

Sen. Brenner honors Gorham Student of the Year awardee

AUGUSTA, ME – On April 23, Sen. Stacy Brenner, D-Scarborough, welcomed Katelyn McKay of Gorham to the Blaine House to honor McKay with a legislative sentiment. Katelyn, a student at the Southern Maine Community College, was awarded the Maine Community College System’s 2025 Student of the Year Award.

“Katelyn’s journey is one of tenacity,” said Sen. Brenner. “Their willingness to work hard to overcome obstacles to achieve an education is so admirable. It was an honor to recognize and celebrate their success and I wish all the best in their future endeavors.”

Each year, the MCCS Student of the Year Award is given to one student from each of Maine’s seven



Katelyn McKay and Sen. Stacy Brenner, D-Scarborough, at the Blaine House

community colleges. Students are chosen for their academic success, service to others and commitment to making a difference on campus.

Katelyn is enrolled in the Southern Maine Com-

munity College’s fire science and automotive programs. They are pursuing many interests, including completing their EMT and firefighting certification and exploring a four-year degree in the future.

Keep supporting Gorham Food Pantry with online shopping

Submitted by The Gorham Food Pantry Friends

GORHAM, ME -- Pantry friends, THANK YOU!! Our new Amazon list is being found and utilized, and deliveries are making it successfully to the bins at the top of the ramp! We are continuing

to add and edit items that are of most need (as well as a few “nice to haves”), and your generosity is astounding and humbling.

If you’d like a way to help out that doesn’t involve going to the store, shopping for an item, and bringing it to the Pantry, feel free to try this out!

At check out, you should be able to choose from the Pantry address in your dropdown list of delivery addresses.

We’ll continue to watch and edit the list to make improvements. Thank you for helping to feed your neighbors here in Gorham.

Cressey Road Christian Church in Gorham holding fundraiser sale

GORHAM, ME -- Cressey Road Christian Church, located at 81 Cressey Road, Gorham will be hosting a perennial and baked goods sale,



along with a yard sale on Saturday June 7 from

9AM-2PM.

FMI Lorraine Lindstedt lindcabin@gmail.com

B2B Trade Show held at Norway Savings Bank Arena in Auburn

AUBURN, ME -- The Maine B2B Trade Show, a premier business-to-business event, lit up the Norway Savings Bank Arena on Thursday, March 27, 2025, drawing professionals from across the region. Hosted by the LA Metro Chamber of Commerce, the event ran from 11:00 AM to 5:30 PM, offering a dynamic platform for networking, collaboration, and growth.

See more photos page 8-9



Jennifer Fogg, Cyndi Robbins and Mark Bosse from Poland Springs Resort (TCT Photo by Chris and Laurie Allen)

Support Gorham’s Boy Scouts at community rummage sale

GORHAM, ME -- Gorham’s Boy Scout Troop 73 is hosting a community rummage sale to raise funds to support Troop activities like camping adventures, community service projects and merit badge/rank advancement requirements. They are looking for community support through donations of items and by coming to the event.

The Rummage sale will be held on Saturday, May 10, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. (May 17 rain date) in the parking lot to the west of Shaw Gym.

On behalf of the troop, Mitch Zaninelli invites community members to also participate in the sale by

renting a table to sell your own items. He said, “We really want to make this an annual community event that brings Gorham residents together each spring. It is a great way to kick off your spring cleaning and give used items a second life instead of going to the dump. We are also going to have some Boy Scout demonstration tables showcasing some of the skills the scouts are learning.”

How can you participate?

Come to the sale and shop.

Donate items for the troop to sell - Items can be dropped off at

On Point Storage, 551 Main St., during normal business hours between April 1 and May 8. Check in with the office when you arrive. Items must be in sellable condition (clean, not broken, working) and please no appliances.

Rent a table (\$50) to sell your own wares. Reach out to mitchellzaninelli@gmail.com for more information. Tables are being donated by Party with Confetti Rentals.

Mitch added, “We are also looking for a food truck or two. If you are interested or know someone who is, please reach out to mitchellzaninelli@gmail.com”

June 10 is Gorham’s School Budget Validation Election

GORHAM, ME -- A School Budget Validation Election will take place on Tuesday, June 10, 2025

Absentee Ballot re-

quests are now available. You can request a ballot by calling the Town Clerk’s office at 222-1670. Ballots will be mailed out the second week in May

and may be returned after May 13, 2025.

You can vote absentee in person at the Town Clerk’s office after May 13, 2025. Last day to request or vote an absentee ballot is June 5, 2025 at 5pm. Ballots need to be returned by June 10, 2025 at 8pm.

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Free classes for career building, financial education

AUGUSTA, ME— New Ventures Maine will offer free online workshops and classes in May that are designed to help people in Maine gain the skills, knowledge, and confidence to build a career, start a business, and manage money.

The full class schedule is accessible at bit.ly/NVMEClasses. Single- and multi-session workshops include (partial list):

Building Careers
Making Career Choices: Tuesday, May 6, 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. Online. Ready for a career change but don't know where to start? This one-hour workshop will point you



in the right direction. We will cover what to consider when making a career choice and resources to help you succeed.

My Next Career Move: Wednesdays, May 7 - 28 (4 sessions), 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. Online. In four weekly Zoom sessions of lively activities and discussion, you will assess your own skills, interests, and

experiences to figure out what career options might be best and create an action plan that will help you achieve success.

Starting Businesses
Exploring Self-Employment: Thursday, May 8, 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. Online. This one-hour workshop covers the pros and cons of owning your own business, the steps needed for start-



Build Your Biz Website Workshop. Photo by Molly Haley

up, the major elements of a business plan, and the many resources available to help you succeed. (Also offered May 20)

Build Your Business Website: Sign up anytime; complete by June 30, 2025.

Online. This class provides business owners with tools to create a professional website that meets your business's needs.

Managing Money
Money Management Workshops: Thursdays,

May 1 - 15, 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. Online. Learn to budget, repair your credit, and create a savings plan. Join us for any or all three workshops. May 1: Budgeting Basics; May 8: Let's Talk About Credit; May 15: Build Your Savings

My Money Works: Tuesdays, May 13 – June 10 (5 sessions), 6:00 - 7:00 a.m. Online. Gain the skills and confidence you need to stretch your money, pay your bills, reduce debt, save, plan for retirement, and set personal financial goals with a plan to achieve greater financial stability.

To learn more, visit newventuresmaine.org or call 207-621-3440.

Pine Tree Camp celebrates 80 years, holds open house

ROME, ME – Pine Tree Camp's summer sessions return this June for the 80th year; bringing Maine kids and adults with disabilities together to experience barrier-free access to the outdoors filled with friendship, fun and freedom to explore.

On Saturday, May 17 between 10:00am and 4:00pm, parents, families and caregivers are invited to Pine Tree Camp (114 Pine Tree Camp Road, Rome, Maine) to meet the team and experience Pine Tree Camp first hand. Tours will be offered throughout the day and visitors will have the chance to check out cabins, see the dining hall, explore campus

and experience fully accessible activities, including: biking, archery, hiking and a special scavenger hunt.

Some families will be seeing Pine Tree Camp for the first time and some will be seasoned camp families available to share their personal experience.

Open house activities include:

- Adaptive biking
- Hiking
- Archery
- Eagle spotting
- Farm animals
- Outdoor fire stations with s'mores
- Indoor crafts
- Yard games

Pine Tree Camp celebrates its 80th anniversary



In 2024, Pine Tree Camper Cassie Oakes (Alexander, ME) spent a barrier-free week of fully accessible summer camp on the shores of North Pond making new friends and spending time with counselors from Maine and abroad, including: Brandi Place (Morrill, ME), Daniela Ochoa-Diaz (Rionegro, Colombia), Lauren Grant (Gardiner, ME) and Marina Rodriguez (Andalusia, Spain).

in 2025 and, since 1945, no camper has ever been turned away due to their ability to pay.



Pine Tree Camp's fully accessible campus on the shores of North Pond in Rome, ME provides barrier-free access for Maine kids and adults with disabilities. On Saturday, May 17th, parents, families and caregivers are invited to meet the staff and experience Pine Tree Camp first hand. More information at www.pinetreesociety.org. Photo courtesy of Pine Tree Camp.

UMaine Extension report highlights tick-borne disease risk

ORONO, ME — In 2024, University of Maine Cooperative Extension Tick Lab processed 4,776 tick submissions including samples from 398 towns,

representing all of Maine's 16 counties. The majority (3,650) were identified as deer ticks, also known as blacklegged ticks, while American dog ticks account-

ed for 1,045 samples. Laboratory testing showed that 41.5 percent of the deer ticks analyzed carried *Borrelia burgdorferi*, the bacterium that causes Lyme disease, while significant proportions also carried *Babesia microti* (12 percent), *Anaplasma phagocytophilum* (9.7 per-

cent) and Powassan virus (1.1 percent).

Most tick exposures occurred close to home with 68 percent reported from the submitter's own property. Yardwork was the most commonly cited activity at the time of tick encounter, accounting for one-third of

all incidents. Despite this, only 16 percent of individuals reported using any protective measures against ticks.

"These data confirm that Lyme and other tick-borne diseases remain a serious, statewide public health concern," said

Tick Lab Coordinator Grif-fin Dill, who urged residents to wear protective clothing, apply repellents and conduct tick checks after outdoor activities. The full 16-page report is available on the Tick Lab's website.

Thanks to ongoing funding supported by the Governor and Maine Legislature, the UMaine Extension Tick Lab keeps its comprehensive tick testing service affordable at just \$20 per tick, ensuring that cost is not a barrier to public participation.

Through educational outreach programs including the 4-H Tick Project, the Tick Lab engages youth and communities statewide, sharing practical prevention strategies through webinars, workshops and print resources.

More information on ticks in Maine and how to submit tick samples to the lab is available online at ticks.umaine.edu or by contacting 207.581.3880; tick-ID@maine.edu.

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

MSMT announces full lineup of May events

BRUNSWICK, ME – Maine State Music Theatre (MSMT) is kicking off summer early with a full slate of May events designed to entertain, engage, and bring the community together ahead of its 2025 Mainstage Season. From treasure hunting to movie nights to kid-friendly fun, MSMT invites locals and visitors alike to celebrate the arts all month long.

First up, the Fourth Annual MSMT Yard Sale returns bigger and better than ever. A favorite among bargain hunters across the state, the event supports MSMT’s professional productions with every purchase.

The festivities begin with a Presale Event on Thursday, May 1, from 5:00 to 7:00 PM, where a \$25 entry fee grants early access to a curated selection of furniture, home goods, décor, and more. The Main Yard Sale follows on Saturday, May 3, from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM, with a Half-Off Sale closing out the weekend on Sunday, May 4, from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM.

The Fourth Annual MSMT Yard Sale will be held at 22 Elm Street in Brunswick, Maine.

Behind the scenes, a dedicated team of MSMT volunteers makes the Yard Sale possible through months of donation collection, organization, and setup.

“They make the Yard Sale possible,” said MSMT Artistic Director Curt Dale Clark. “From sorting and pricing to organizing, merchandising, and helping customers during the event, our volunteers are the driving force behind every detail. Their passion, energy, and commitment are what allow us to keep this growing tradition alive. And what’s most rewarding is that every dollar raised directly supports our productions—so

each item sold helps bring world-class theatre to our stage. It’s a fun, community-driven effort that truly makes a difference.”

Also returning in May is the popular Teaser Tuesday film series, featuring free weekly movie screenings at Curtis Memorial Library in Brunswick, Maine, at 6:00 PM. Each film ties directly into MSMT’s upcoming Mainstage productions and includes complimentary popcorn and a post-film discussion.

The Teaser Tuesday lineup includes:

May 6 – *Anastasia* (1956): A royal mystery starring Ingrid Bergman

May 13 – *Tootsie* (1982): Dustin Hoffman in a comedy about identity and ambition

May 20 – *Footloose*



(1984): Kevin Bacon in a dance-fueled teen rebellion

May 27 – *West Side Story* (1961): A legendary musical about love and rivalry

For younger audi-

ences, MSMT will host a special family-friendly screening of the 1997 animated film *Anastasia* on Saturday, May 17 at 2:00 PM at MSMT’s Creative Studio (22 Elm Street, Brunswick). Kids are encouraged to dress in costume, enjoy popcorn, and take in this musical adventure in a relaxed, welcoming environment.

With events for every age and interest, May offers the perfect opportunity for the community to engage with MSMT before the 2025 season officially begins. The summer opens with *Anastasia the Musical* in June, followed by *Tootsie*, *Footloose*, and *West Side Story*—four iconic productions truly “Bringing Broadway to Brunswick!”

For more information about MSMT’s May events or to purchase tickets for the 2025 season, visit www.msmt.org or call 207-725-8769.

Jane’s Walk tour offers unique perspective on local history

BRUNSWICK, ME – The Brunswick Downtown Association is partnering with Pejepscot History Center to host a Jane’s Walk on May 3rd. Jane’s Walk is a global festival of free, volunteer-led walking conversations inspired by urban activist Jane Jacobs. This festival combines the simple act of exploring a place with personal observations, local history, and civic engagement.

Brunswick’s Jane’s Walk, Brunswick’s Heart: A Walk Through History & Community, is a one-mile walking tour through downtown Brunswick where participants will visit key nonprofit organizations that are embedded in the history of the area. Participants will learn about the buildings these organizations occupy, the work they do, and how they contribute to the greater community. Along the way, participants will learn about the rich histo-



ry of the land and architecture, offering a unique perspective on the development of Brunswick.

The tour will begin at 10:00 AM on May 3rd at the Brunswick Downtown Association’s office in Senter Place (124 Maine Street, Suite 107). The stops along this tour include Tedford Housing, Maine State Music Theatre (MSMT), Midcoast Hunger Prevention Program, The Theater Project, and Pejepscot History Center. Each stop will feature a representative from the organization speaking about their work, as well as Pejepscot History Cen-

ter discussing the building’s history.

For more information, please visit brunswickdowntown.org/event/janes-walk-maine or contact marketing@brunswickdowntown.org

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

Gorham Brush Drop Off Days

GORHAM, ME -- Public Works (located at 80 Huston Road) will be accepting brush Saturday, April 26th and Saturday, May 10th 8AM - 3PM. This event is for residents ONLY, no commercial drop offs will be accepted. No stumps, please. Leaves and grass clippings accepted in the designated area throughout the season.

Please do not leave your bags behind. Contact the office with any questions at 207-222-4950 or dpw@gorham.me.us.

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Jonathan Knowlton
Licensed Agent

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



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Seniors Not Acting Their Age

A Challenging Paddle on Crooked River



A canoeist navigates one of several difficult rapids on Crooked River



Snowy banks and debris in the river were common on Crooked River



Crooked River derives its name from the many twists and turns

Paddling the Crooked River near East Waterford has been on my mind for decades. When my friend, Paul Plumer, suggested joining him and Eggman DeCoster for a trip down Crooked River in late March, I quickly agreed. Neither Eggman nor I had paddled Crooked, and Paul's only experience was in the summer of 1990

at very low water, so this was essentially a first descent for all of us. I consulted my old copy of the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) Maine River Guide for information which stated it was last inspected in 1986. Rivers don't usually change much but I wondered how reliable their report was.

None of us found any additional information on the infrequently paddled waterway.

We identified a moderately warm day for the planned trip. The river gods threw us a curve ball the day before delivering six inches of snow with cold weather predicted. Despite the setback, we decided to go.

The area was blanketed with a thick carpet of snow and the temperature was around freezing when we met in the tiny village of Bolsters Mills, the planned takeout. An inspection of the shoreline indicated there was no suitable place to disembark. We drove a few miles upriver to a location called Two Bridges where we found an acceptable take-

out at a snow-covered picnic area. The now ten-mile trip was on!

Traveling north, we located a site to start just off Route 118 in East Waterford. After obtaining permission from the landowner, we dragged our boats across the snow and launched into the chilly water.

We quickly realized why the river was named crooked; there are a multitude of exaggerated twists and turns for several miles. Unwanted were a succession of blowdowns that seemed to be around every bend; two had to be carried. When not portaging, we found ourselves bouncing over submerged logs or plowing through fallen debris. Our strenuous efforts kept us warm despite the cold air.

After approximately two hours of paddling, we began looking for a series of difficult rapids reported in the AMC guidebook. That edition recommends scouting the first rapid on the left. Rounding a sharp bend, we were in pushy whitewater before finding a good eddy. Boat scouting on the fly was our best choice. Paul quickly dropped out of sight. Eggman and I followed. What we found was a multi-stage, Z-turn pitch with numerous hazards that thoroughly tested our skills but we remained upright.

A reportedly more dif-

ficult rapid called McDaniel's Rips was next. This time, we caught the recommended eddy on the right to scout. Eggman waded through snow while walking down the rocky shore and signaled from a large boulder to paddle hard right. Again, Paul dropped out of sight. Hard right was definitely the best choice as perilous obstructions were just to the left as I tumbled down a boulder-strewn channel and punched through a sticky hole. Two less convoluted ledge drops followed to the bottom where the guidebook warned of a dangerous broaching rock we never found.

We started looking for yet another challenging falls. This one began with a horizon line. After scouting from a steep bank on the right, we carefully navigated through a long maze of holes and boulders until reaching a pool where we regrouped. Two easier rapids followed to Sodom Road Bridge, the approximate half-way point.

Below the bridge, a three-mile stretch of flat water ensued. Mercifully, this section was relatively straight forward and free of blowdowns.

The guidebook cautioned to watch for a power line because two demanding rapids were just below. As predicted, they appeared shortly after. Compared

to the rapids above Sodom Road Bridge, these were less complex and more easily negotiated.

Milder whitewater continued to Two Bridges. Catching an eddy in shallow quick water at the picnic area was no easy task. Hauling our boats up the steep snow-covered embankment was an arduous, slippery endeavor.

At the top, we congratulated ourselves on completing an exceptional spring whitewater day reminiscent of those in years past. We had successfully overcome cold air, colder water, snowy banks, numerous blowdowns and challenging rapids. A day to remember!

My book, *Maine Al Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine* narrates exciting whitewater escapades on nine more Maine rivers.

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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passivhausMAINE launches Pre-Apprenticeship Program

FREEPORT, ME – passivhausMAINE is excited to announce the launch of its new Pre-Apprenticeship Program, a six-month training initiative designed to introduce students to Passive House principles and connect them with industry leaders in high-performance building. With the demand for sustainable, energy-efficient construction rapidly growing, this program offers a unique hands-on opportunity for students to gain real-world experience and explore career pathways in green building.

The phME Pre-Apprenticeship Program will run from May 14 through November and is open to students interested in building science, architecture, construction, and sustainable development. Participants will receive both technical training and direct exposure to Passive House design and construction through phME's network of partner firms, including Portland-based Juniper Design + Build and Bethel-based Maine Passive House.

Program Highlights:

- Flexible Learning** – Students can attend either a mid-month in-person training session or a repeat virtual session at the end of each month, ensuring accessibility for all participants. The first session runs three hours, while subsequent sessions are approximately two hours.
- Real-World Job Shadowing** – Each month, students will visit a partner business or an active job site to observe how passive building projects are designed and made. These sessions provide an inside look at sustainable building techniques, project management and industry best practices.
- Industry Connections** – The program offers a direct pipeline to potential apprenticeships, internships and future employment by fostering relationships between students and Maine's top passive builders, designers and developers.
- Financial Support** – A stipend will be available to help students participate in the program.

"This program is a great opportunity for students to gain a strong foundation in sustainable building while making real connections with industry professionals," said Erin Scally, passivhausMAINE's Training Director. "We're excited to help train the next generation of high-performance builders and designers and give students a chance to explore careers in this important field."

As Maine continues to lead in sustainable construction and energy efficiency, the phME Pre-Apprenticeship Program aims to build a skilled workforce ready to meet the growing demand for passive house design and construction.

Registration is now open for the inaugural cohort. To learn more or apply, visit <https://passivhausmaine.org/pre-apprenticeship-program>. For questions about the program, please email Erin Scally at erin@passivhausmaine.org.

World War II soldier from Maine accounted for

WASHINGTON—The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced that U.S. Army Pvt. Willard D. Merrill, 21, of Dover-Foxcroft, Maine, who was captured and died as a prisoner of war during World War II, was accounted for August 19, 2024.

Merrill's family recently received their full briefing on his identification, therefore, additional details on his identification can be shared.

In late 1941, Merrill was a member of the 2nd Observation Squadron when Japanese forces invaded the Philippine Islands in December. Intense fighting continued until the surrender of the Bataan peninsula on April 9, 1942, and of Corregidor Island on May 6, 1942.

Thousands of U.S. and Filipino service members were captured and interned at POW camps. Merrill was among those reported captured when U.S. forces in Bataan surrendered to the Japanese. They were subjected to the 65-mile Bataan Death March and then held at the Cabanatuan POW Camp #1. More than 2,500 POWs perished in this camp during the war.

According to prison camp and other historical records, Merrill died Nov. 14, 1942, and was buried along with other deceased prisoners in the local Cabanatuan Camp Cemetery in Common Grave 305.

Following the war, American Graves Registration Service (AGRS) personnel exhumed those buried at the Cabanatuan cemetery and relocated the remains to a temporary U.S. military mausoleum near Manila. In 1947, the AGRS examined the remains in an attempt to identify them. Three sets of remains from Common Grave 305 were declared unidentifiable. These unidentified remains were buried at the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial (MACM) as Unknowns.

In January 2019, as part of the Cabanatuan Project, DPAA exhumed the remains associated with Common Grave 305 and sent them to the DPAA laboratory for analysis.

To identify Merrill's remains, scientists from DPAA used dental and anthropological analysis, as well as circumstantial evidence. Additionally, scientists from the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System used mitochondrial DNA and Y-chromosome DNA analysis.

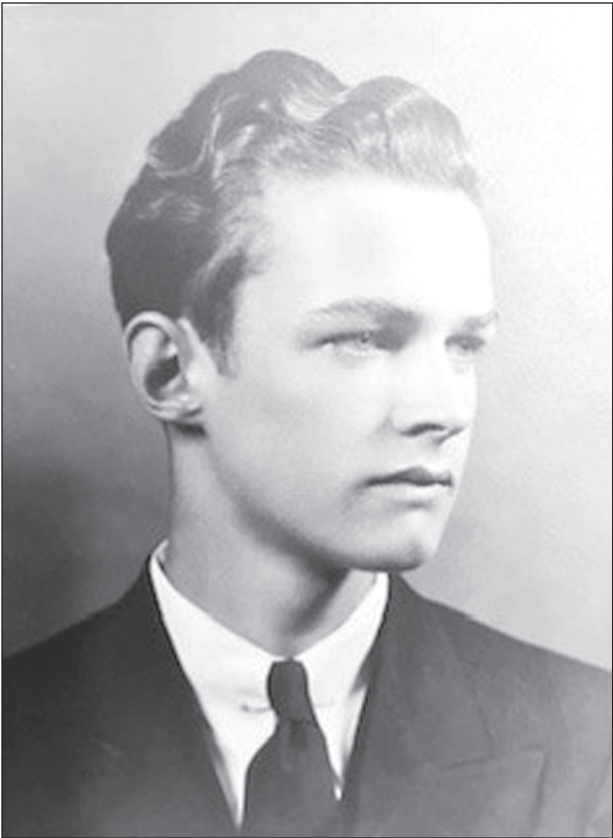
Although interred as an Unknown in MACM, Merrill's grave was meticulously cared for over the past 70 years by the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC). Today, Merrill is memorialized on the Walls of the Missing at the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial in the Philippines. A rosette will be placed next to his name to indicate he has been accounted for.

Merrill will be buried in Dover-Foxcroft, Maine, in June 2025.

For family and funeral information, contact the Army Casualty Office at (800) 892-2490.

DPAA is grateful to the ABMC and the United States Army for their partnership in this mission.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for Americans who went missing while serving their country, visit the DPAA website at www.dpaa.mil or on social media at www.facebook.com/dodpaa, <https://www.linkedin.com/company/dodpaa>, <https://www.instagram.com/dodpaa/>, or <https://x.com/dodpaa>.



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Westbrook High School represents Maine in national showdown

WESTBROOK, ME
-- High school mascots are going head-to-head in a nationwide showdown — and Maine is in the game! The64, the new interactive online voting platform, kicks off its first-ever National High School Mascot Tournament on April 24, 2025, inviting schools, students, alums, and fans across the country to help crown the nation's top high school mascot.
From fierce Volcanoes, Horned Toads, and mighty Spartans, the competition starts with two regions containing 64 mascots nationwide, including one from Maine, that will battle for Best High School Mascot and a cash prize for their school. And it's not just about the schools; fans from anywhere can vote and rally behind their favorite mascot.
Representing Maine: Westbrook High School (Westbrook) – Blue Blazes “Blazey”
“This mascot rivalry isn't just a competition—it's a national celebration of school pride and community spirit,” said Justin Woo, entrepreneur, philanthropist, and founder of The64. “We're giving schools and their fans a chance to showcase their spirit in a fun, interactive way while engaging in some friendly competition.”
How It Works:
Sign up for free at www.The64.com
Vote in each head-to-head matchup as the bracket narrows from 64 → 32 → 16 → 8 → 4 → 2 → Champion.
Earn chips: Every vote earns you a chip. Use chips to spin The64 Prize Wheel and win gift cards, pizza discounts, merch, and entries into monthly sweepstakes.
The tournament runs for 18 days, with new matchups every 3 days.
The64 National High School Mascot Tournament kicked off on April 24.
Join the mascot battle and cast your votes now at www.The64.com.
More Than Mascots – More Ways to Win!
The64 isn't stopping at mascots. New tournaments are launching weekly—locally and nationwide—covering everything from your favorite restaurants, attractions, destinations, and more.

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The Little Prince

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BY RICK CUMMINS AND JOHN SCOLLAR.
ADAPTED FROM THE BOOK BY ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY.

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NOW and THEN

by Sean Grennan

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18 Maine non-profits collaborate on “Full Speed Ahead” Festival

WATERVILLE, ME—Movies and trains have a long and productive relationship; more than 300 films have captured the anticipation and thrill of leaving, travelling, and returning by train.

From May 6–11, a collaboration of 18 non-profit Maine cinemas, museums, and schools will come together to produce Full Speed Ahead, a statewide festival of entertainment, information, and recreation coinciding with National Train Day (May 10) and presenting 24 movies and live activities in 16 locations.

“The festival program spans more than 125 years of history and includes beloved films of every kind for all ages, with live programs and activities related to Maine’s unique railroad heritage,” said Mike Perreault, executive director of Maine Film Center. A chronological schedule follows. The festival trailer and all program details including ticketing information can be found at www.MaineTrainFest.com

Filmmakers Love Trains

From Alfred Hitchcock to Wes Anderson, directors have always been attracted to trains as settings for every kind of movie. Three Hitchcock thrillers will play in the festival—North by Northwest (1959), Strangers on a Train (1951), and The Lady Vanishes (1938)—along with Anderson’s comedy The Darjeeling

Limited (2007), classic film noir The Narrow Margin (1952), and the first all-star film adaptation of Agatha Christie’s Murder on the Orient Express (1974). Train travel and movies promise the potential for discovery and romance as in these festival selections: David Lean’s film of Noel Coward’s Brief Encounter (1945), named “Most Romantic Movie of All Time” in Time Out Magazine’s 2025 critics poll; Judy Garland’s rousing musical The Harvey Girls (1946), featuring the Academy Award-winning song “On the Atchison, Topeka and the Santa Fe”; Billy Wilder’s crime comedy Some Like It Hot (1959); Robert Redford’s portrayal of a mythical baseball player in The Natural (1984); and the coming-of-age drama Stand by Me (1986), based on Stephen King’s novella.

Several festival movies are inspired by historical events and do not contain a digit of CG—every stunt and visual effect is real: Anthony Mann’s 1951 historic noir The Tall Target (based on a plot to assassinate Abraham Lincoln before his first inaugural), John Frankenheimer’s action drama The Train (1964; a Nazi plan to transport priceless French art to Germany), and two sprawling epics set against the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad (its completion marked by National Train Day)—Cecil B. DeMille’s Union Pacific (1939) and Sergio Leone’s

Once Upon a Time in the West (1968).

Guest Speakers and Discussion

Screening hosts and guest experts include cinema studies professors Jonathan Cavallero of Bates College and Tricia Welsch from Bowdoin College; Maine International Film Festival’s co-founder Ken Eisen; biographer and film historian Mark Griffin; novelist and screenwriter Michael Koryta; artist and filmmaker Alan Magee; and author and host on Turner Classic Movies Alicia Malone.

The festival poster was created by Bob Staake, illustrator of 23 covers for The New Yorker and more than 75 children’s books.

“Movies allow us to engage in discussion on an endless variety of topics,” said Christina Belknap, executive director of Lincoln Theater in Damariscotta. “Hopefully the train festival encourages a conversation about more passenger service throughout Maine. For Midcoast arts organizations like ours, having the train extended to Rockland would be life-changing.”

Maine’s Unique Railroad Heritage

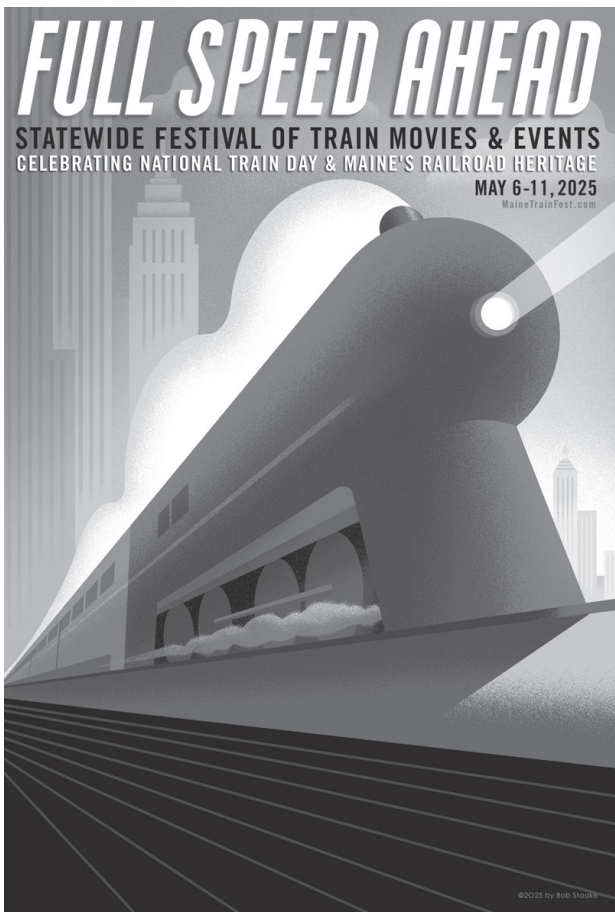
Maine once had five narrow-gauge railroads carrying passengers and freight on small two-foot-wide tracks. Several of these railroads are gone although engines and other equipment representing all five lines still exist. Wiscasset, Waterville & Farm-

ington Railway Museum (WW&F) in Alna supports an ambitious building and restoration program that adheres to historic accuracy, the subject of a May 9 Maine Historical Society live stream. And in Western Maine a group recently formed to rebuild part of what was the Bridgton & Saco River Railroad.

“Trains are like big, living toys,” said best-selling author-illustrator Chris Van Dusen, who is hosting “If I Built a Train,” inspired by his “If I Built” book series—a May 10 program about WW&F building from scratch a full-size 1900 locomotive and 1894 passenger car. That same day, WW&F will also offer train rides to its open-air pavilion for a catered Mother’s Day Tea.

Free and Discounted Programs

On May 9–11, Boothbay Harbor will present a weekend of free events, starting with Harbor Theater’s screenings of Thomas and the Magic Railroad (2000) on May 9, The Train on May 10, and Union Pacific on May 11. On May 10, Railway Village Museum will offer train rides, light refreshments, and commemoration of their historic Merci Train (Gratitude Train) box car. (In 1949, each state received one of these box cars filled with personal gifts from beleaguered but appreciative post-War French and Italians. Maine State Museum holds the box car’s contents.)



Other free movies are The Natural (Lewiston); Brief Encounter (Brunswick); and The General (Portland, free for students 21 and under).

On May 10, a special STEM Saturday at Owls Head Transportation Museum (free with daily admission) will challenge kids to make play-dough trains and equip them with Squishy Circuits train horns. All aboard for a lot of beeping!

Also on May 10, Belfast & Moosehead Lake Railroad will offer half-price train rides from its Unity station.

And Amtrak

Downeaster is providing festival attendees with a promo code (v503) for 15% off travel on all Downeaster trains, May 1–Sept. 30, 2025, with three-day advance purchase.

“Every organization taking part in Full Speed Ahead is integral to the social, educational, and cultural lives of their towns and cities,” Perreault said. “This wide-ranging community-building project demonstrates how numerous non-profits can work together to create something bigger than they might do alone—and that’s also something to celebrate.”

Three steps to consider this spring for a healthier lifestyle

By Dr. Greg Carnevale, Chief Medical Officer, UnitedHealthcare of Maine

Spring into health this season by refreshing your well-being routine and building healthier habits for the rest of the year. While many Americans make health a primary focus of their New Year’s resolutions¹, 57% of recent survey respondents said they take up healthier lifestyle choices only after having a medical concern².

As the days get longer and the weather gets warmer, it’s a great time to get moving and focus on living a healthier lifestyle. There’s no better time to get started than today.

Here are three steps you may start taking right away:

Choose a primary care provider and access preventive screenings.

A primary care provider can help guide you on your health journey, and studies suggest that access to primary care providers may help people live longer³. Yet more than 30% of American adults don’t

have a primary care provider⁴.

One important item to check off your health care checklist each year is an annual wellness visit with a primary care provider – even if you feel healthy. A preventive care visit may help you better understand your health and detect any problems early. If you don’t currently have a primary care provider, check with your health plan for in-network doctors in your area or other options for accessing care like virtual care options. Health plans usually cover preventive care, which means you may pay \$0 out of pocket for certain covered preventive services if you go to an in-network provider.

You may also be eligible to earn rewards through your health plan for activities like your annual wellness visit, getting certain preventive screenings or completing a health survey. Some health plans also offer coverage for certain health screenings like those for breast cancer and colorectal cancer.

Check with your health plan to understand your coverage and eligibility and talk to your employer about benefits and wellness programs that may be available to you.

Walk 15 to 30 minutes each day.

Getting outside during the day and enjoying the sunshine may be an important source of Vitamin D, boost your mood and help you sleep better⁵.

Taking regular walks, even for 15 to 30 minutes, may be a simple way to get some sun and fresh air, get your steps in and keep your body moving. In fact, a recent study found that walking more may help extend life expectancy by up to 11 years⁶. Ideally, adults should aim each week for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity like a brisk walk, or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity like jogging or running⁷.

Some employers now offer wellness programs as part of the health benefits available to their employ-

ees.

Track and improve your sleep.

Many people struggle with their sleeping habits, with more than one-third of adults in the U.S. reporting regularly not getting enough sleep⁸. Experts recommend adults get 7 or more hours of sleep a night⁹. Maintaining healthy sleeping habits may be beneficial for both your physical and mental well-being, from helping to reduce stress and improve your mood to lowering risk for some chronic conditions¹⁰.

To help improve your sleep, consider avoiding alcohol, caffeine and too much screen time before going to bed, and try to go to sleep and wake up at the same time every day¹¹.

Adding these tips into your daily routine may be a great way to boost your overall health and well-being this spring.

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9 Mayo Clinic, 2025, <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/expert-answers/how-many-hours-of-sleep-are-enough/faq-20057898>

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11 Cleveland Clinic, 2025, <https://health.clevelandclinic.org/how-to-get-better-sleep>

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Victoria Young and Andy Maier from Northeast Charter & Tour Co., Inc. (TCT Photo by Chris and Laurie Allen)



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Daniel J. Costantino Jr., David Palazzolo and Joshua Adams from Camden National Bank (TCT Photo by Chris and Laurie Allen)

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Don’t wait! – Start planning Medicare coverage at 64

By Dr. Steve Angelo, Chief Medical Officer, UnitedHealthcare Medicare & Retirement of Maine

If you’re retiring soon or know someone who is, you’re not alone. In 2025, a record 4.18 million Americans will reach retirement age, which equates to over 11,000 people turning 65 each day¹. This phenomenon is sometimes referred to as “Peak 65” or the “Silver Tsunami,” which began in 2024 and will continue over the next several years. This means a lot of people and their families will be looking for answers about Medicare.

Companies advertising Medicare plans and Medicare enrollment opportunities may open their commercials with someone asking – “I just turned 65. What are my coverage options?” With all the coverage options and first-time enrollment deadlines, people should begin planning early – and not wait until their 65th birthdays to begin thinking about their retirement health insurance needs and options.

While there are resources that can help guide one’s decisions, following are some tips to help you, a loved one or an employee begin planning for post-retirement health care and to enroll in Medicare.

Think 3-1-3 – You are eligible to apply for Medicare coverage starting the first three months before your 65th birthday – the month you turn 65 – and the three months after you turn 65. This is referred to as your Initial Enrollment Period (IEP).

Understand consequences of your choices – While you don’t have to enroll in Medicare when you turn 65, if you decide not to enroll at that time and do not qualify for a Special Enrollment Period, there may be penalties when you do enroll – and these can be costly.

Celebrate your 64th birthday – Thinking about retiring and what the future holds can be stressful so take time to enjoy your birthday, and then start planning.

Begin planning soon after your 64th birthday – Following are some questions to get you started.

Am I required to get Medicare coverage?

Can I get dental, vision and drug coverage as well as medical coverage?

What if I cannot afford Medicare?

Are you planning to work past 65? Do you have coverage through your employer or spouse?

How long am I covered under the plan I enrolled in during the IEP?

What if my birthday falls during the Annual Enrollment Period? Or just before? Do I need to enroll twice?

What if I do not enroll in a Medicare plan before the end of my IEP deadline?

While beginning to plan early should help avoid the consequences of not enrolling on time, choosing the right Medicare plan may still seem confusing. Many pre-retirees may never have shopped for their own health insurance, having had health care coverage through their employers.

As you begin your research, Medicare.gov is one place to start. UnitedHealthcare’s Medicare Made Clear also provides information on plan benefits, details on various enrollment periods and other resources to answer your questions.

Medicare plays a key role in the lives of people as they age. Making the right decisions right from the start and in a timely manner can have positive long-term financial and health consequences. So, plan early so you may enjoy your 65th birthday.

[1] Alliance for Lifetime Income

BBB: Use caution when posting on social media

Better Business Bureau reminds consumers to use extra caution when publicly posting on social media to resolve an issue with a business. With impostor scams on the rise, fraudsters are creating fake customer support accounts, including for BBB, to target users seeking business resolutions.

How the scam works

You log on to your social media account to post about an issue with a business’s product or service, hoping for a quick resolution. You tag the business and await a response. In a few minutes, you notice a reply to your post from an account that appears to be for the business’ customer support team. You may even receive multiple responses from several different customer support accounts, each claiming they can help you resolve the issue if you direct message (DM) them with all the details, including personal information like your phone number.

In reality, the customer support account is fake. If you message one of these accounts, instead of resolving the issue with the business as you anticipated, you may end up with a bigger headache after handing over your personal or financial information to a scammer.

How to avoid customer support impostor scams

Look at the customer support account’s profile. Most impostor accounts were recently created to attempt to fool consumers. Check to see how long the account has been active and how many friends or followers it has. Real customer support accounts typically have a long history and have many followers. Remember, verification is now a paid service, so thoroughly inspect the account before you act. Telltale signs of a fake account include spelling or grammar errors, stock image profile pictures, and social media handles that look illegitimate.

Use caution if you receive multiple responses. If you reach out to a business publicly on social media and receive several responses from multiple “customer service” accounts, take that as a major red flag. Do your due diligence and check whether the business’ real customer service account responded. If the accounts look fake, ignore them.

Don’t fall for fake account recovery services. If the issue you’re looking to resolve with a business involves recovering a login or account, watch out for fake account recovery services responding to your post. You should never have to pay to recover your accounts.

Never provide personal or financial information to a stranger. If an account you’re messaging starts asking for your personal or financial information that has nothing to do with the issue at hand, stop communication with them.

Don’t click any links that are sent to you. If the “customer support agent” sends you a link to a website to resolve your issue, think twice before clicking. Scammers are easily able to make fake websites and URLs that look legitimate but are actually created to steal your information or install malware on your device. Refrain from downloading attachments, too.

When in doubt, stop communication and contact customer service on your own. If you’re questioning who you’re messaging on social media, your best bet is to go to the business’s real website and find their customer support contact information there. Even if social media is your preferred method of communication, calling the business may be the safer route.

For more information

Read more about social media scams and how to spot a scam.

Impostor scams are everywhere – read helpful tips to identify and avoid them.

If you’ve seen or experienced a scam, help warn others by reporting it to BBB Scam Tracker.

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Red Cross asks Mainers to fill disaster posts

PORTLAND, ME -- Volunteers are more critical now than ever as the Red Cross responds to a new major disaster about every two weeks. These massive events, like storms and wildfires, are on top of the home fires which occur multiple times every day across the country. To make sure no one faces an emergency alone, the Red Cross has a crucial need for disaster volunteers and is actively recruiting to be ready for disasters of all sizes.

Just like the people served, the Red Cross is proud that its volunteers represent a wide array of cultures, backgrounds, ages, lifestyles and beliefs. Everyone is welcome at the Red Cross. While volunteers of all types are needed, there is a strong need for people to support disaster operations and blood collection efforts.

These are the most needed positions:

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

Shelter Volunteers: Ensure needs of shelter residents are met and help them access additional services.

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

Blood transportation specialists: Volunteer transportation specialists support hospital patients by delivering blood from our facilities to local hospitals. If you have a little free time, love driving and enjoy meeting new people, the Red Cross has a great volunteer spot waiting for you.

You’re invited to put on a red vest and join the Red Cross team. Visit redcross.org/volunteer to get started today. Free online training will be provided.

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

Addressing problems with Paid Family & Medical Leave

By Sen. James Libby

If you’ve taken a close look at your pay stub since January 1st, you may have noticed a new tax is being deducted from your paycheck. This new payroll tax is part of Maine’s Paid Family and Medical Leave Program (PFML), which was enacted in the 2023 “Part II biennial budget.” Though enacted in 2023, this controversial tax did not take effect until the first of this year.

Hello, I’m Senator James Libby of Cumberland County. I have the honor of serving the citizens of Senate District 22, which consists of communities in Cumberland, Oxford and York Counties.

According to WalletHub, Maine continues to rank in the top five for highest overall tax burden

as of April 1st. With a total tax burden of 10.64 percent, the last thing Mainers need is for even more of their hard-earned money to be taken away.

While paid family leave is a noble endeavor, the version passed in Maine is poorly thought out and harms businesses and workers. Maine is one of only 13 states that have enacted mandatory state paid leave systems funded by payroll taxes.

Of the 13 states with tax-funded paid leave, Maine is ranked near the top for highest wage replacement rate, benefit cap and employer share of program financing. Unfortunately, nothing is free; and the most generous programs are the most expensive. We still don’t even know how much this

program will cost when benefits begin in May of next year.

When Maine’s program was first proposed in 2023, numerous business owners and organizations highlighted its serious flaws. This program disproportionately affects small businesses. Maine is a small business state, and these employers simply cannot afford to lose an employee for almost three months.

This program negatively impacts large employers as well. Bath Iron Works and the Maine State Chamber of Commerce are currently suing the state over its implementation of the PFML program. Under the statute, businesses that offer a private paid leave option that meets program

requirements are granted an exemption from paying into the program.

Despite this statutory exemption, however, these employers and their employees have been paying in to a system that they will never use. Although the Maine Department of Labor started accepting opt-out applications, the implemented rules do not specify any deadline for the department to act.

The Legislature’s Labor Committee held public hearings on 11 bills aiming to address this problematic program. While some of these bills would fully repeal the PFML program, others were targeted to address specific problems that affect Maine’s businesses.

Sen. Bradstreet introduced LD 1307, “An Act

to Suspend the Remittance Obligation for Paid Family and Medical Leave Private Plan Users.” This bill would address the concerns raised in the lawsuit against the state and ensure that businesses and employees who never use the PFML program don’t have to contribute.

Other bills, including LD 952, “An Act to Exempt Agricultural Employers and Employees from the Maine Paid Family and Medical Leave Benefits Program,” introduced by Senator Black, aim to address the flaws of this program on particular industries.

There are ways to implement a paid leave program that works for businesses, employees, and taxpayers. Ten states have successfully enacted

and implemented voluntary programs, including New Hampshire’s innovative program that blends family medical leave insurance with business tax credits to soften the hit.

The Legislature should prioritize solutions that work for everyone, without massive tax increases and raising the burden on Maine’s employers. If this flawed program can’t be repealed and replaced, we should at least adopt some of the modest reforms proposed that would bring us into line with most other states that have a paid leave program.

Again, this is Senator James Libby from Cumberland County. Make sure to follow Maine Senate Republicans on Facebook, Instagram, and X.

Just Passing Through + An Appeal to Heaven exhibitions on view

PORTLAND, ME - Just Passing Through + An Appeal to Heaven Exhibition will be on view May 2 – June 21, 2025 at SPACE Gallery. Just Passing Through, solo exhibition by Julia Arredondo, and An Appeal to Heaven, installation by Vin Caponigro. This exhibition takes places at SPACE Gallery, 534 Congress St. in Portland, Maine. The exhibition is free and open to the public.

About the artists:

Julia Arredondo is a Tejana with working-class roots, navigating the changing landscape of creative economies within the United States. With a BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art and an MFA from Columbia College Chicago, Julia has held appointments as a Visiting Artist at Illinois State University, the Jaffe Center for Book Arts at Florida Atlantic University, Indigo Arts Alliance in Maine, and more. Formally trained in printmaking, Julia specializes in screen printing and countercultural design. Her graphic aesthetic, rooted in analog processes, grew from her work designing for DIY spaces, where she explored zines as a medium for storytelling, self-preservation, and community building.

In their research-based transdisciplinary practice, Vin Caponigro blends accessible and egalitarian concepts with ritual and performance to explore ideas of restriction and reproduction through writing, performance, and the creation of multiples. Caponigro’s research includes how those in power have used storytelling



and reproducible media to control history, and how marginalized communities have used independent publishing to tell their own stories and fight back against oppressive systems. Caponigro has attended residencies in Estonia, Sicily, Italy, and the United States, including Zygote Press, ACRE, Wassaic Project, Art Center Padula, and Women’s Studio Workshop.

Just Passing Through | Exhibition Statement

Just Passing Through is an exercise in being seen. Transients often slip through the records of archivists, elude the tracking methods of government agencies, and go unaccounted for in the projected needs of a community. This invisibility is often deliberate—a safety mechanism for navigating new groups of people and unfamiliar regional customs. Just Passing Through offers me the chance to engage in conversation with Maine as someone “from away”—to exhibit the ways the region has shaped my creative practice, to reflect on the customs I’ve adopted (and also those I’ve resisted), and to express my gratitude for the craft traditions, popular motifs, and abundant landscape it has so generously shared with me.

An Appeal to Heaven | Installation Statement

By the late 17th century, the British had completely deforested their own land and began harvesting and exporting eastern white

pinus from colonial New England. In order to provide masts for their massive navy of wooden ships, King George III laid claim to any white pine measuring 24 inches or more in diameter in 1691 and any white pine measuring 12 or more inches in 1722. The Pine Tree Riot was an act of resistance against British royal authority undertaken by settlers colonizing the unceded land of the Wabanaki, N’dakina, and Pen-nacook Peoples, in what is now known as Weare, New Hampshire, on April 14, 1772. Nearly two years before the Boston Tea Party, surveyors attempting to enforce the laws were severely beaten by colonists who disguised themselves as Native Americans, sinking their boats, and whipping them with long pine branch poles. To the settlers on stolen land, the pine tree became a symbol of resistance to colonization and a desire for independence.

An Appeal to Heaven includes documentation of a ritual performed less than 20 miles from the site of the Pine Tree Riot, prints, and magic made from fallen pine tree branches at my mother’s house.

Join us for the opening reception of Just Passing Through and An Appeal To Heaven on First Friday at SPACE Gallery, 534 Congress St. Portland, Maine. Opening Reception Friday May 2, 2025 | 5 pm – 8 pm EST This event is open to attendees of all ages, free of charge.

Augusta Symphony Orchestra announces May Pops Concert

AUGUSTA, ME -- The Augusta Symphony Orchestra invites the community to an enchanting afternoon of live music at its May Pops Concert! Join us on Sunday, May 11, at 3:00 PM at Cony High School (60 Pierce Dr, Augusta, ME) for a performance that promises to delight music lovers of all ages.

This exciting program features a stunning solo performance by ASO’s concertmaster, violinist Ryu Mitsuhashi, who will captivate audiences with Pablo de Sarasate’s Zigeunerweisen (Gypsy Airs). The orchestra will also perform the Katahdin Suite, a work by Maine composer and ASO musician Nathan Saunders. To round out the concert, the ASO will bring to life a vibrant selection of Eastern European dances, rhapsodies, and more!

Founded in 1920 as a community orchestra, the Augusta Symphony Orchestra has a rich history of bringing exceptional classical music to the community. This concert continues that proud tradition, showcasing the orchestra’s talent and dedication to the arts.

The ASO is led by Conductor and Music Director Jinwook Park. Mr. Park is a member of the Colby College faculty and serves as the Music Director of the Colby Symphony Orchestra, as well as teach-

MAY POPS CONCERT



AUGUSTA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



Violin Soloist
Ryu Mitsuhashi



Maine Composer
Nathan Saunders

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This performance of the Katahdin Suite was funded in part by a grant from the Maine Arts Commission, an independent state agency supported by the National Endowment for the Arts



ing violin and viola. With his passion and commitment to educational outreach, Mr. Park also served as a founder and Music Director of the Kennebec Valley Youth Symphony Orchestra, providing music and music education to the Central Maine community for many years. He has served as the music director of the Augusta Symphony Orchestra since 2021.

Admission is free, but donations are gratefully accepted to support the orchestra’s mission of making music accessible to all. Mark your calendar and join us for an unforgettable afternoon of music.

For more information about the Augusta Symphony Orchestra and upcoming events, visit www.augustasyphonymaine.org

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The right equipment for storms, unpredictable spring weather

ALEXANDRIA, VA. – Weather is more unpredictable than ever before, and homeowners should take stock of the outdoor power equipment they have in their garages and sheds to handle ensuing damage left behind. Preparation is key—before a storm and unseasonable weather hits a community.

“Today it’s not enough to just prepare for each season. We’re seeing powerful storms in places that normally don’t get them—and too often leaving behind crippling damage,” says Kris Kiser, President and CEO of the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI). “Being equipped with the right outdoor power equipment is critical for when hurricane-force weather events bring water and wind, ice and snow put you at a standstill, and power goes out.”

To help people pre-

pare, OPEI encourages homeowners to educate themselves by visiting WeatherItBetter.com, which includes tips on having the right outdoor power equipment, severe weather and emergency cleanup, and safety measures, such as:

Have the right equipment on hand—before you need it. Acquire equipment based on weather, seasons and individual preferences before an emergency arises.

Know all equipment is not the same. Understand your equipment and its unique safety and usage requirements before using it. Review your owner’s manual and follow all instructions.

Inspect equipment before use. Check the air filter, oil level, gasoline tank or batteries. Stored equipment should be put away without fuel in the tank. Watch for missing



or damaged parts. Tighten chainsaw chains. Replace damaged parts or take equipment to a qualified service representative.

Walk through your yard and work areas. Seek and remove objects, sticks, dog toys, and other items that could create a hazard.

Always keep children and pets away from running equipment. Hire a professional if a job is beyond your abilities.

Never alter or disable equipment’s safety protection. Stay safe and follow the manufacturer’s safety measures at all times.

Use fuel and batteries designed for the equipment. Use E10 or less in gasoline-powered equipment unless it’s designed otherwise. Only use batteries or chargers that are manufacturer-specified.

Store fuel and batteries safely. Use containers

designed for fuel and label them with the purchase date and ethanol content. Use up fuel before it’s thirty days old and run equipment dry of fuel before storage.

Keep battery packs away from other metal objects, like paper clips, coins, keys, nails, or screws, that can make a connection from one terminal to another. Keep batteries stored away from one another.

Clean equipment before storing. Remove dirt, oil or grass before using and storing equipment. Store it in a dry place, avoiding damp or wet environments.

Plan ahead for safe placement of generators. NEVER place a generator in a home, garage, carport, or near an open window or door. Have on hand and use outdoor-rated power cords long enough to keep it a safe distance from the house.

Maine Veterans Homes receive reimbursement for care

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Senators Susan Collins and Angus King, and Representatives Chellie Pingree and Jared Golden

announced that Maine Veterans’ Homes (MVH) has received full reimbursement due to them from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for domiciliary care provided to veterans since 2021. In 2020, Congress passed legislation authorizing the VA to cover the costs of nursing home care provided by state veterans’ homes for veterans with early-stage dementia after it abruptly stopped covering these payments in 2019. Unfortunately, the VA delayed the required rulemaking by more than two years. This lag forced MVH to pay out-of-pocket for the care costing approximately \$130,000 per month and over \$3 million since 2019.

“For decades, Maine Veterans’ Homes (MVH) has provided quality care to Maine veterans; working hard to make good on

our nation’s promise to give back to those who served,” said Senators Collins and King and Representatives Pingree and Golden. “However, for years, MVH has faced financial strain due to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) delay in reimbursing it for nursing home care for veterans battling dementia, putting additional burdens on Maine veterans and their families. We are excited to share that MVH has finally received full reimbursement from the VA for this care — an important step that will ensure its doors can stay open, and our veterans can continue to access important care and support.”

Domiciliary care was established by the VA after the Civil War as a type of assisted living that is provided to older veterans who are independently mobile, or semi-mobile and incapable of living alone. Over 115 MVH residents receive domiciliary care, 80 percent of whom are on Medicaid.

The Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act, signed into law on January 5, 2021, authorized the VA to resume reimbursements for domiciliary care at state homes like MVH. Since then, the Maine Congressional delegation has continuously pushed the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to reimburse Maine Veterans’ Homes. In spring of 2023, the delegation introduced the Reimburse Veterans for Domiciliary Care Act, which would require the VA to restart payments for current care as mandated by law and retroactively provide MVH with the reimbursements for past care. Months later, the delegation received news the VA had agreed to resume reimbursing Maine Veterans’ Homes (MVH) for domiciliary care, but did not follow through on delivering the funds. After pressure from the Maine delegation, in September 2023 the VA announced a proposed rule that would retroactively reimburse MVH for the care they’ve

provided back to January 2020. Last spring, the delegation wrote a letter to the former Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Secretary Denis McDonough requested an update on the rule and in October 2024, the VA announced the finalized rule that would provide retroactive reimbursement for MVH.

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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,

Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

zles, CDs, and DVDs, too. Stop in and browse our ever changing selection! Auburn Public Library, 49 Spring Street.

May 3
BRUNSWICK — Get ready to set sail for an enchanting night at St. John’s Catholic School’s annual auction, “Treasures of the Deep”! Dive into the enchanted seas into the transformed St. John’s Community Center as year’s event promises to be an unforgettable celebration featuring incredible auction items, delectable cuisine from Cook’s, and top-tier entertainment-all in support of our students and school community. This much-anticipated gathering promises an enchanting evening under the sea!

May 3, 2025 at 5:30PM at St. John’s Community Center

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 6, 7
AUBURN -- Auburn Public Library: Healthy Eating on a Budget to be

taking place on Tuesday, May 6th & Wednesday, May 7, 2025 from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM.

May 9, 10
AUGUSTA -- Homeschoolers of Maine’s convention returns for another year as the Maine Home-school 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 homeschoolers throughout Maine and beyond! For more information, see homeschoolersofmaine.org/events-services/annual-convention/

May 10
LEWISTON -- Join us at the Lewiston Public Library for Painting Class: Spring is in the Air! in the 2nd floor Idea Lab on Saturday, May 10th at 11am. Recommended for children ages 8 – 14 years old.

Come learn how to paint a spring scene with step-by-step instruction by local artist, Nicole Ann. Get creative by painting a

floral scene using acrylic paints on canvas panels, perfect for gifting on Mother’s Day. All materials are provided.

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

Sundays, Starting May 11

LEWISTON -- Lewiston Farmers’ Market held every Sunday, May 11th-November 23rd from 9:30am-1:00pm. Hours change to 11:00am-1:00pm beginning first Sunday in November. Located at 2 Oxford St., Lewiston

May 15
AUBURN -- “Moving past fear—to healing”, a talk at 7:00 pm by practitioner of Christian Science healing and international speaker, Lisa Troseth at First Church of Christ, Scientist, 79 Lake St., Auburn. The talk will focus on universal healing precepts found in the Holy Bible, especially in Christ Jesus’ life and teachings, showing how they are available for anyone to understand and experience through the lens of Christian Science. This event is free, open to the public, and sponsored by First Church of Christ, Scientist, Auburn-Lewiston. Child care available upon request: 207-782-0012

May 15
BUXTON -- Thursday, May 15, 5PM Buxton Town Hall, 185 Portland

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May 17
LEWISTON, TOPSHAM -- “Ethereal Weaves of Air” Saturday, May 17, 2025, 7:00 p.m. - Franco Center, Lewiston and Sunday, May 18, 2025, 2:30 p.m. - Orion Performing Arts Center, Topsham

Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson: Rondo: Allegro Furioso (from Sinfonietta No. 1); Joseph

Haydn: Symphony No. 83 “La Poule”; Sergei Prokofiev: Symphony No. 5 in B flat, Op. 100; Tickets are \$25 in advance for adults; \$30 at the door. All concerts are free for anyone 25 and under.

Student Musicians in the Heritage Hall at the Franco Center (part of the “More with Midcoast” series) Saturday, May 17, 6:15pm - pianist Ryan Sweet; Saturday, May 17, intermission - cellist Ronan Sands and violinist Linnea Turesson

Open Rehearsal with Music Director Rohan Smith (part of the “More with Midcoast” series) Sunday, May 18, 2025, 1:30 p.m. - Orion Performing Arts Center, Topsham

For more information about the concert or “More with Midcoast,” visit MidcoastSymphony.org, call 207-315-1712, or e-mail info@midcoast-symphony.org.

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

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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.

SEPTEMBER 15 - 18, 2025 - THE GRAND CANYON OF PENNSYLVANIA - Trip includes 3 nights lodging, 3 breakfasts and 3 dinners including the historic Peter Herdic House and The Carriage House. Highlights of this tour are Susquehanna River Cruise, Pennsylvania Grand Canyon Wagon Tour, Millionaires Row Tour, Thomas Taber Mu-

seum, Historic Rowley House and much more. A \$75.00 deposit is due upon signing up. Price of this trip is \$769.00 pp double occupancy and \$918.00 for a single. Final payment is due July 17, 2025.

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 Light-house. 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.

APRIL 14 - 22, 2026 - HOLLAND AND BELGIUM SPRINGTIME CRUISE - Trip includes 9 days and 20 meals. Highlights are 7 Night River Cruise, Amsterdam with Canal Cruise, Keukenhof Gardens, Middelburg, Belgium Waterways, Scenic Sail, Bruges, Antwerp, Kinderdijk Windmills. Ship is the MS Amadeus Brilliant. Included in price is round trip air from Logan International Airport and all Hotel Transfers. Deposit is \$898.00 pp plus \$699.00 if you

want travel protection. Rates vary depending on the cabin category you choose.

SEPTEMBER 20 - 28, 2026 - DISCOVER PAINTED CANYONS OF THE WEST - Trip includes 9 days and 11 meals. Highlights are Colorado National Park, Wine tasting in the midst of Colorado Wine Country. Moab, Arches National Park, Canyonlands National Park, Dead Horse Point State Park, Capitol Reef State Park, Bryce Canyon National Park and Zion National Park all in Utah, last day in Vegas. Included in price is round trip air from Logan International Airport and all Hotel Transfers. Deposit is \$698.00 pp plus \$429.00 if you want travel protection.

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

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

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