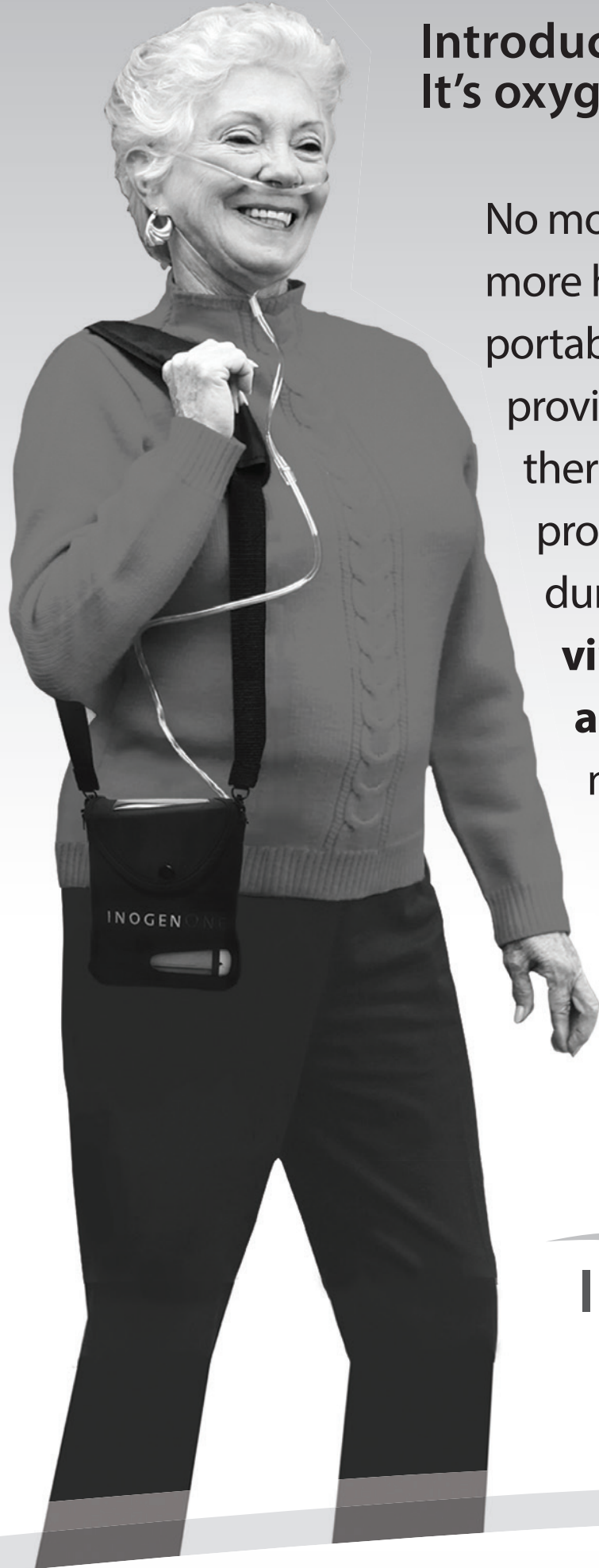
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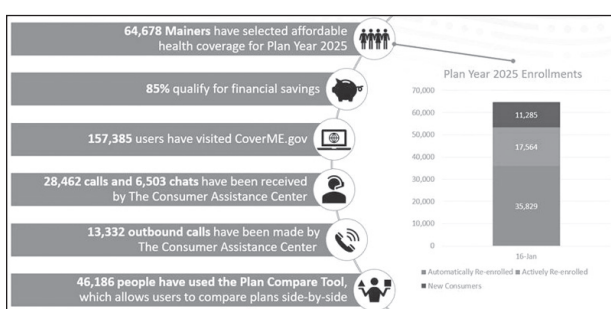
Record number sign up for affordable coverage

AUGUSTA, ME — The Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Office of the Health Insurance Marketplace (OHIM) announced that nearly 65,000 Maine people signed up for affordable health coverage in 2025 through CoverME.gov, Maine's health insurance marketplace, during the fourth annual open enrollment period that concluded last week. Maine's marketplace contributed to the more than 24.2 million people who signed up through Affordable Care Act marketplaces nationwide. Maine is one of 19 states plus Washington, D.C. that fully run their own Health Insurance Marketplaces, with the Federal government running the rest through HealthCare.gov.

Of the 64,678 Maine consumers who selected a health plan, 11,285 were new consumers who didn't previously have insurance

through the marketplace. This breaks Maine's prior record for new consumers turning to CoverME.gov for insurance since it transitioned to a state-based marketplace in 2021. The remainder were returning consumers who actively re-enrolled or were automatically re-enrolled in a plan. Another 8,423 consumers selected standalone dental plans, an increase of nearly 6% year-over-year.

"Having health insurance saves lives," said Governor Janet Mills. "There isn't anyone who doesn't get sick, and there isn't anyone who doesn't need to see a doctor at some point. From day one, my administration has worked to make health insurance available for more Maine people can see a doctor, can get preventative care, and can afford critical prescription medications. That way, people can be healthy, join or rejoin the workforce, and care for



their families." "This year's record-breaking enrollment reflects our ongoing commitment to ensuring Maine people have access to affordable, high-quality health coverage," said Sara Gagné-Holmes, Commissioner of the Department of Health and Human Services. "CoverME.gov continues to provide vital support for individuals and families across our state, helping more Mainers access the care they need to live healthier lives."

Open enrollment through CoverME.gov — the only place where Maine

residents can shop for plans that meet Affordable Care Act quality coverage standards and find financial savings to help pay monthly premiums — ran from November 1, 2024, to January 15, 2025. For plan year 2025, 85% of Mainers who selected a plan during open enrollment qualified for financial savings. While average premiums set by insurance companies rose in Maine and many other states in 2025, premiums paid by consumers qualifying for financial savings increased by less than \$15 per month, thanks to extra financial assistance from

the federal government. However, the expanded financial savings, approved by the U.S. Congress, are currently set to expire at the end of 2025.

"The enhanced health care tax credits have been critical in keeping coverage affordable, especially for Mainers who are older and live in more rural locations, said Hilary Schneider, Director of the DHHS Office of the Health Insurance Marketplace, which runs CoverME.gov. "Without these tax credits, many Mainers will likely make the tough decision to go without health coverage or will have to cut other necessary expenditures in order to afford health coverage. This will not only have a detrimental impact the health and wellbeing of our citizens but also on our economy."

The next CoverME.gov open enrollment will start on November 1, 2025.

In the meantime, Maine residents who experience a life event such as getting married or divorced, having or adopting a baby, or losing employer-sponsored coverage or MaineCare, can enroll in coverage using a Special Enrollment Period. Additionally, Maine residents can check a box on Maine State tax return Form 1040ME to opt into the Easy Enrollment Tax Referral Program, which is a new Special Enrollment Period. Visit CoverME.gov for more details.

CoverME.gov is at the heart of Maine's effort to ensure that people can see their doctor, afford their medications, and stay healthy. CoverME.gov is a one-stop shop for health care coverage and the only place Mainers can get financial assistance to reduce out-of-pocket costs for coverage. Eligible Maine people can enroll in MaineCare at any time of year.

2025 Common Ground Country Fair artwork unveiled

MAINE -- The Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA) unveiled the 2025 Common Ground Country Fair artwork at the Maine Agricultural Trades Show in Augusta. The artwork for the fair's promotional materials and iconic T-shirts is selected from contest submissions each year and the winning design is highly anticipated. This year's artwork by Katherine Noble Churchill, features two draft

horses, livestock important to sustainable farming methods. From moving heavy equipment to plowing fields for planting, draft horses offer farmers an alternative to fossil-fueled machinery.

"It is an honor to have my artwork represent MOFGA's 2025 Common Ground Fair promoting organic agriculture in Maine," says Noble Churchill. "Each year, I look forward to attending the Common



Ground Fair, enjoying the animals, crafts, music, and delicious organic food. My favorite part has always been watching Chris Lombard's demonstrations of human/horse communication and connection. Now and in the

future, I hope to see people enjoying the continual process of learning to develop communication and athleticism in the horse for both riding and working on the farm."

The "Belgian Draft Horses" posters will be available for sale in MOFGA's online store (at store.mofga.org) starting January 17, 2025.

Planning is underway for the 2025 Common Ground Country

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Illustration by Katherine Noble Churchill - Printed by Lucie County Publishing Company

2025 Common Ground Country Fair design by Katherine Noble Churchill, titled "Belgian Draft Horses."

Fair, which will take place on September 19, 20, and 21 in Unity, Maine. Vendor applications are now being accepted for many areas of the fair. Vendors

and exhibitors interested in learning more about how they can participate in the event this year can learn more at: mofga.org/the-fair.

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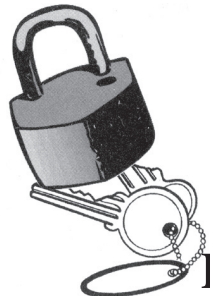
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Calendar

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.

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 14

LEWISTON -- At 10am the Lewiston Public Library Children's De-

partment will be offering a Valentine's Day Keepsake program. Caregivers and their young children will be able to make a collaborative family handprint keepsake on canvas for Valentine's Day. All family members can participate in this program.

Free. No registration required. Recommended families and their young children ages birth-6 years old. Older siblings are also welcome to attend and participate.

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

Feb 18, Mar 18, Apr 15

TURNER -- Music for Mavis" hosts 2025 Cabin Fever Concerts at 98 MATHEWS WAY, OFF RT. 117 TURNER CENTER. 6:00-7:30 PM. Leave the winter blues behind and enjoy music with your fellow music lovers, right beside the gazebo, downstairs in the TPLibrary Building. The

music is as follows:

February 18: Stan Keech & friends, Bluegrass/folk

March 18: Robbie Coffin, Maggie, & Dave Rockin' Rock & Roll

April 15: Jim Galant and Billy Belskis, Instrumentals/blues/Celtic/a mix

Feb 19

LEWISTON -- Let's Grow Crystals at 11am, Lewiston Public Library Children's Department. Children will be provided with materials to grow tetragonal crystals by creating a solution with water and a package of monoammonium phosphate and powdered pigments.

Because the crystals take many days to grow, the crystal solutions will be kept in the display case so patrons can see their growth. After 2 weeks or so the finished crystals will be removed from their solution. The crystals will be kept in the display case on a lighted stand. Participants may also take the crystals home at that time.

Free. No registration required but supplies are limited. Recommended kids 8-12 years old. The Lewiston Public Library is located downtown at 200

Lisbon Street at the corner of Pine Street.

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/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).

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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/>.

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>

Cafe

Continued from page 6

ner's" mindset, Elaine enjoys bringing people together for meaningful and inspiring conversations.

This program will take place in the Androscoggin Community Room at the Auburn Public Library. Registration is not required.

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



Finding meaningful work that's flexible and close to home

Direct Support workers help Mainers stay connected to their communities

From her earliest memories, Kathleen's mother, Alice, has been independent. Having raised four children largely on her own, Alice worked until she was 85 and is a fixture in their island community.

But as Alice aged, her vision began to deteriorate. She wanted to continue living independently in the home and community she loved, but she and her kids knew that she needed a helping hand to remain safe and happy.

For the family, that helping hand came from Jim, a Direct Support worker, who lives nearby, and now visits Alice for a few hours, several days a week. He supports her with a variety of household tasks, including shopping and preparing meals. Often, the most valuable support is the conversation and camaraderie he provides.

"Jim is my godsend," Alice said. "I look forward to him every single week."

Jim is part of the growing field of Direct Support, ensuring that Mainers with age-related, physical, behavioral, intellectual and cognitive health needs have the support they need to stay safe, independent and empowered to achieve their personal goals.

For Jim, this is the ideal encore career. At 65, he retired from his full-time job; but after two years, he began to feel restless.

"If you have too much time you can overthink things and feel like you're missing out on something," he said. "But when you're helping somebody, it feels like you're in exactly the right spot. And that's such a good feeling."

For Dakota, 24, the steady presence of a Personal Support Specialist, Sonya, has made all the difference in the world. Dakota, who lives with intellectual and developmental disabilities, says that Sonya's support has allowed him to gain the independence and a sense of connection to the community that he didn't have before. In addition to assisting with activities of daily living, her support allows him to go to the movies, go to bookstores and do many other activities he loves.

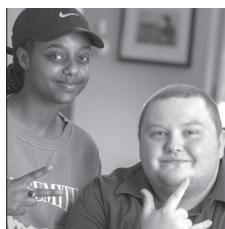
"It makes me feel so happy to be a part of society," he said. "With her support, I really feel like I've been able to flourish."

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.



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"It makes me feel so happy to be a part of society,"



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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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