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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 sig-

nificantly 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 tan-

dem with the American Bus Association, is proud to announce Scott Riccio, owner of Northeast Charter & Tour, 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 indus-

try. 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.

UMaine Extension offers farm tractor safety courses this spring

SIDNEY and TOPSHAM, ME — University of Maine Cooperative Extension will offer two multi-session farm tractor safety courses this spring. The Kennebec County

session will be held on Monday evenings (and one Thursday) at Kramer Tractor, 2400 West River Road in Sidney, starting April 14. The Androscoggin/Sagadahoc counties

session will be held on Tuesday evenings at Topsham Tractor and Equipment, 403 Lewiston Road in Topsham, starting April 22.

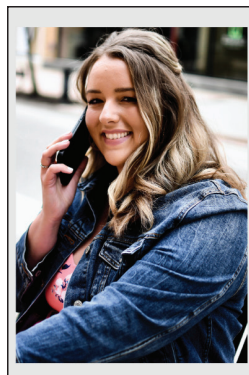
The training will in-

clude classroom lectures, tractor driving time and homework over the 5-part course, which is recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor. Successful completion of the course

is required for 14- and 15-year-olds who plan to operate farm equipment for hire on farms other than their own family's farm. Participants will learn how to safely handle tractors and equipment and how to avoid hazards and minimize the chance of accidents. Certificates will be issued after successful completion of the course, including a written test and a driving test. The program is designed for adults and youth at least 14 years of age.

There is a sliding

scale fee for the course of \$40 (full price) or \$20 (suggested for youth 14-17 and those who can afford 50% of the full course fee). Access to a computer, tablet or smartphone is required to complete homework assignments. More info including dates and registration links are available on the event webpage. For more information or to request reasonable accommodation, contact Jenni Cappello-Ruggiero at 207.781.6099 or extension.agcumberland@maine.edu.



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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.

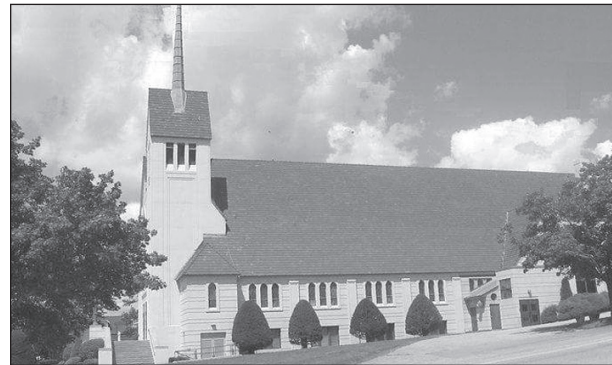
Every type of ailment, from before or after surgeries, to the many health challenges present in people's lives, including lift-long issues, will be given considered and thoughtful prayer by team members in the ornate Chapel.

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 oper-

ating 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

CMH announces two senior leadership appointments

LEWISTON, ME -- Central Maine Healthcare (CMH) has announced appointments to two senior leadership positions within the healthcare system.

Michael Berlowitz, MD, has accepted the position of chief medical officer for Central Maine Healthcare. Since 2021, Dr. Berlowitz has provided exceptional leadership as chief of Central Maine Heart & Vascular Institute (CMHVI). He will con-

tinue to lead CMHVI.

Before joining CMH, Dr. Berlowitz served as chief of clinical operations for the University of South Florida's cardiovascular service line. He holds an MBA from Auburn University Harbert College of Business, specializing in operations and organizational behavior. He has also earned certificates in strategic healthcare leadership from Cornell University and patient safety



Michael Berlowitz, MD, has accepted the position of chief medical officer for Central Maine Healthcare.



Michelle Kap, MS, RN, who has been serving as interim chief nursing officer (CNO) since December, has accepted the permanent role of CNO.

and quality from the Institute for Healthcare Improvement.

Michelle Kap, MS, RN, who has been serving as interim chief nursing officer (CNO) since December, has accepted the permanent role of CNO.

Michelle brings extensive leadership experience to this position, having previously served as senior vice president of clinical operations at Steward Health Care in Massachusetts. She holds

a Master of Science in Nursing with a focus on critical care from the University of Massachusetts.

"These appointments reflect our dedication to strong leadership for the health system," said Steve Littleton, president and CEO, Central Maine Healthcare. "I am confident these two seasoned professionals will have a positive impact on the care we provide to our patients."

Fontaine Family celebrates excellence at awards banquet

AUBURN, ME – Fontaine Family – The Real Estate Leader® recently hosted its Annual Awards Banquet at the Hilton Garden Inn in Auburn, recognizing the outstanding achievements, dedication, and milestones of its exceptional team. This celebratory event honored agents for their commitment to excellence, client service, and professional growth in the real estate industry.

Celebrating Success – Helping 552 Families in 2024

As a team, we proudly helped 552 families buy or sell their homes this past year, a testament to our dedication, expertise, and passion for real estate.

Honoring Our Amazing Support Staff

A real estate team is only as strong as the foundation behind the scenes, and we were proud to recognize our amazing support staff for their hard work, dedication, and unwavering commitment to helping our agents and clients succeed. Their contributions play a vital role in our continued growth and success!

Recognizing Years of Dedication

The Fontaine Family team is built on experience, trust, and dedication. This year, several agents were recognized for their significant career milestones:

5 Years of Service
Bruce Mason



Fontaine Family Team



Top 5 Agents

Steve Miller
10 Years of Service
Charmaine Raby
Maria Morrissette
Kelly Webb-Quinn
Kathy Lee Cook
Megan Fortin
15 Years of Service
Pat Long-Cressey
25 Years of Service
Clay Larochelle

Top Honors & Achievements

The Fontaine Family team thrives on hard work and dedication, and the following agents were recognized for their outstanding achievements in 2024:

Rookie of the Year

Sylvia Rhodes – Recognized for her impressive first year and outstanding client service.

Bronze Level Achievers

Tiffany Poland
LeAnn Payne
Kathy Lee Cook
Nicole Paul
Dustin Larochelle

Gold Level Achievers

Cindy Morin
Chad Doucette
Sylvia Rhodes
Charmaine Raby
David Foster



Award recipients

Hannah Clark
Platinum Level Achievers

Teri Campbell
Maria Morrissette
Kelly Webb-Quinn
Sierra Lemieux
Clay Larochelle
Bill Bergeron
The Brenda Fontaine Leadership Award

The prestigious Brenda Fontaine Leadership Award

was presented to Bill Bergeron for his dedication, leadership, and embodiment of the Fontaine Family values. This award recognizes individuals who go above and beyond in their commitment to clients, colleagues, and the community.

A Tradition of Excellence

"Our team is more

than just a group of real estate professionals—we're a family," said Brenda Fontaine, Founder of Fontaine Family – The Real Estate Leader®. "We take pride in recognizing the hard work, dedication, and passion our agents and support staff bring to their clients every day. Their achievements reflect our commitment to delivering exceptional service and making a positive impact in the communities we serve."

As one of New England's top-ranked real estate brokerages, Fontaine Family – The Real Estate Leader® continues to set the standard for excellence in Maine and New Hampshire real estate.

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 Sabbatus 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 mercerial 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

Shop Maine Craft presents Tidal Shifts by Nikki Pilgrim

WEST GARDINER, ME – The Center for Maine Craft is pleased to announce the upcoming solo exhibition, TIDAL SHIFTS, featuring original paintings by Bath, Maine artist Nikki Pilgrim. This exhibition will be on display from April 7 – May 30, 2025, showcasing a collection that encapsulates the essence of Maine's vibrant ocean and the sea life within it.

About the Exhibition: TIDAL SHIFTS is an evocative body of work created by artist Nikki Pilgrim, inspired by the dynamic and ever-changing coastline of Maine. This series delves into the way the tides shape the landscape and the life that thrives within it, drawing attention to the vast emotional and natural landscapes of the sea. The rhythmic ebb and flow of the tides serve as both metaphor and muse, fueling a series of paintings that vibrate with color, movement, and life.

Artist Statement:

"I call myself an 'un-



conventional watercolor' artist. After completing my BFA with a focus in printmaking I had to reimagine how I would make my art without acid baths and a press. It started with mixed media assemblage combined with paint on birch panels, which eventually

evolved into using watercolor exclusively. Working on wood lends me so much freedom, and flexibility, with integrity. I'm able to achieve more layering, color saturation, contrast, and boldness that is not commonly found in traditional watercolor paint-



ings. While still embracing its lovely translucency, ability to move, wash, and blend. Joyfully flexing my love of opulent color, and movement, with a nod to nature and a kiss of funk. My partner then hand frames all of my originals in a way that compliments, and turns every piece into beautiful lasting heirloom pieces of artwork."

– Nikki Pilgrim
Exhibition Details:

Location:

Center for Maine Craft, 288 Lewiston Rd. West Gardiner, Maine 04345

Hours:

Open Daily, 9am – 6pm

Dates:

April 7 – May 30, 2025

About the Artist:

A New Hampshire native, Nikki received her Bachelors of Fine Art, with honors in printmaking, from the Maine College of Art in 2007. Currently showing work with 'Trove Gallery' in Searsport, 'Bath Street Design Co' in Bath, 'The C Word' a contemporary art pop up in Portland, the Center for Maine Craft in West Gardiner, and at the 'Maine Evergreen Hotel & Art Gallery' in Augusta. Nikki was awarded 1st in painting in 2019 & 2022, and 2nd place in 2021 by the Brunswick Arts Festival. When Nikki is not painting, she owns, operates,

and founded Caravan Artist Market, curating multiple traveling events every year that supports and promotes hundreds of multidisciplinary artists across the state since 2020.

Visit the Exhibition:

The Center for Maine Craft invites art enthusiasts, collectors, and the community to experience the stunning works of Nikki Pilgrim in TIDAL SHIFTS. For more information, please visit shopmainecraft.com or contact Edythe Morin, edy@shopmainecraft.com.

About the Center for Maine Craft:

The Center for Maine Craft is dedicated to showcasing and supporting the work of Maine artists and small businesses. Presenting and promoting over 300 members of the Maine Crafts Association, the Center is located in the West Gardiner Service Plaza and offers a diverse range of retail sales, exhibitions, events that celebrate the rich tradition of craft in Maine.

SeniorsPlus' Aging Well Living Well Franklin County Expo 2025

FARMINGTON, ME – SeniorsPlus is presenting the 18th annual Aging Well Living Well Franklin County Expo on Friday, April 25, 2025, at the University of Maine Farmington, Olsen Student Center, 111 South St., Farmington. This half-day event, running from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., offers older adults and their families an opportunity to learn, connect, and

engage with workshops, exhibitors, and more—all at no cost. The event begins with a continental breakfast and concludes with a chance to win raffle prizes.

The expo, hosted by SeniorsPlus, the designated Area Agency on Aging for Western Maine, provides a unique educational and social experience. Attendees will have the opportunity to participate

in three 45-minute workshops of their choice from topics including estate and long-term care planning, understanding Medicare, Bingocize, emergency preparedness, internet safety, funeral options, and backyard birding. Additional offerings include an e-bike demonstration and secure paper shredding. A variety of exhibitor booths will also be available, offering resources, products,

and services relevant to older adults and caregivers. Expo attendees can bring their expired and/or unused medications for secure disposal to the Franklin County Sheriff's Office, a short drive from the UMF campus.

"Our goal is to inspire and encourage healthy, active aging," said Betsy Sawyer-Manter, president and CEO of SeniorsPlus. "This event

is a wonderful way for older adults to gain valuable knowledge while also enjoying a social and engaging atmosphere."

To learn more about the workshops offered and event details, visit www.seniorsplus.org/AWLW. Registration is required as space is limited. Attendees can sign up online or call 1-800-427-1241. The deadline to register is Monday, April 7, 2025.

SeniorsPlus is grateful for the support of its event sponsors, including AARP Maine, Franklin Savings Bank, and Martin's Point Health Care, with additional sponsorships pending. Sponsorship opportunities are still available for organizations interested in supporting this impactful event. For more information, please email dbechard@seniorsplus.org.

Marine Corps League Central Maine hosting Birthday/Dinner

AUBURN -- Marine Corps League Central Maine Detachment 810 respectfully requests your attendance at the 250th Marine Corps Birthday/Dinner Supper, being held at Hilton Garden Inn, 14 Great Falls Plaza, Auburn. The dinner will take place November 10, 2025, 5pm

Social Hour and 6:00pm dinner.

Menu: Dinner Plated menu/\$25 per Marines/Associate Marines, \$40 for non-members

The 250th USMC birthday celebration is open to all. All are welcomed! Come spend an evening with Amer-

ica's Finest. This is a great event; we would be honored if you attended.

Please contact Commandant Charlie Paul via phone 207-393-7667 or e-mail charlespaul293@gmail.com by October 1, 2025 (firm date) with a count of how many will be attending.

Auburn Community Recycle Day 2025 – Join Us!

AUBURN, ME – In honor of Earth Day, Community Credit Union is excited to partner up with local organizations to host its annual Community Recycle Day Drive-Thru Event and bottle drive on Saturday, April 26, 2025, from 9 AM to 12 PM at our Auburn branch.

This FREE event

is open to everyone—no membership required! Local community partners are coming together to provide a convenient and FREE way for residents to recycle a variety of items, including:

Shredding On Site – Standard office paper, file folders, envelopes, and notepads. NorthCoast

Services – TVs, monitors, PCs/laptops, and printers (no cords, keyboards, or accessories). Kaydenz Kitchen – Clothing, coats, and shoes. SeniorsPlus – Food, puzzles, unopened adult incontinence products, shower chairs, transfer benches, walkers/rollators, canes, and quad canes

See *Recycle*, page 14

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]

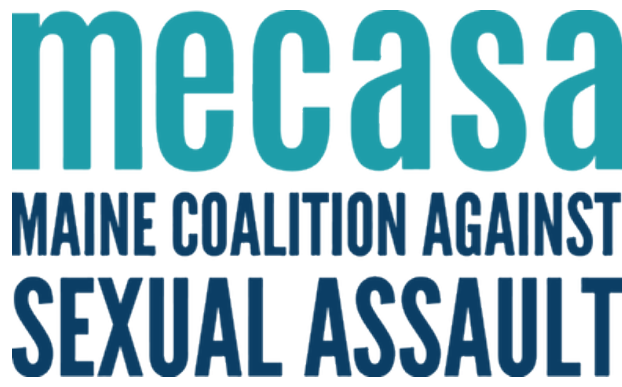
In 2019, about 20% of callers to Maine's sexual assault crisis and support line were men. [12]

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]

Citations 1-17

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7. Maine Centers for Disease Control. (2019). 2019 Maine integrated youth health survey. Retrieved from <https://data.maine.gov/mainepublichealth.gov/>

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9. MECASA Center Service Statistics, 2018 and 2019.

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13. McLaughlin, T.C. (2009). Women and homelessness: Understanding risk factors and strategies for recovery.

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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 orga-

nization. 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 SAPARS, serving Androscoggin County

We are Sexual Assault Prevention & Response Services

Our combined history of over 90 years, SAPARS centers serving Androscoggin, Franklin and Oxford Counties have worked for change by educating our communities and supporting victim/survivors of rape, child sexual

abuse and other forms of sexual violence.

Free, Confidential, 24-Hour Helpline 1-800-871-7741, Language Interpreters and Video Relay Service Available

*Our Oxford County location also serves the town of Bridgton in Cumberland County, Maine.

Mission Statement

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Services works to prevent and eliminate sexual violence and promote healing and empowerment for people of all genders and ages who are affected by rape, sexual assault, child sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, stalking and sexual harassment.

SAPARS: Maine 24/7 helpline is 1-800-871-7741

You don't have to report, to get support, we are here for you!

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Services (SAPARS) mission is to prevent all forms of sexual violence and to empower all people affected by sexual violence to find a path to healing.

Since 2011, Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Services (SAPARS) has been supporting survivors and providing prevention education in Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford Counties and the towns of Bridgton and Harrison. Our free and private services include:

A 24/7 Helpline for people who have experienced sexual violence and the people supporting survivors.

One to one support

(by phone, over zoom, and/or in person)

Support groups

Support and advocacy at the hospital, reporting to the police, filing for a protection order, and accessing civil legal services.

The Children's Advocacy Center of Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford Counties

Prevention education programming in schools and communities

Connection to other local supports and resources

A free, confidential* 24-hour Helpline with advocates who are understanding and ready to help

(Call 1-800-871-7741 to speak to an advocate now: TTY #1-888-458-5599)

Daytime text or on-line chat support

Accompaniment for survivors who go to the hospital, police, or court

Training for local agencies and organizations

Community and school-based education

In-person and online peer support groups

Information and referrals to different resources

Urgent support to survivors and their families and friends anytime

*We are mandated reporters. That means we have to follow Maine state reporting laws. If we think you are under 18 or an adult dependent on care from others, and you tell us any information that makes us think you are being abused or neglected, we may have to share this with other adults to help keep you safe.

Healing through SAPARS support groups

SAPARS offer support groups to people of all, regardless of gender identity. Groups function as mutual-help, peer-support groups where participants take as much responsibility as possible in their own healing process. Groups offer the opportunity to regain some of the power and control that was taken during the assault. Each group is facilitated by experienced

staff whose role is to provide structure, guidance and a safe environment. Before beginning a group, individuals may need to meet with the facilitators to discuss the group, talk about personal goals, and ensure the group is the right fit.

We offer a variety of free and confidential groups for survivors and concerned others, such as traditional groups, out-

reach groups, skills based groups, and creative healing groups. For more information please call one of our offices below.

Lewiston: 207-784-5272

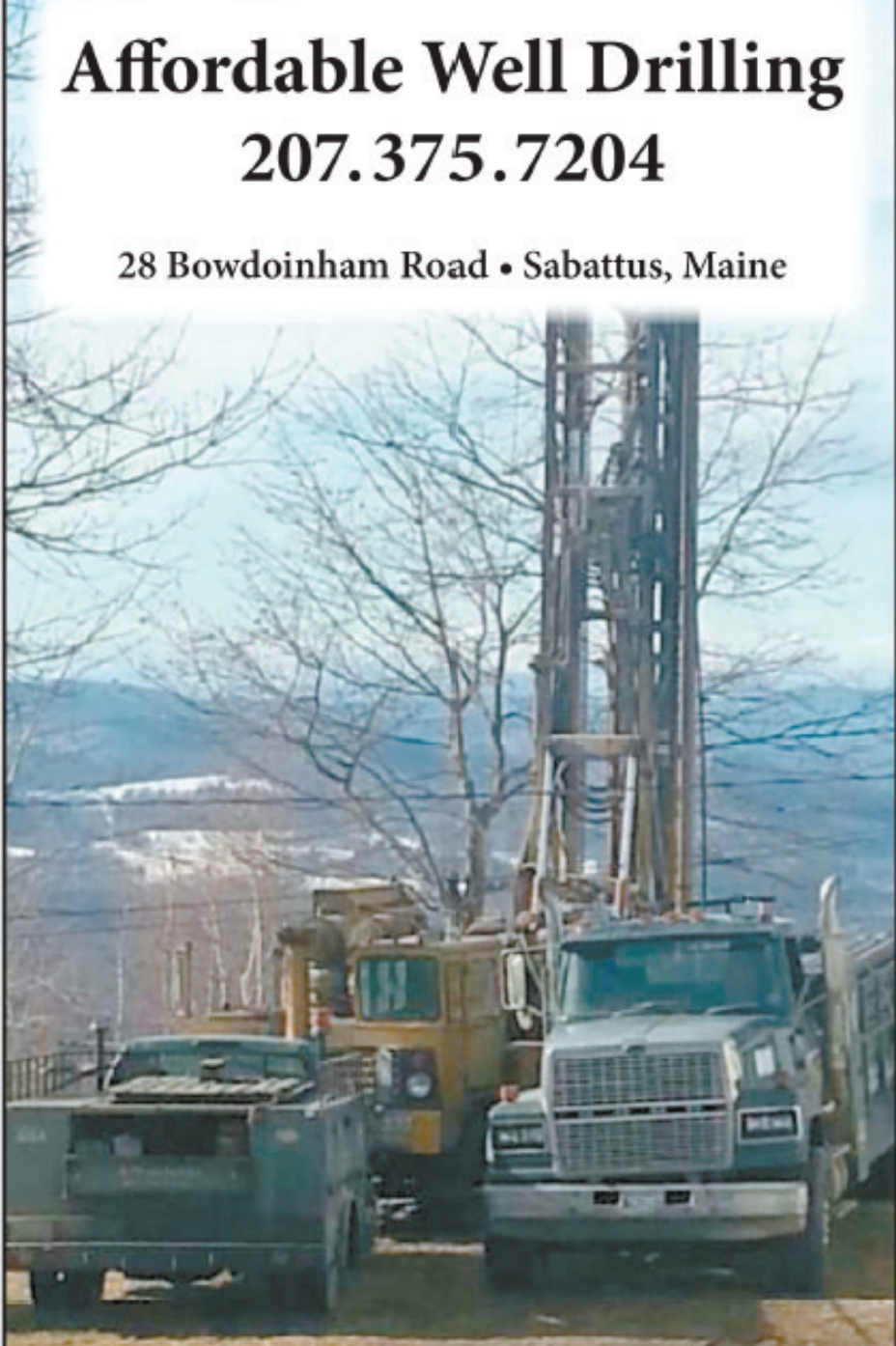
Farmington: 207-778-9522

Norway: 207-743-9777

Upcoming Support Groups: For our next support group, reach out at 207-784-5272

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April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Sex trafficking and exploitation assistance in L-A

There are an estimated 300-400 victims of sex trafficking in Maine every year. If you or someone you know needs support or resources, SAPARS advocates are here to help! 1-800-871-7741

Warning Signs for Trafficking May Include:

A controlling and dominating partner who the victim has to frequently check-in with

Sexually explicit profiles on websites

Prepaid/multiple cell phones; key cards

Frequent STIs, pregnancies, abortions

Unusual tattoos/brandings/scars

New clothes/accessories/gifts with no explanation; unexplained shopping trips

Unexplained injuries, bruises, cuts, etc.

Hyper-vigilant or paranoid behavior

Secrecy about whereabouts; unaccounted-for

time; vagueness or defensiveness in response to questions or concerns

Late nights and/or unusual hours

A sex trafficker can be:

A supposed professional modeling agent, photographer, or filmmaker

An older boyfriend or partner who pretends to be loving but passes their victim on to other people for sex, or to other traffickers

A relative or family friend who wants the victim to "give back" to the family

What can SAPARS Sex Trafficking and Exploitation Advocate do?

Crisis intervention and ongoing support services to survivors of sex trafficking and exploitation

Accompaniment and support for survivors during forensic medical procedures, police interviews and/or court proceedings (civil and criminal)

Follow-up assistance and support to survivors

Assist survivors with developing and implementing a comprehensive safety plan.

Assess the needs of survivors

Referrals and warm hand offs to other social service agencies as appropriate

Help survivors file for victim compensation whenever appropriate

Establish regular office hours in the Sex Trafficking Safe House to further assist survivors in reaching their identified goals

Supporting survivors during their stay, work with survivors after they have ended their stay, in the Sex Trafficking Safe House, providing continuity and ongoing assessment and referral, and helping to modify their safety plan as needed.

SAPARS: Sexual assault prevention FAQs

What if what happened was a long time ago?

You can still call. Some people call right away. Some people call after many years. Whenever it happened we will listen and give you support.

If I call, do I have to talk to the police?

No, you do not have to tell the police what happened. It is up to you. We won't tell you what to do and we are not part of the police department.

Will you tell anyone about what I tell you?

Our services are confidential, which means that we don't tell anyone what you say or that you called us. But, we are mandated reporters. That means we have to follow Maine state reporting laws. If we think you are under 18 and you tell us any information that makes us think you are being abused or neglected, we may have to share this with other adults to help keep you safe.

Can anyone call?

Yes. We will help anyone no matter who they are.

Can I call for a friend?

Yes. We will help you think of ways to support your friend. We can also talk with you about your own feelings about what happened to your friend.

Why should I call?

You may feel mad, sad, or scared.

You may want to get help for yourself. You may want to get help for a friend.

You may want to talk

to someone or ask questions.

You may want to find out your rights. You may want to find other services.

You may need help making sure you're safe.

What do I do if a child tells me about abuse?

You may not know what to say or do. We will help you come up with a plan.

What are my rights as a victim of crime in Maine?

All victims of crime are entitled to the following rights:

To be treated with dignity and respect.

To be assisted by criminal justice agencies.

To be free from intimidation.

To be informed about the criminal justice system.

Whenever practical, to be notified of plea agreements, and the right to comment on them.

Whenever practical, to be notified of all judicial proceedings, including time and place of trial.

To have input at sentencing.

To request restitution.

To request compensation from the Victim Compensation Board for unreimbursed medical and medically-related expenses for victims of violent crime.

To be notified of an offender's release from institutional confinement in all felony cases.

To be provided with a pamphlet containing certain statutes which pertain to victims' rights.

SAPARS offers community outreach, education programs

Our outreach and education programs help community members understand how to support victim-survivors of sexual assault and abuse, how sexual violence impacts everyone in the community, and how to be part of the solution to ending sexual violence. We offer presentations to professionals, systems providers, undergraduate students, service providers and any group interested in learning and helping.

Our community outreach staff also provide drop-in services at local residential and community facilities in an effort to be accessible for those who may not have access to transportation.

Some examples of the presentations we can provide:

- Sexual Harassment – Flirting or Hurting?
- How to Help Keep Kids Safe
- Internet Safety
- Media Literacy and Sexual Assault
- Sexual Assault of Minors and Maine Law



Parents In The Know TO SCHEDULE A PRESENTATION OR REQUEST DROP-IN, PLEASE CONTACT US.

DAN THE MAN REAL ESTATE

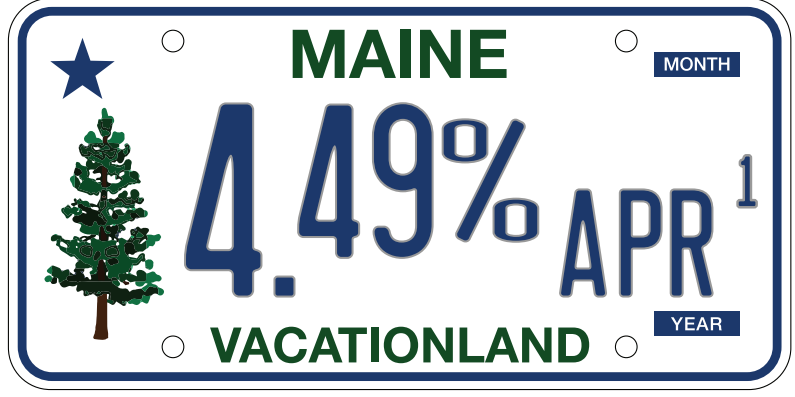
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Former librarian makes reading accessible for Gorham toddlers

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.

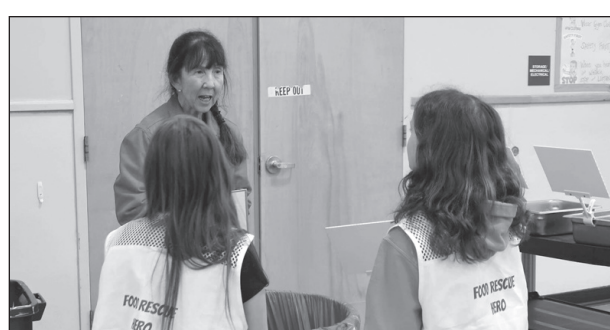
“The Food Waste Study is a great opportunity for our students to see firsthand how their choices impact the environment and their community. It’s not just about reducing waste. It is also

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

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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Indoor Homestead Goods & Farmers Market is tomorrow!

AUBURN, ME -- Please plan to stop by the Auburn Public Library on Friday, April 4, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. for their annual Homestead Goods & Farmers Market! For this family-friendly event, the APL will welcome many great vendors who will offer a variety of homegrown and homemade foods, treats, and crafts for sale. (We also are expecting a baby animal or two from Valley View Farm!)



the library thanks all our community members and community businesses for their wonderful support.

This year's vendors will include Androscoggin Valley Soil & Water Conservation District, The Chef's Cupboard, Chi-GoBee Farm, Deltacom Coffee, Greater Andro-

scoggin Humane Society, Hometown History Works, Lewiston-Auburn Community Garden, Mama G's Homemade Baked Goods, Meadow Muffin Pottery, Read the Grain, Schuler Paintings, and Valley View Farm. Music will be provided by local pianist Madelaine Bauer.

Our annual APL Bookstore Clearance Sale will be happening that afternoon, from 1-5 p.m. Cibo Pizza will also be open, so before you head home, don't forget to stop downstairs to pick up din-

ner!

For more information on this or other upcoming

programs offered by the Auburn Public Library, visit the events page of our

website – auburnpubliclibrary.org/events/upcoming.

Letter to the Editor:

Medicaid keeps Maine kids healthy

Preventive care is key to the health and well-being of Maine children and families. As a retired family physician, I know that access to quality, affordable and reliable health care determines whether or not patients get the critical care they need. Medicaid allows more children in Maine to receive the preventive care they need to grow into healthy adults.

Unfortunately, there is a concerning effort in Washington, D.C. to cut funding for Medicaid. These cuts would put health care in jeopardy for thousands of Maine children. It would be

devastating to many of my former patients, their children and our community. That's why I'm calling on Maine's federal delegation to reject cuts to Medicaid and protect access to care.

More than half of Maine children rely on Medicaid for health care coverage. This coverage ensures more children make it to their well child visits, hit key developmental milestones and see a doctor when they are sick or injured.

Receiving regular preventive care early on improves health outcomes, putting children on

the pathway to becoming healthy, active and productive adults. It allows health care professionals the opportunity to detect, diagnose and treat potential health issues early on.

For almost 40 years, I had the privilege of providing quality, affordable health care to children and families in Auburn and the surrounding communities. I may be retired but my commitment to my patients and this community remains. Congress must reject cuts to Medicaid and protect kids' access to care.

Dr. Ned Claxton of Auburn

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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-



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



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Tickets: \$25 individual / \$45 per couple

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 -- BOOKSTORE "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 Cen-

ter 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 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@LewistonMaine.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

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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

Apr 26

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

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

May 4

LYMAN -- 5th Annual Drumming Up Wishes benefiting Make-A-Wish Maine at Funky Bow Brewery, Lyman, ME on Sunday, May 4, from noon to 6 p.m. Donations requested for admission

May 9, 10

AUGUSTA -- Home-schoolers of Maine's convention returns for another year as the Maine Homeschool Exchange—May 9th and 10th in Augusta. This is HOME's 35th year providing encouraging and informational workshops, family-friendly activities, and fellowship for homeschool families.

Bring the entire family for a full range of experiences for all ages! You won't want to miss the opportunity to come together and connect with fellow home-schoolers throughout Maine and beyond! For more information, see homeschoolersofmaine.org/events-services/annual-convention/

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

Recycle

Continued from page 6

(in clean and in good working condition). Kommunity Kritters – Pet food, bowls, toys, treats, and cat litter. SHAREcenter – Personal care items for shelters and schools, office supplies, school supplies, musical instruments and more (a full list to be posted in the Facebook event).

Red's Moving Inc. – Red's Moving Inc. will be on-site, collecting bottles and cans to support the SHAREcenter!

This event has been a community tradition since 2009, bringing together local businesses and residents to reduce, reuse, and recycle as we honor Earth Day!

For more details and event updates, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/share/18dt742d7N/>

Let's work together to keep our community clean and green!



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.

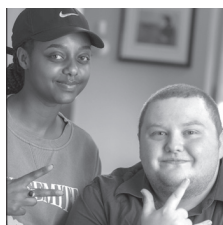
"It makes me feel so happy to be a part of society," he said. "With her support, I really feel like I've been able to flourish."

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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Young Lewiston Theatermakers make an impact beyond the stage

LEWISTON, ME – Lewiston High School Theater students are learning more than just the art and craft of putting on a play. Inspired by the thematic content of their most recent project, they're inviting the wider community for shared experience and exploration over a potluck meal on April 5th.

The event will benefit the Maine Re-Entry Network.

The creative fare for the evening is a staging of "Valjean," adapted by Jeffrey Potter-Watts from Victor Hugo's Les Miserables and performed recently by the students at the Regional One-Act Drama Festival at Skowhegan High School. Claudio Cucubica and Emily Desrosiers received acting awards for their performances and the entire cast received an award for their Tableaus on stage.

The simple potluck menu of soup and bread is a nod to the story itself: Jean Valjean—the protagonist of both this play and the 1987 multi-Tony award-winning musical adapted from the same source material—is released from prison after serving 19 years' hard labor for stealing a loaf of bread to feed his starving family. He soon finds, however, that society is not set up to welcome him back and he struggles to make a place for himself in the world.

"The students were deeply moved by the story and the relevance it holds today," says Lewiston High School Drama teacher and "Valjean" director, Aimee Ranger. "They wanted to raise money for a local organization that supports formerly incarcerated peo-

ple in our community who struggle like Valjean did." They chose to turn the public showing of their work into a benefit for the Maine ReEntry Network, which exists to liaison between Maine's communities and those who have been separated from them for any reason, most commonly incarceration or substance use disorder.

Because LA Arts is a mixed-use community space, events and exhibitions often overlap in ways that allow for unexpected resonance or counterpoint. In this case, however, the synchronicity couldn't be more potent if it were planned from the start. While students perform "Valjean" and break bread with

their audience afterward, the play's thematic content will be underscored by the gallery's current exhibit, Inside Vision: An Outside Exhibition of Inside Art. That show, featuring works of poetry and visual art by currently and formerly incarcerated artists, has been co-curated and organized by Olivia Hochstadt with Maine Prisoner Advocacy Coalition.

Event Details: The event will take place from 5:30-7pm on Saturday, April 5th at LA Arts, 168

Lisbon St. in Lewiston. The show runs 35 minutes, with community conversation and potluck to follow. Tickets are available at the door, pay what you can, with a suggested donation of \$10-15.

LA Arts, the arts agency for the cities of Lewiston and Auburn Maine, has pursued a mission to engage and inspire a vibrant community through arts and culture since 1973. The agency works with governments, businesses, schools, and local arts and cultural organizations to create opportunities for community members across the generations to experience, learn, and participate in the arts. LA Arts organizes arts programs and initiatives, supports the work of local artists and arts organizations, and highlights the essential role the arts play in shaping an economically vital, socially integrated, and forward-looking future for its community. Learn more at www.laarts.org.

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

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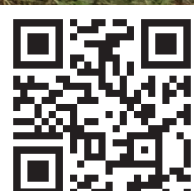
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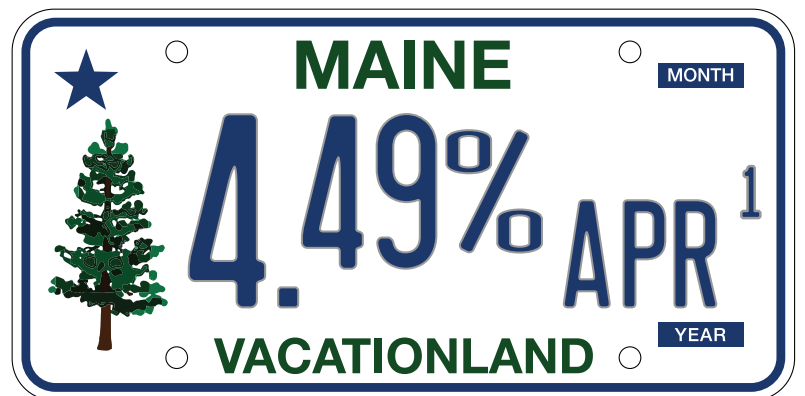
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