

Scott Riccio receives BUSRide Good Stewardship Award

For more than a decade, the prestigious BUSRide Good Stewardship Award has honored individuals who exemplify outstanding leadership, ethics, and dedication to customer service in the motorcoach industry. This year, the American Bus Association is proud to announce that Scott Riccio, owner of Northeast Charter and Tour, has been named the 2025 BUSRide Good Stewardship Award recipient.

A Visionary Leader in the Motorcoach Industry

Scott Riccio's journey in the transportation sector began in 1999 when he founded Northeast Charter and Tour in Lewiston, Maine, with just one motorcoach. Through his strong leadership and unwavering commitment to excellence, his company has since expanded into a thriving enterprise with 13 coaches, three mini-buses, passenger vans, and SUVs, providing a wide range of charter and tour services.

A Champion for the Industry

Riccio's advocacy for the motorcoach industry has been pivotal. During the COVID-19 pandemic, he lobbied U.S. Senators from Maine for federal relief, ensuring the industry received the support it desperately needed to recover. His engagement with organizations such as The Institute for Family-Owned Business highlights his dedication to strengthening family-run enterprises in Maine.

Committed to Community and Sustainability

Riccio and Northeast Charter and Tour have significantly contributed to their community through various philanthropic efforts. Notable initiatives include:

Potato Palooza is an annual charity event that donates tons of potatoes to food banks and shelters.

Stuff the Bus is a campaign that collects donations for local community groups.

Organizing a GoFundMe campaign that raised nearly \$20,000 for a Northeast Charter driver who lost his home and belongings.

Beyond community engagement, Riccio has championed environmentally friendly business practices for over a decade. His efforts have earned his company several prestigious sustainability awards:

2013 ABA Green Spirit Award for environmental stewardship.

2014 UMA Green Highway Award for adopting sustainable initiatives, such as switching to natural gas for heating, implementing a comprehensive waste oil and product recycling program, and transitioning to an all-digital system for driver logs and company communications.

Industry Involvement

Riccio's influence extends across multiple industry organizations, where he remains an active member of:

Greater Northeast Motorcoach Association

International Motorcoach Group

United Motorcoach Association



American Bus Association

A Well-Deserved Honor

Scott Riccio's remarkable leadership, dedication to ethical business practices, and commitment to environmental sustainability have impacted the motorcoach industry. His tireless advocacy and community contributions exemplify what it means to be a true industry steward.

Please join us in congratulating Scott Riccio, the 2025 BUSRide Good Stewardship Award recipient!

Every year for more than a decade, the coveted BUSRide Good Stewardship Award has recognized one individual who is considered an ambassador; a dedicated professional who not only provides the highest level of customer service, but who also helps guide the industry forward as a champion of ethics, strong values, safety, operational excellence, and unparalleled leadership.

BUSRide, in tandem with the American Bus Association, is proud to announce Scott Riccio, owner of Northeast Charter & Tour in Lewiston, Maine, is the winner of the 2025 BUSRide Good Stewardship Award.

A dynamic leader in the motorcoach industry, Riccio's influence has been apparent since he founded Northeast Charter and Tour in Lewiston, Maine, in 1999 with just one motorcoach. Under Riccio's leadership, the company has grown to a fleet of 13 coaches, three minibuses, plus passenger vans and SUVs, offering a variety of charter and tour services.

Through his tireless efforts, Riccio has demonstrated an exceptional ability to lead with integrity and a deep sense of responsibility towards his community and the environment.

During COVID-19,

Riccio lobbied U.S. Senators from Maine for much-needed federal relief for the motorcoach industry. He participates in The Institute for Family-Owned Business, which serves family business owners, executives, and employees through a wide range of continuing education programs, networking opportunities and consulting services. The Institute is a comprehensive resource for family-owned businesses throughout Maine.

Northeast Charter & Tour participated in the annual "Potato Palooza," a charity event that donates tons of potatoes (literally) to food banks and shelters to feed the hungry. "This was a fun event," said Riccio, adding that the companies made direct donations. "In turn, we all received one ton of freshly harvested Maine potatoes. We gave them away to employees, friends, and family, plus we provided hundreds of pounds to food shelters and food pantries in our towns."

Northeast Charter also sponsor the annual "Stuff the Bus" school readiness program that provides backpacks, school supplies and other items to prepare low-income students for the first day of school and to ensure their success throughout the school year.

When a Northeast Charter driver lost his home and possessions last year, Northeast Charter & Tour organized a GoFundMe that raised almost \$20,000.

In addition to his deep involvement in community initiatives, Riccio has been a fervent advocate for eco-friendly business practices for more than a decade. His unwavering dedication to sustainability has garnered his company several awards in recognition of its environmental achievements, including:

In 2013, Northeast Charter and Tour won the ABA Green Spirit Award for environmental stewardship

In 2014, the company won the UMA Green Highway Award by switching to natural gas to head the company's headquarters, running a robust waste oil and product recycling program, and moving to all-digital for driver logs and company communications.

As involved in the motorcoach industry as he is in his own company, Riccio is an active member of the Greater Northeast Motorcoach Association, the International Motorcoach Group; the United Motorcoach Association, and the American Bus Association.

Riccio's outstanding leadership, steadfast dedication to ethical business practices, and unwavering commitment to environmental sustainability have left a profound impact on the motorcoach industry.

His ceaseless advocacy for the industry and his countless contributions to the community serve as a shining example of what it means to be a true steward of the industry. His work not only sets a high standard for others in the industry but also inspires future generations to follow in his footsteps.

BUSRide and the American Bus Association applaud Riccio, winner of the 2025 BUSRide Good Stewardship Award.

Clothes galore at Gorham's Mission of Hope Clothes Closet

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

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

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

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

Spring 2025 Gorham Brush Drop Off Days

GORHAM, ME -- Public Works (located at 80 Huston Road) will be accepting brush Saturday, April 26th and Saturday, May 10th 8AM - 3PM.

This event is for residents ONLY, no commercial drop offs will be accepted.

No stumps, please.

Leaves and grass clippings accepted in the designated area throughout the season.

Please do not leave your bags behind.

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2025 Spring Brush Drop Off

Residents only, no commercial drop off. No stumps will be accepted.



Leaves & grass clippings accepted in the designated area throughout the season. Please do not leave bags behind.

When: Saturday, 4/26 and Saturday, 5/10

Time: 8AM to 3PM

Location: 80 Huston Rd.

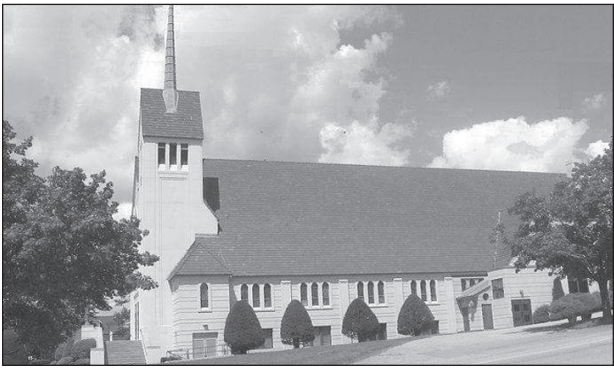
Newsmakers, Names & Faces

After-Mass healing ministry begins at Holy Cross Church

LEWISTON, ME -- An expanded healing prayer ministry started Jan. 26 at Holy Cross Church, 1080 Liston St in Lewiston, which will continue every Sunday morning in its Chapel following the 8:30 a.m. Mass. All present after the services, which typically end around 9:45 a.m., will be invited into the side chapel to have prayers said for themselves or as surrogates for loved ones.

Every type of ailment, from before or after surgeries, to the many health challenges present in people's lives, including lift-long issues, will be given considered and thoughtful prayer by team members in the ornate Chapel.

One healing of early-stage cancer has taken place along with several remissions and other recoveries. As was said in the January 19 announcement, even when healings don't occur in the moment or require further prayer, what will be true in every circumstance is that people will know some-



one care enough to pray for them. This ministry is not restricted to parishioners; all faith communities are welcome. Holy Cross Church sits at the top of Lisbon Street, is tan-colored with a red-tiled roof. Spacious parking is available behind the elementary school set behind the Church.

Androscoggin Bank to receive “Champions of Change” award

LEWISTON, ME -- Stand Against Racism is a one-day, bi-annual conference, and a signature YWCA event designed to build community among those working for racial justice, raise awareness about the negative impact of institutional and structural racism in our communities, and provide strategies to root out injustice, transform institutions, and create a world that sees women, girls, and people of color the way we do: Equal. Powerful. Unstoppable. This year's theme for the conference and fundraiser is “Reduce Conflict, Improve Culture: A Guide to Restorative Practices” and features Hilary North-Ellasante (they them), owner of Water's Edge Consulting's (www.changeatwatersedge.com) keynote, “Re-storying

Our Pathways to Liberation.” By weaving together threads of storytelling and examples of liberatory praxis, Hilary will share learnings from their own journey towards freedom and invite attendees to explore for themselves how supporting anti-oppression can (and should) be a daily practice. At each Stand Against Racism conference YWCA Central Maine presents the “Champions of Change” award to a business or organization in Maine, chosen by the YWCA and board members, that lead and support efforts that advance racial and gender equity in the workplace or community and has shown a distinct and continued effort to do their part in creating a more equitable Maine through efforts to educate and empower their staff, customers or constituents,

and the greater community as a whole. 2025's Champion of Change award will be presented to Androscoggin Bank. “Androscoggin Bank's accomplishments and long-term commitment to equity within their workplace, within their industry, and within the greater community makes them a champion for equity and social justice and we are pleased to honor them with this year's YWCA Champion of Change Award” YWCA Central Maine CEO, Melanie LaMore “We are deeply honored to be recognized as a “Champion of Change” by the YWCA of Central Maine given the leadership and impact they demonstrate every day. At Androscoggin Bank, we understand that we prosper when our community prospers.” Said Neil Kiely,

CEO. “Since our founding in 1870, we have helped generations of “New Mainers” establish a life and livelihood in Lewiston & Auburn. While our efforts might look different over the course of our history, there is a common thread throughout. We strive every day to ensure that every individual has the opportunity to achieve their full potential, so that they may contribute their full measure to the success of our broader community. Fostering inclusion and belonging in our workplaces and communities is critical to unlocking that full potential and we are proud to partner with the YWCA to be leaders in this work.” Businesses looking for financial assistance to send staff can apply to the Maine Workforce Development Compact. YWCA Central Maine is a verified

member, as well as a listed training vendor. This means that, any employer looking to become a compact member or is already registered as a compact member can request training funds for employees to attend trainings and conferences such as YWCA's upcoming Stand Against Racism Conference. The compact member benefits allow each employer to apply for funding and receive up to \$1,200 in training funding per frontline employee per year. This is a free program for employers and can reduce the cost of the conference ticket by 50%. Apply now and offset the training costs of your employees and be able to send staff to our upcoming conference. For more information, please visit the website: <https://www.mccs.me.edu/workforce-training/grant-funded-training/>

All proceeds from Stand Against Racism support the work YWCA Central Maine does each day in service of its missions to eliminate racism and empower women while promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. Those interested in sponsoring the conference or learning about group rates, or scholarship opportunities can contact Jennifer Molloy, Chief Development and Communications Officer at jmolloy@ywca-maine.org To learn more about the Stand Against Racism Conference or to register go to: <https://standagainstracism2025.eventbrite.com/>



Downeaster Corridor undergoing construction

PORTLAND, ME – The Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA) announced that CSX Transportation will begin replacing over 130,000 railroad ties along 124 miles of the Downeaster Corridor, from the Massachusetts state line to Brunswick, Maine, starting on Tuesday, April 1, 2025. Tie replacement crews will work in eight-day increments, with six-day breaks, through mid-July. During this time, Amtrak Downeaster trains will continue to operate daily service between Brunswick

and Boston. Morning and afternoon peak-hour trains, as well as those scheduled for Boston sporting and cultural events, will operate as usual. However, some mid-day trains will be modified on workdays, with bus service substitutions at select stations. For detailed schedule information, visit AmtrakDowneaster.com. The tie replacement is necessary to maintain the Downeaster's operating speed and reliability. In 2023, NNEPRA, in partnership with CSX, was awarded a competitive discretionary Federal-State Partnership grant, administered by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), to fund \$27 million of the more than \$35 million project. CSX Transportation is covering the remaining costs. This partnership will allow CSX to deploy resources to address additional projects along the corridor that support and improve the efficient and reliable movement of both freight and passenger trains. These projects include improvements to several grade crossings in Maine and New Hampshire, which will take place in tandem with the tie replacement. This project follows a successful partnership between NNEPRA and CSX to extend a passing siding between Wells and North Berwick, completed in December 2024. The next phase includes the construction of new boarding platforms connected by an overhead pedestrian bridge at Wells Station, with work underway by Great Falls Construction. Additionally, CSX is installing an upgraded railroad communication and signal system, Positive Train Control (PTC), in partnership with Amtrak. Visit NNEPRA.com for more information on NNEPRA-sponsored projects. The Amtrak Downeaster, which set ridership and revenue records with nearly 600,000 riders in FY24, is poised for continued success. “It's exciting to see so many projects underway that will improve the Downeaster service and position it for growth,” said Patricia Quinn, NNEPRA Executive Director. “The short-term temporary changes and service interruptions while track work is underway will result in long-lasting improvements that will benefit the public well into the future.”

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Examining Maine history through families of infamous slave captain

AMHERST, MA—In March of 2024, The Washington Post reported that after a decades-long search, a crew in Brazil may have located the infamous lost slave ship Camargo. Captained by American Nathaniel Gordon III from Maine—who upon landing in Brazil, burnt and sunk the ship and fled arrest—the Camargo was the final known ship to transport enslaved people to Brazil.

Later, Gordon would

become the first (and last) person to be executed by the United States Federal Government for their involvement in the slave trade under the 1820 Piracy Law.

Now, a year after the initial discovery, a new book, *The Divided North: Black and White Families in the Age of Slavery* (UMass Press, April 2025), chronicles the histories of two Maine families—the Rubys and the Gordons—through-

out the 1800s. The Ruby family, helmed by Reuben Ruby, became closely involved with the abolitionist movement and Underground Railroad, whilst the Gordon family continued to illegally engage in the slave trade as slave ship captains.

The dual-family biography weaves effortlessly through the legacies of these two families, which sometimes converge, diverge, mirror, and juxtapose each other.

In *The Divided North*, author Carol Gardner challenges us to question our preconceived idea of the “free” North during the tumultuous 19th century. “My 20 years of education in the North and Mid-Atlantic failed to offer an accurate picture of slavery, the slave economy and abolitionism in the North,” Gardner says. “That lack of acknowledgment inspired *The Divided North*.”

Jared Ross Hard-

esty, historian and author of *Black Lives, Native Lands, White Worlds*, says of the book, “Such an intimate portrait of nineteenth-century America’s racial politics helps us better understand what was at stake in the struggle for human freedom and dignity. It was a struggle that echoes into our own time.”

Bob Greene, historian of African Americans in Maine, praises the book, saying, “This engrossing dual biography is another

giant step in uncovering the national leadership of an unsung Maine hero, Reuben Ruby.”

Gardner writes, “This book seeks to recover some of what has been forgotten: in particular, what it was like to live in the North throughout the turbulent 19th century. It tells that story through the lenses of two families who played important but opposing roles: abetting and advocating against slavery.”

Kate Cheney Chappell '83 Center for Book Arts presents Bazaar

PORTLAND, ME --Join us for the 2025 Book Arts Bazaar, a community celebration dedicated to the fine craft of book arts. This unique gathering showcases the talents of regional book artists, papermakers, bookbinders, printmakers, educators, and writers, all coming together to share their passion for contemporary book arts. This event is FREE and open to the public. We welcome visitors of all ages. Presented by the Kate Cheney Chappell '83 Center for Book Arts, this event invites the public to connect with artists and learn about the techniques that keep these cherished traditions alive.

Featured vendors include: Purplebean Bindery | Lank Press | Pretend Books | Wingedprints | Bunkhouse Studio | Allison Villani | Wake Robin | Surprise! I Made It | Andy Jones | Gayle Fitzpatrick | PinkLime Creative | Fireball Bookbindery | Tempered East | Small Craft Advisory | Mermaid

Bindery | Landless Craft | Pattison Paperworks | Pickwick Independent Press | Talking Heads Fine Art Studio | Dragonfly Studio | Maggie Fiori | Maya Skylark | SICK Magazine | The Kelpie Press | Cyan Pen | A CLEARING | Portmantoad Prints | Shattuck Gallery | Grant Street Editions | Benoni Press | Pencil Magazine | KCC'83CBA Crit Group | Portland Zine Club | Calla King-Clements |

Two Imagine Studios Visitors have the opportunity to explore a diverse array of handmade books, artisan paper products, and unique prints, while engaging in meaningful conversations about the rich traditions and innovations within the field. Portland Zine Club will also be hosting zine making activities throughout the duration of the event, encouraging community-building through sharing narratives in print.

Getting to the Book Arts Bazaar



The METRO Husky Bus and the METRO #4 pickup/drop-off directly in front of the McGoldrick Center for Career and Student Services. An updated bus schedule can be found on the METRO website and bus fair is \$2 each way.

Additionally, a flat \$8 parking rate is available to Book Arts Bazaar attendees who are interested in parking in our USM Portland Garage One, located directly across the street from the McGoldrick Center for Ca-

reer and Student Success. In our digital parking interface, navigate to April 6 and find the Book Arts Bazaar event tab. From there enter your auto information and pay accordingly. Street parking is free, although limited.

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WHY PEOPLE CHOOSE CHAMPOUX INSURANCE

Jonathan Knowlton
Licensed Agent

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

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Seniors Not Acting Their Age

Stormy Weather in Tuckerman Ravine



A skier struggles with a heavy load on Tuckerman Ravine Trail



A hiker ascends a ridge in Tuckerman Ravine



Three hikers arrive in the bowl at the foot of Tuckerman Ravine headwall

Tuckerman Ravine on New Hampshire's Mount Washington is an iconic place. Each year, thousands of skiers and hikers visit the spectacular glacial cirque on the southeast face of the massive mountain.

Over the past 40 years, I've had the good fortune to experience several adventures in the ravine. It's been a waypoint on treks to the summit and twice I've climbed to the ravine to ski the Sherburne Trail. Skiing the headwall and nearby gullies was once a goal but always a jump too far for my limited abilities.

Physical ailments in recent years have ren-

dered my return to climb to the summit or ski the Sherburne Trail unrealistic. When my friend, Suzanne Cole, announced a Penobscot Paddle & Chowder Society trek to the ravine to watch skiers and enjoy the exceptional beauty of that location, the hike seemed like an endeavor my arthritic knee could withstand. And, the prospect of revisiting the cirque was very compelling.

Mount Washington is notorious for extreme unpredictable weather and obtaining a reliable forecast is problematic. Although late February, the prediction for the trailhead at Pinkham Notch was

spring-like. However, a potpourri of sun, variable winds, clouds and precipitation was the bewildering prognostication for higher elevations.

Four Chowderheads met at the Appalachian Mountain Club Visitor Center at Pinkham Notch on a unusually warm, breezy, partly sunny morning with intermittent rain showers. A modest number of hikers and skiers were preparing to ascend Tuckerman Ravine Trail.

An inspection of surface conditions at the trailhead left us confused about the best choice for footgear. In fact, there really wasn't a good option.

Treads on the heavy-duty Snowcat used for rescues and transporting supplies had recently chewed up the snow leaving a rough partially frozen snowpack. Three of us decided to wear snowshoes while the fourth just bare boots. We all carried micro spikes.

The sun was shining and the temperature in the high thirties when we started hiking up Tuckerman Ravine Trail. The wide, moderately steep path gains about 1,800-feet of elevation in 2.4-miles before reaching Hermit Lake Cabin at the lower end of the ravine. After a short distance, we began overheating and stopped at a bridge over Cutler River to remove layers.

The trail was busy as we progressed past Boot Spur Trail junction on the left and angled sharply right. Almost instantaneously, the weather changed. Winds picked up and it started to snow. We stopped again, this time to add layers.

About midway, conditions worsened into a gusty snowstorm. We met a skier descending while carrying a heavy pack and pulling a sled filled with gear. He had spent the night in a Hermit Lake Shelter and was struggling

in the stormy weather.

After persisting past junctions for Huntington Ravine Trail, Raymond Path, and Lion Head Trail, we met two skiers who were using skins to ski up the path. When asked if they would be challenging the headwall, their quick reply was, "Not in this weather." Instead, they planned to descend the less exposed Sherburne Trail that parallels Tuckerman Ravine Trail to Pinkham Notch. In anticipation of an arctic blast when entering the ravine, we donned parkas and protective gear.

As expected, we encountered blustery weather and wind-driven snow at Hermit Lake Cabin. Equipped with adequate gear for extreme conditions, we decided to proceed a short mile to the bowl at the bottom of the headwall.

All of us wore snowshoes as we ascended steeply on a narrow path in a sparse stunted spruce forest. We met a lone hiker on snowshoes near the top of a ridge who reported powerful winds in the bowl.

Visibility was limited amidst gusting wind and blowing snow when we reached our destination near a site called Lunch

Rocks. No skiers or hikers were observed. We didn't linger in the stormy environment and quickly descended to a wooded location below Hermit Lake Cabin where we paused for a lunch break protected from the wind.

On our return to Pinkham Notch, we met numerous skiers on their way to Sherburne Trail. Conditions were warm and sunny when we arrived. We had experienced a quintessential weather day on mercurial Mount Washington.

My book, *Maine Al Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine* relates treks on the nine best mountain hikes in Maine including exciting winter climbs on Mount Katahdin.

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

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Franco Center collaborates on five-year strategic plan

LEWISTON, ME — On Friday, March 21, the board members and staff of the Franco Center came together with consultant Alice Kornhauser, founder and principal of AKorn Communications, for a productive session focused on the Center’s new five-year strategic plan. The meeting included board members Chair Michel Lajoie, Vice Chair Dr. Don Christie, Treasurer Jan Sullivan, and Dottie Perham-Whittier, as well as staff members: Theresa Shanahan, executive director; Denise Scammon, marketing and development director; and Susan Spellman, box office manager and administrative assistant.

Shanahan, who had been collaborating with Kornhauser for several weeks on the strategic plan, shared that it was the right

time to bring the board and staff together for a brainstorming session. “It was very encouraging to hear the input from staff members and our current board. This is great forward momentum!” she said.

The day-long workshop centered on a SWOT analysis— a widely used marketing and strategic planning tool that stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. This exercise allowed participants to contribute their insights, helping to identify key priorities for the Center’s future.

“The planning session enabled us to collaboratively focus on where we are, where we want to be, and how we are going to get there,” said board member Perham-Whittier. “Such input and perspectives are invaluable for the

Center’s continued growth and development.”

The group’s discussion highlighted an extensive list of the organization’s strengths, including its rich French culture, language, and history programs, a dedicated and passionate staff, a beautiful and historic building, signature events, a strong marketing presence, an engaged audience, and the Franco Center’s role as a gathering place for the community.

“Our interactions with patrons at the Franco Center are invaluable in understanding our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats,” noted Scammon. “For instance, patrons at La Rencontre often share how much they enjoy the social hour before the event begins, which speaks to the community-building



A strategic planning workshop was held March 21 at the Franco Center and included board members, staff and a planning consultant. From left, in the front row are Denise Scammon, Alice Kornhauser, Theresa Shanahan, and Susan Spellman; back row: Jan Sullivan, Dr. Don Christie, Dottie Perham-Whittier, and Michel Lajoie.

atmosphere we strive to foster.”

Board Chair Lajoie echoed the importance of community feedback in shaping the Center’s strategic plan: “We need input from our community on what they appreciate about our events and pro-

grams, and what they’d like to see more or less of in the future. We are also committed to the Franco Center’s mission of honoring, preserving, and celebrating Franco-American heritage.”

At the conclusion of the session, the group iden-

tified several key priorities for the Center’s future, including professional development, board member recruitment, and increasing awareness of the venue’s rental opportunities. Kornhauser wrapped up the workshop by summarizing the SWOT analysis, stating, “It’s clear that a lot of great work is happening here at the Franco Center.”

For more information about volunteering or becoming a board member, or to share comments, the public is encouraged to contact the Franco Center staff at 207-783-1583. Additional details about the organization and its events can be found on the newly updated website at www.francocenter.org. The venue is located at 46 Cedar Street, the former St. Mary’s Church, in Lewiston.

Greg Boardman presents Evolution of French Fiddling

AUBURN, ME -- The Maine Franco-American Genealogical Society [MFGS} is pleased to have Greg Boardman, renowned Maine fiddler, as its guest performer at its spring general membership meeting on April 12th in the Androscoggin Community Room of the Auburn Public Library, 49 Spring St., Auburn.

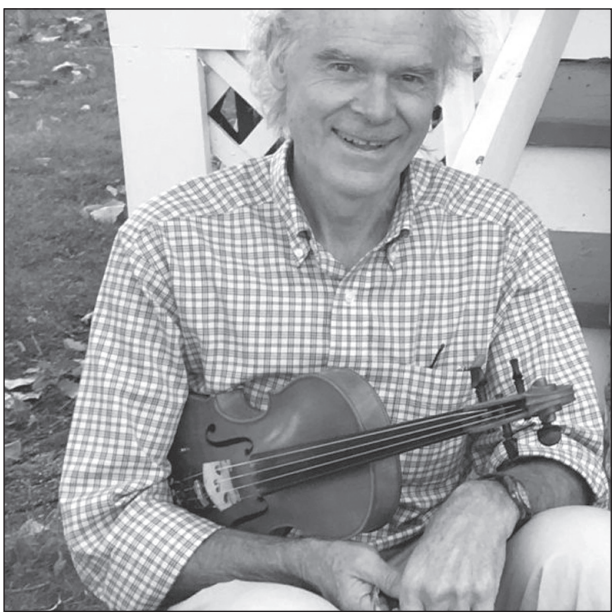
Greg’s presentation will begin at approximately 11:00 am. Prior to this performance, MFGS will hold a brief business meeting beginning at 10 am that will include light refreshments.

Admission to the meeting and the presentation is free and open to the public.

According to Greg: “I will be tracing the evolution of French dance music from the old country to the North American colonies and their eventual sovereignty, while playing examples on my fiddle. I will be doing my

best to play the different styles, including French folk, renaissance and baroque dance music, plus examples of Acadian, Québécois and Maine French traditional music.”

Greg Boardman is a well-known Maine fiddler originally from Salem, Massachusetts. Greg states: “I traded my electric guitar for a fiddle upon hearing Dave Swarbrick play with Fairport Convention at the King’s Rook, in Ipswich, Massachusetts, back in 1970.” Roving out later from his home in central Maine, he soon discovered a cadre of expeditionary peer fiddlers and older generations boasting of some very fine country and traditional musicians. He goes on to name a few of these who had a great impact upon his life and music: Cherry Frechette, Otto Soper, Fred Pike, Leo Murphy, Simon St. Pierre, Ben Guillemette



Greg Boardman, Fiddler and Lucien Matthieu. And in Boardman’s own words: “Dudley Laufman of Canterbury, New Hampshire, whose itinerant musician’s license still brings him frequently to Maine, has also been a seminal musical influence, not to mention the very welcome new wave of younger musicians who are infusing our

scene with great energy, creativity and feeling.”

Greg received his BM from USM and his MFA from Goddard Col-

lege. He is a founding member of Maine Fiddle Camp established in 1994. This camp, for adults, youths and children, is held every summer in Mid-Coast Maine and consists of multiple weekend and week-long sessions. According to Assistant Camp Director Jo-Anne Bouthot, Greg is not only a founding member but is a highly valued instructor and member of the organization.

In addition to performing around the state from his family base in Lewiston, Greg continues to teach bowed strings to Lewiston elementary school children, produce music events such as the weekly Oasis at Trinity

Commons, and assist in music for worship.

There will be time for a question-and-answer session at the end of Greg’s presentation.

MFGS is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization whose purpose is to promote the study of Franco-American genealogy and genealogical research in the state of Maine.

For more information about MFGS visit www.mfgen.org

For more information about the meeting, contact Connie Hitchcock, at cahitchco@aol.com.

For parking information at the Auburn Public Library, visit www.auburnpubliclibrary.org

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

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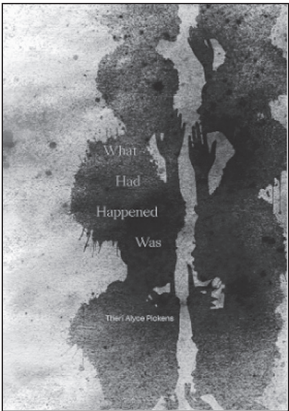
Arts & Entertainment

Author launches debut poetry collection in Lewiston

LEWISTON, ME --In her debut poetry collection, *What Had Happened Was*, Therí Alyce Pickens investigates the complex structures of Black storytelling. Addressing topics ranging from Black life, popular culture, and history to individual encounters with emotion, love, and chronic disability, Pickens crafts and questions the stories we tell ourselves about who we are and who we want to be. Throughout, Pickens mines the formal structures and the play of Black English within the lives and afterlives of Harriet Tubman, Mary J. Blige, Li'l Kim, Breonna Taylor, and fragments of our collective imagination. Her poetic voice flows between what she knows and what she's heard and between everyday Black conversation and her work in cultural criticism and disability studies. Traveling at the speed of thought, Pickens explores a praxis of storytelling governed by the places where truths and fables kiss.

Dr Pickens will be launching her debut poetry collection on Thursday, April 3rd at 6 pm. This event will be held in the Commons (221 & 222) of Bates College, at 136 Central Avenue in Lewiston. Dr. Pickens will be in conversation with Samaa Abdurraqib, poet and Executive Director of the Maine Humanities Council. Book signing and reception to follow. You can join this event virtually, here: vimeo.com/event/4999616.

PROFESSOR THERÍ A. PICKENS received her undergraduate degree in Comparative Literature from Princeton University and her PhD in Comparative Literature from UCLA. She is a poet-scholar who focuses on Arab American Studies, Black Studies, Comparative Literature, and Disability Studies.



Author of *Black Madness :: Mad Blackness* (Duke UP, 2019) and *New Body Politics* (Routledge, 2014) and editor of *Arab American Aesthetics: Literature, Material Culture, Film, and Theatre* (Routledge, 2018) and *Special Issue of African American Review on Blackness and Disability* (2017), her work has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Black Girl Nerds*, *The Counter*, *Inside Higher Ed*, and *Ms. Magazine*. Her poetry has been published or is forthcoming from *Prairie Schooner*, *The Journal*, *Diode*, *Black Renaissance Noire*, *Omnium Gatherum Quarterly*, *Langston Hughes Review*, *The Madison Review*, and *Cane: A New Critical Edition*.

PRAISE from readers of *What Had Happened Was*:

"Therí Alyce Pick-

ens writes a poetics of the body that considers history, politics, race, gender, and the everyday mundane ways that they are experienced in bones, in the brain, and on the skin. If you understand in depth the expression, the answer is in how one would begin: "What had happened was . . ." - Bettina Judd, author of *Feelin: Creative Practice, Pleasure, and Black Feminist Thought*

"In her constantly surprising and deftly built poems, Therí Alyce Pickens enacts a poetics that refuses binaries, attends to and extends the power of Black art, and centers a body navigating illness. Pickens seamlessly moves through and braids memory, history, pop culture. The language is precise and remarkable; it will engage and entangle you in marvelous ways." - Eduardo C. Corral, author of *Guillotine: Poems*

"This collection demands attention and introspection by offering a raw yet eloquent portrayal of the intersections of history, identity, and systemic oppression. It's an essential read for people seeking to honor the complexity of the experiences of Black Americans." - Jessica Calaway, *Library Journal*

USM Gorham presents 'Little Women, the Broadway Musical'



L-R, Top to Bottom: Karoline Brechter (Meg), Taylor Ciotti (Jo), Kaelan Gildart (Marmee), Emma Hall (Beth), Kiki Belanger (Amy). Photo by Kat Moraros Photography

GORHAM, ME -- The University of Southern Maine Department of Theatre, in collaboration with the Osher School of Music, Welcomes Spring with *Fantastical & Heartwarming Little Women, the Broadway Musical*, April 4-13th at Russell Hall on the USM Gorham Campus.

Based on Louisa May Alcott's groundbreaking novel of the same name, *Little Women, the Broadway Musical*, depicts the story of Jo March as she reflects on her struggle to become a successful writer in Civil War America. Finding strength in the support and love of her mother and sisters, Jo fights to overcome enormous obstacles - including war, illness, and discrimination - in her pursuit of achieving her dreams. This reimagined and fantastical portrayal of an American classic is brought to life with glorious music filled with personal discovery, heartache, hope, and everlasting love.

Content Advisories: Conversations about death and the Civil War.

Little Women is sug-

gested for grades five and up.

Little Women, The Broadway Musical, In collaboration with the Osher School of Music. Book by Allan Knee, Music by Jason Howland, Lyrics by Mindi Dickstein. Based on the novel by Louisa May Alcott, Directed by Danny Hutchins, Musical Direction by Edward Reichert, Choreography by Vanessa Beyland.

April 4-13, 2025
Russell Hall, USM Gorham Campus

Tickets:
To purchase tickets, or for more information, visit USM Theatre online at <https://usm.maine.edu/departments-theatre/box-office-tickets/>, or call the USM Theatre Box Office at (207) 780-5151. For more information on USM's Department of Theatre events and programs, head to: <https://usm.maine.edu/departments-theatre/>
\$10-\$24

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

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

Special April 12th Performance: A Little Women VIP Spring Soiree

To celebrate storytelling, women in literature, and the work of the USM Department of Theatre, we will be hosting "The Little Women VIP Spring Soiree" on April 12th. This special fundraising event will feature hors d'oeuvres, cash bar, a photo booth, an intermission dessert bar, a raffle, a silent auction with great items from local businesses, special student performances, a meet-and-greet with the cast after the show, and a ticket to *Little Women, the Broadway Musical*. Everyone is encouraged to dress in your spring soiree best. All proceeds support the USM Department of Theatre.

Tickets to Little Women VIP Spring Soiree <https://www.give-campus.com/schools/UniversityofSouthern-MaineFoundation/events/little-women-vip-spring-soiree>

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April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Is sexual assault a problem in Maine?

Yes. One in five Mainers will experience sexual assault at some point in their lifetime. [1] Each year, 19,000 Mainers will experience sexual violence. [2] However, in 2019, only 514 rapes or attempted rapes were reported to Maine law enforcement. [3]

CHILDREN

In a study of girls who were committed and/or detained at Maine’s Long Creek Youth Development Center between December 2001 and September 2002, 20% of the girls reported a history of sexual abuse or rape. [4]

In 2019, approximately 50% of calls to Maine’s sexual assault crisis and support line related to child sexual abuse. [5]

According to the Children’s Safety Network and Data Analysis Resource Center, the comprehensive costs of sexual abuse of children in Maine in 2004 were \$138,057,000. This estimate takes into consideration future earnings, medical and mental health expenses, and public programs, among other things.

[6] Approximately 7.5% of Maine high school students (10.8% of girls and 4.0% of boys) report that they have been physically forced to have sexual intercourse. 11.9% – 18.4% of girls and 5.6% of boys – report having been forced to have sexual contact in any way in their lifetime. [7]

18.4% of Maine high school students – 26.4% of girls and 10.6% of boys – report having been the target of offensive sexual comments at school or on the way to or from school in their lifetime. [8]

In FY 2018 and FY2019 combined, Maine’s sexual assault crisis and support centers provided prevention education sessions to almost 70,000 Maine K-12 students. [9]

ADULTS

A recent study found that nearly one in five adult Maine residents reports that they have been the victim of rape or attempted rape during their lifetime; 35.7% of female respondents and 10.1% of male respondents have experienced this devastating crime at some point in their lives. [10]

Roughly 14,000 Maine residents may be the victim of rape or unwanted sexual activity during any 12 month period. [11]

In 2019, about 20% of callers to Maine’s sexual assault crisis and support line were men. [12]

Preble Street Resource Center, located in Portland, Maine, reports that 44% of women interviewed for their report Women and Homelessness reported being a victim of sexual assault since becoming homeless. [13]

MENTAL HEALTH/ SUBSTANCE USE

48.6% of adult Maine sexual assault survivors report that they have ever been diagnosed as depressed, as opposed to 17.5% individuals who have never been sexually assaulted. [14]

38.3% of adult Maine sexual assault survivors report that they have ever been diagnosed with an anxiety disorder, as opposed to 14.2% of individuals who have never been sexually assaulted. [15]

28.7% of women sexual assault survivors in Maine report they drank heavily in the past month (compared to 4.4% of individuals who have never been sexually assaulted). [16]

Of Maine youth who experience forced sexual contact OR forced sex, 35-37% consider suicide, as compared with only 9-10% of their peers who have not experienced sexual violence. [17]

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Tips for talking with survivors of sexual assault

Contributed by RAINN

It’s not always easy to know what to say when someone tells you they’ve been sexually assaulted, especially if they are a friend or family member. For a survivor, disclosing to someone they care about can be very difficult, so we encourage you to be as supportive and non-judgmental as possible.

Sometimes support means providing resources, such as how to reach the National Sexual Assault Hotline, seek medical attention, or report the crime to the police. But often listening is the best way to support a survivor.

Here are some specific phrases RAINN’s National Sexual Assault Hotline staff recommend to be supportive through a survivor’s healing process.

“I believe you. / It took a lot of courage to tell me about this.” It can be extremely difficult for survivors to come forward and share their story. They may feel ashamed, concerned that they won’t be believed, or worried they’ll be blamed. Leave any “why” questions or investigations to the experts—your job is to support this person. Be careful not to interpret calmness as a sign that the event did not occur—everyone responds to traumatic events differently. The best thing you can do is to believe them.

“It’s not your fault. / You didn’t do anything to deserve this.” Survivors may blame themselves, especially if they know the perpetrator personally. Remind the survivor, maybe even more than once, that they are not to blame.

“You are not alone. / I care about you and am here to listen or help in any way I can.” Let the survivor know that you are there for them and willing to listen to their story if they are comfortable sharing it. Assess if there are people in their life they feel comfortable going to, and remind them that there are service providers who will be able to support them as they heal from the experience.

“I’m sorry this happened. / This shouldn’t have happened to you.” Acknowledge that the experience has affected their life. Phrases like “This must be really tough for you,” and, “I’m so glad you are sharing this with me,” help to communicate empathy.

There’s no timetable when it comes to recovering from sexual violence. If someone trusted you enough to disclose the event to you, consider the following ways to show your continued support.

Avoid judgment. It can be difficult to watch a survivor struggle with the effects of sexual assault for an extended period of time. Avoid phrases that suggest they’re taking too long to recover such as, “You’ve been acting like this for a while now,” or “How much longer will you feel this way?”

Check in periodically. The event may have happened a long time ago, but that doesn’t mean the pain is gone. Check in with the survivor to remind them you still care about their well-being and believe their story.

Know your resources. You’re a strong supporter, but that doesn’t mean you’re equipped to manage someone else’s health. Become familiar with resources you can recommend to a survivor, such as the National Sexual Assault Hotline 800.656.HOPE (4673) signs, and offer help and support. For more information about suicide prevention please visit the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline or call 800.273.TALK (8255) any time, day or night.

Encourage them to practice good self-care during this difficult time.

If you or someone you know has been affected by sexual violence, it’s not your fault. You are not alone. Help is available 24/7 through the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE or visit the Online Hotline, y en español a rainn.org/es.

RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network) is the nation’s largest anti-sexual violence organization. RAINN created and operates the National Sexual Assault Hotline (800.656.HOPE, online.rainn.org y rainn.org/es) in partnership with more than 1,000 local sexual assault service providers across the country and operates the DoD Safe Helpline for the Department of Defense. RAINN also carries out programs to prevent sexual violence, help survivors, and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice.

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

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April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

About Cumberland County’s Through These Doors

Through These Doors began its work in 1977 as Family Crisis Shelter and continues to work together with survivors to offer holistic services, give voice to their experiences, and shape our community’s response to the issue of domestic abuse. Social Change Advocacy TTD supports individuals experiencing domestic violence, while working to end domestic violence everywhere. We connect with survivors and their supportive networks to strengthen our community as a whole and to create solidarity around the issue of violence against women. Community Focused TTD calls on community members, partners, leaders, and ourselves to respond, repair, and prevent the damage caused by violence. Survivor Centered TTD engages in meaningful relationships that affirm the whole person, honoring our interdependence with each other and our environment. Innovative Services TTD learns from survivors and community members, developing and adapting services to respond to the changing world. We help rather than rescue survivors.

SARSSM’s Sexual Assault Helpline

Sexual Assault Response Services of Southern Maine (SARSSM) offers a free, confidential 24-hour sexual assault helpline for anyone affected by sexual violence in York and Cumberland Counties in Southern Maine.

Call Our Helpline at 1-800-871-7741

Common Reasons People Call Our Helpline:

They just want to talk about what happened, or have questions about whether or not a situation was consensual.

They have experienced an assault and are in need of resources and support.

They would like to request that we meet them at the hospital to support them through a forensic exam (rape kit), or at the police department while they file a police report.

They are interested in receiving ongoing advocacy services, or would like to sign up for one of hope and healing programs (support groups, yoga).

Someone they care about has experienced sexual violence and they are looking for ways to help.

They are a community partner supporting a survivor of sexual violence and would like to consult with an advocate. ... and more! Feel free to give us a call.

What to Expect When You Call Our Helpline

When you call our helpline, our answering service will answer your call and request your first name, county and phone number to help route your call to an on-call Advocate in your area. The Advocate will return your call within 15 minutes at the phone number you provided. Please ensure that your phone settings will allow you to receive a call from a blocked phone number. If you are calling from a pay phone, you can ask that the answer service patch you through to us, and they will keep you on the line until an Advocate has joined the call. If you need a language interpreter, simply state what language you speak, and the advocate will arrange for an interpreter to assist by phone. Please Note: For safety reasons, Advocates are unable to leave you a voicemail if you miss their call, but you can always call the helpline number again to request another call back. Once the advocate is on the line, they will introduce themselves and ask how they can help. You can let them know if you just want to talk, or ask questions. If you feel nervous or are unsure about what to say, that’s okay! You can just let them know how you are feeling, and they will help guide you through the conversation. They are non-judgmental and will never blame you for what happened. Helpline Advocates are there to support, validate, and help you.




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

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April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Spring Melt 2025 to raise funds for Sexual Assault Awareness Month

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Details at <https://www.sarssm.org/sarssm-spring-melt-2025.html>

with catering by 2getherprivatechefs

Please join Sexual Assault Response Services Of Southern Maine on April 24th as we wind down Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) with our fundraising event SARSSM Spring Melt 2025.

As we enter warmer seasons, come break the ice with SARSSM. It will be an event like no other, and we want you to be there! ☐

Join us at The Hill Arts for an evening of music, creativity and discovery, topped off with melty, gourmet grilled cheese, drinks and chocolate cheese tarts by 2Gether Private Chefs.

SARSSM Spring Melt 2025 begins a new annual tradition to recognize the possibility and power of getting to the other side of trauma, of sharing light and community connection.

With MC Atiim Boykin, Portland based artist & community leader keeping the energy moving, the evening will also include a brief program highlighting the positive impact of SARSSM programs and services provided within Cumberland and York Counties. as well as creative activities for introverts, and special guest, DJ 40Sauce, the live jukebox, collaborating with guests to curate the mood for the evening.

SARSSM is thrilled to announce our Lamp, Lifeboat, & Ladder Award recipients: Pine Tree Legal Assistance, Barb McGuan, and Paul Matteson, LCPC. Please join us to celebrate their work on behalf of our mission.

Every ticket sold and dollar raised for this event allows us to sustain our vital services AND to develop and implement additional programs and services in response to evolving need within our community. Together, we can create a brighter world for all.

To promote accessibility & community engagement, tickets are “pay what you want” and are priced \$10-\$100.

If you cannot make the event but want to make a donation, please go here.

To purchase tickets to SARSSM Spring Melt 2025, please scan the QR code.

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Through These Doors can help. Please call our free, confidential 24-Hour Helpline at 1-800-537-6066.

A trained TTD advocate is available 24 hours a day by phone for support, information, and safety planning. You do not have to be in crisis or needing shelter to call the helpline. Call with questions or talk with someone who will listen to you without judgment or telling you what to do.

Our helpline is for everyone. Friends, family, coworkers, supervisors,

Through These DOORS

Domestic Violence Resources & Advocacy

police, counselors, clergy, and healthcare providers are welcome to contact us for information and support. TTD has access to interpreters, ASL, and Language Line.

Our helpline is answered by an answering service. An operator will ask for your name and a safe phone number. An advocate will call you back from a blocked or restricted phone number within 15 minutes. If you would feel more comfortable speaking to an advocate in a language other than English, please tell the operator which language you prefer. The advocate will return your call with an interpreter.

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Former librarian makes reading accessible for Gorham toddlers

GORHAM, ME -- Thanks to North Gorham Public Library's esteemed former librarian Virginia Rundell and her husband Clark, toddlers can now easily access our collection of board books. Virginia found the bin and Clark attached some wheels. Our models are a bit older than our intended audience, but they still enjoyed browsing. We appreciate book lovers of all ages!



Join Conservation Commission for 5th annual Gorham Cleans Up

GORHAM, ME -- Folks of all ages are invited to join the Gorham Conservation Commission in collaboration with the Gorham Village Alliance and the Think Blue Maine campaign for the 5th Annual Gorham Cleans Up event on Sunday, April 27, 2025 from 8:30am - 11:00am to pick up trash in the Village and along the drainage basins along New Portland Road and South Street.

As with previous years, Gorham Volunteers



in Police Service (VIPS) will help with traffic safety and the Gorham Conservation Commission will provide clean-up supplies, including donuts!

This is a great way to get outside, have some fun and keep trash out of Gorham's stormwater run off

basins. The event will start at the Municipal Center, and donations will be collected for the Gorham Food Pantry.

To sign-up and find more information about the event, please visit <https://www.gorhamconservation.org/gorham-cleans-up/>.

TUSM-MHMMC Maine Track holds Match Day

PORTLAND, ME -- Fourth-year medical students in the Tufts University School of Medicine –MaineHealth Maine Medical Center (TUSM-MHMMC) Maine Track program celebrated “Match Day” in Portland on Friday, learning which residency program they’ll be joining for the next three to seven years. Every one of the 41 Maine Track students in this year’s class matched to a high-quality program, and 11 of them found out they would be staying in Portland as residents at MaineHealth Maine Medical Center.

Match Day is the culmination of the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) that fourth-

year medical students use to enter their next stage of training. Students apply to residency programs in the fall, and programs interview those they’re interested in. Students then rank the residencies, with the program that they would most like to join at the top, and residency programs enter a ranked list of students. The NRMP matches students and programs, and on Match Day, students find out their residency “match.” This is the third year that Maine Track students opened the envelopes containing their match with family and friends in Portland. Previously, they joined other Tufts students in Boston for the celebration.



Maine Track M25 students who matched at MaineHealth Maine Medical Center celebrate. Left to right: Hannah Slatery, Mariah Milazzo, Julia Greenwald, Annika Williams, Austin Steward, Anne Mullin, Zack Gauthier, Joshua Parbs, Tyler Hinckley, Beanie O’Shea and Camille Lubetkin

“It is so exciting to see all my hard work come to fruition,” said Joshua Parbs, M25, who learned he matched with MaineHealth Maine Medical Center. “I felt all the emo-

tions at once. I’m really looking forward to diving into pediatrics and becoming a doctor.”

The Maine Track program is a partnership between MHMMC Port-



land and Tufts formed 17 years ago to help address the shortage of doctors in Maine, provide financial assistance to aspiring medical students from Maine and develop an innovative curriculum focused on community-based education. Students receive classroom instruction in Boston before coming to Maine for hands-on training. To date, 439 physicians have graduated from the Maine Track Program. 85 graduates known to have completed their training are now practicing physicians in Maine.

“Every physician has a distinct memory of

their Match Day,” said Dr. Dena Whitesell, assistant dean for students in the TUSM-MHMMC Maine Track program. “It is a big moment for doctors professionally and personally, and it’s always wonderful to see the support our students receive from their families, friends and mentors as they find out where they’ll be taking the next step in their careers.”

14 students in the Maine Track class of 2025 matched to primary care residencies. MaineHealth also filled all of its categorical residency programs and 3 rural tracks.

UMaine research aims to reduce wasted food in school cafeterias

SOUTH PORTLAND, ME — Four school districts across Maine were able to reduce their food waste by 20% by participating in a 2023 study conducted by University of Maine researchers. To build on the learning and momentum around reducing wasted food in Maine school cafeterias, UMaine has launched a second Maine School Cafeteria Wasted Food Study with four school districts and support from the World Wildlife Fund.

Students from Brown Elementary School in South Portland, Sherwood Heights Elementary School in Auburn, Sugg Middle School in Lisbon and Easton Elementary School have been given various lessons and activities to learn how they can

eat better and waste less food.

New share carts and school community fridges have been set up to allow students to give unopened food that can be eaten by other students or donated to feed the community. Students from kindergarten through eighth grade are learning to separate their food scraps from trash. Their food scraps can be used to feed animals or make compost that can grow new fruits and vegetables. The students weigh their daily food scraps to measure any changes.

“The Food Waste Study is a great opportunity for our students to see firsthand how their choices impact the environment and their community. It’s not just about reducing waste. It is also

about learning to be responsible, thoughtful and resourceful,” said Brown Elementary School Principal Beth Kellogg. “By tracking what gets thrown away, students become more mindful of what they take, what they eat and how they can share or save food instead of wasting it. Additionally, we like filling student tummies more than filling landfills.”

In Easton, the food scraps from the school cafeteria are collected at the end of each day by local Amish farmers. This food is then used to feed their livestock and support their local farming and gardening activities.

The activities are part of the eight-week study developed by the Food Rescue MAINE student and faculty team from UMaine’s Senator George J. Mitchell Center for Sustainability Solutions. The study seeks to improve student nutrition and reduce wasted food through hands-on learning.

Study co-leads Susanne Lee, Mitchell Center faculty fellow, and William Brenneman, UMaine graduate student, meet weekly with district school



Susanne Lee speaks with elementary school students volunteering to serve as “food rescue heroes” and help their classmates prevent wasting food at Brown Elementary School in South Portland. Photo by Gracie Treadwell

nutrition directors to plan the study implementation and also visit the schools to host engaging, school-wide “How Can You Reduce Wasted Food?” assemblies.

“The study is valuable because it has effectively brought together productive communication across multiple departments, inspiring students and adults, and showing the importance of highlighting the concept of getting back to basics with education in the cafeteria and the reason behind the why to reuse and recycle,” said Shawn Perry, Director of the School Nutrition Program for the South Portland School Department.

The study was also developed in collaboration

with the Maine Department of Education, state Department of Environmental Protection and the Governor’s Office for Policy & Innovation for the Future. It’s supported by a grant from the World Wildlife Food Waste Warrior program.

Food waste leads to economic, social and environmental damage. In the first-ever Maine Food Loss and Waste Generation Study completed in 2024, Food Rescue MAINE found that 361,000 tons of food loss and waste are generated annually in the state. Overall, that is almost 40% of all food produced in Maine. For families, this means an average of \$1600 worth of food is thrown away each year.

Throwing food in the trash results in valuable food resources going to non-food disposal resources like Maine landfills where it produces leachate as well as methane and other greenhouse gases harming the environment. Keeping food out of the waste stream and reallocating it to people in need can not only address environmental concerns, but also help tackle food insecurity in the state, which is the highest in New England. According to Feeding America, 180,000 people in Maine — about one in eight — experienced food insecurity in 2022, including one in five children.

In 2015, the Mitchell Center’s Materials Management team was tasked with eliminating wasted food and food loss, as the Maine DEP identified this as the most pressing issue impacting the state’s materials management system. The Food Rescue MAINE program was founded in 2019 to end wasted food and food loss in Maine through stakeholder-driven, transdisciplinary, triple bottom line solutions to support Maine’s food recovery hierarchy.

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North Gorham Public Library hosting Plant, Book Sale

GORHAM, ME -- It's a sure sign of spring as North Gorham Public Li-

brary is already thinking about our annual Plant & Book Sale! Mark the date

on your calendar. North Gorham Public Library

Plant & Book Sale Saturday, June 7 from 9 to 1

Remember us as you begin to open up your gar-

dens. We will happily accept your plant donations as we get closer to the date. Don't worry, we'll remind you!



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Green Home & Energy Show is April 5

PORTLAND, ME – The publisher of Green & Healthy Maine HOMES magazine is happy to present the fifth annual Green Home + Energy Show on April 5th at The Point Community Center in South Portland.

The Green Home + Energy Show is the place to find resources to make your home more comfortable, efficient, healthy and sustainable—whether you are renovating, building, or buying. Take advantage of a full day of programming included with your ticket. Connect with a variety of

home and energy exhibitors all in one place. Test drive an electric vehicle or check out electric yard tools at the EV Expo, discover businesses prioritizing eco-friendly landscaping practices at the Sustainable Landscape Expo, and learn directly from experts at 18 workshops, case studies and demonstrations offered at the event. Enjoy food trucks including Ironclad Eats, Tacos del Seoul and Totally Awesome Vegan Food Truck. Girl Scout cookies and treats from Baked With Love will also be available for purchase.

As home to many nationally recognized building science and design professionals, Maine is leading the way in the high-performing home industry. Don't miss your chance to learn directly from these highly sought-out professionals.

The show will host informative workshops featuring a wide range of topics including creative ways to reinvest in your property with an accessory dwelling unit, pre-fab construction for high performance homes, retrofitting your foundation, planting for

wildlife, accessing Efficiency Maine rebates, and many more. These programs are included with admission. A full list of workshops and exhibitors is available at greenmainehomes.com/workshops.

The presenting sponsor of this year's Green Home + Energy Show is LaPlante Home Services, and other lead sponsors include Dave's World, Mitsubishi Electric, Ecoheat Maine, Evergreen Home Performance, Hannaford Supermarkets, ReVision Energy, and Eldredge Lumber. A full list of sponsors

is available at greenmainehomes.com/show-2025.

The show takes place Saturday, April 5th from 9am to 4pm, with the Electric Vehicle Expo from 11am to 2pm. Tickets are \$15 at the door or \$12 when purchased online in advance. Students get in free with a valid student ID and children are free when accompanied by a ticket holding adult. Tickets can be purchased online at greenmainehomes.com/show-2025. Ticket sales will benefit The Ecology School at Riverbend Farm in Saco, Maine, a nonprofit school

where sustainability means living, learning, working & playing in ways that are regenerative.

Green & Healthy Maine HOMES is a magazine and website dedicated to inspiring real Maine homes that are comfortable, efficient, healthy and sustainable. Created and published by The SunriseGuide, LLC, Green & Healthy Maine HOMES provides expert advice, informative interviews, profiles of high performing homes, and cutting-edge information about both new and tried-and-true technologies.

Fontaine Family celebrates 10-year anniversary in Scarborough

SCARBOROUGH, ME -- At the heart of our community service initiative, we proudly offer moving vans to our clients and local charitable organizations, entirely free of charge. Whether you're relocating to a new residence or organizing resources for a non-profit, our vehicles are here to support your journey and the community at large.

This year marks

a special milestone for us—our 10th anniversary of the second location nestled in the beautiful Southern Maine, specifically Scarborough. Over the past decade, this location has been a beacon of support and convenience, offering a seamless experience to our valued clients. Scarborough's community has been incredible to serve, and we have cherished every mo-



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L-A VETERANS COUNCIL

ment of partnership and growth with our friends and neighbors.

As we celebrate this significant anniversary, we reflect on the countless moves we've facilitated and the many charitable missions we've supported. Our moving vans have been more than just vehicles; they've been a lifeline and a bridge to new



beginnings for so many. The gratitude and connections we've built fuel our commitment to continue offering these services free of charge.

In welcoming another decade in Scarborough, we are also renewing our

dedication to enhancing community engagement and fostering relationships. We're constantly looking for new ways to support and give back, promising richer experiences and fortified bonds with our community

members and organizations.

Thank you for allowing us to be part of your lives for the past 10 years. Here's to many more years of community building and shared successes in Scarborough!

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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.

Saturdays
AUBURN -- Books! Books! Books! The Auburn Public Library Bookstore is now open on Saturday mornings. from 9:30-1:00. Choose from hundreds of gently used books, with most prices under \$3. We have books for children, teens, and adults, fiction and non-fiction. We often have puzzles, CDs, and DVDs, too. Stop in and browse our ever changing

Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

selection! Auburn Public Library, 49 Spring Street.

Apr 4
AUBURN -- BOOK-STORE “Buck-A-Bag” CLEARANCE SALE - Thousands of book available for \$1 a bag. Fill any bag with books and pay just \$1 (as long as you can lift it). Friday, April 4 from 1:00 - 5:00, and Saturday, April 5 from 9:30-3:00. Auburn Public Library Bookstore, 49 Spring Street (Ground Floor). Auburn. Contact the Library for information on tickets for the Early Bird Sale (Friday 11:00 - 1:00).

Apr 12
LEED -- Leeds Volunteer Fire Department Spring Pancake and French Toast Breakfast 6:30 am - 10 am, Serving: French Toast, Pancakes, Eggs, Bacon, Sausage, Ham, Home Fries, Coffee, Cider and OJ Adults \$10, kids 4-12 \$6, under 4 Free. Funds Raised will purchase Personal Protective Gear

Apr 12
BRUNSWICK -- The 2024-25 UUCB Concerts for a Cause Series season will include folk, jazz, blues, celtic, and choral singing for justice. This season’s charities receiving 100% of the profits from the

concert are Brunswick Area Teen Center and Maine Family Planning. For further details about the concerts, go to <https://www.uubrunswick.org/events/>.

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

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

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

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:
April 15: Jim Galant and Billy Belskis, Instrumentals/blues/Celtic/a mix
Apr 17
FRYEBURG — South African musician McCoy Mrubata will be returning to the LHE/PAC’s Bradley Backstage on April 17th, at 7:00PM. Mrubata will be joined by his musical collaborator, guitarist Gary Wittner.

Apr 22
LEWISTON -- Celebrate Earth Day at the Lewiston Public Library in the Children’s Department on Tuesday, April 22, from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Children will learn about the importance of Earth Day and the ways they can reduce, reuse, and recycle. By using bottle caps, recycled paper, and plastic bags, children can create stylish friendship bracelets, goofy puppets, or adorable mini pets. This program is recommended for elementary-aged kids 6–14 years old. Free. No registration required. Bring recycled materials.

Apr 22
LEWISTON -- At 11am Chewonki will present their traveling natural history program, Owls of Maine: Habits and Adaptations of Maine’s Native Owls in Callahan Hall at Lewiston Public Library. This program includes an intimate and detailed look at a live owl, bringing these creatures of the night into

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the light! Free. No registration required. All ages are welcome to attend.

Apr 22-26
LEWISTON -- Join us at the Lewiston Public Library for Make an Owl Friend in the Children’s Department on the 3rd floor from April 22nd-26th. Come create your very own owl friend out of paper and feathers. Make an owl to take home or create one for display at the Lewiston Public Library. Use crayons, colored pencils, feathers and glue to decorate your paper owl. All materials are provided. Free. In person. For more information contact the Children’s Department at 513-3133 or LPLKids@Lewiston-Maine.gov

Apr 24
LEWISTON -- At 12PM at the Lewiston Public Library, don’t miss SPRING BREAK STEM: DISSECT AN OWL PELLET. Owls swallow their food whole but cannot

digest bones and fur so these are separated by the owl’s gizzard. After several hours, the owl regurgitates a pellet of the undigested material. The pellets have been professionally sanitized and arrive ready for dissection, offering participants the chance to identify the bones of the owl’s previous meals. Free. No registration required. Gloves and dissection materials will be provided, as well as one owl pellet per participant. This activity is recommended for kids ages 8 and older.

Apr 25
LEWISTON -- 10:00am at the Lewiston Public Library: SOME BUNNY LOVES YOU KEEPSAKE. Use your young child’s footprints to create a spring bunny keepsake. Free. No registration required. Recommended for caregivers and their children between the ages of birth-5 years old. 513-3133; www.LPLonline.org

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GORHAM LITTLE LEAGUE

Field Funding Campaign



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

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- Repair dugouts and fencing, build storage centers
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- Acquire tarps and field maintenance equipment
- Add scoreboards

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New England Fiddle Ensemble presents 2025 concert season

MAINE -- The New England Fiddle Ensemble, a local nonprofit, announces a concert in Westbrook for their 2025 season:

Sunday, June 1, 2025, 2:00pm, Westbrook Performing Arts Center, 471 Stroudwater Street, Westbrook, ME

The 16th year of the New England Fiddle Ensemble brings together another dedicated group, now with over 160 people ranging in age from 4 to 91. The Fiddle Ensemble is a community orchestra made up of a diverse

group of musicians from throughout the region, sharing the joy of playing music together. More than just fiddles, the Ensemble features a full range of acoustic instruments, including fiddles, guitars, banjos, mandolins, basses, harps, and cellos. Ensemble members come from a wide range of experience levels, from a 4-year-old bass player who will stop the show with his gutsy playing on I'm Shipping Up to Boston, to a retired string teacher who taught for over 30 years.

The New England Fiddle Ensemble is a nonprofit whose mission is to bring community together through music. Rehearsals happen in seven locations throughout New Hampshire and Maine from November through April, then all the groups come together for 2 large rehearsals and 7 concerts. The music is taught by ear, so you won't see any music stands on stage, just performers smiling, looking at the audience and communicating with one another.

In the Fiddle Ensemble you will hear a talented family of eight singing and soloing on a bluegrass song, an 80-year-old woman stepping up to rip up a Canadian fiddle tune solo, a teenager singing

Hand Me Down My Walking Cane, and the beautiful sounds of a harp on Swannanoa Waltz. These community musicians are backed by professionals, coming together to deliver a heartwarming

and energetic performance. It's a lively show with a dose of humor!

For tickets, go to: <https://www.nefiddleensemble.org/purchase-concert-tickets>

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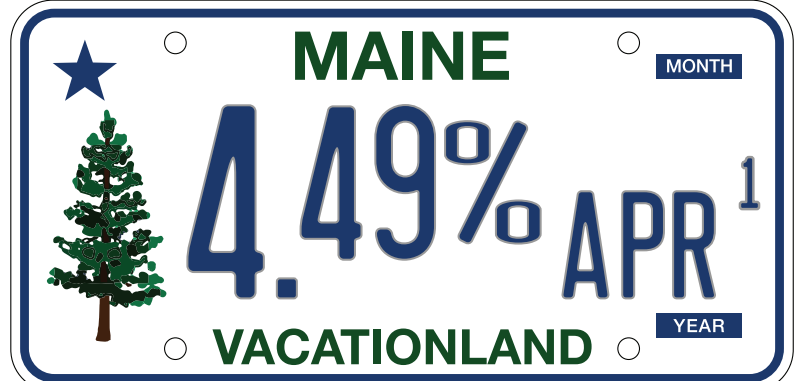
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