

Local ice cream shop helps Rumford Hospital beat the heat

RUMFORD, ME – Rumford Hospital team members got an unexpected boost this week. Bob Bohren, the owner of Frosty Delite in nearby Mexico, decided to treat all of them to a free ice cream to thank them for what they do every day.

It has been a challenging June for Rumford Hospital team members who have been coping with a computer and phone system outage as well as some scorching temperatures.

“This extremely generous gift couldn’t have come at a better time,” said Stephany Jacques, RN, president of Rumford Hospital. “Bob has stepped up for this hospital on numerous occasions over the years, and we are all so grateful for his generosity. With temperatures in the high 90s, his gift was a huge hit for our team members!”

Rumford Hospital provides River Valley residents with local access to a wide array of healthcare services, including comprehensive primary care, sophisticated diagnostic and medical-surgical nursing services and surgery.



Rumford Hospital patient access team members Lori Roberts (left) and Jessica Laurinitis with Frosty Delite owner Bob Bohren.

Humane Society announces summer raffle winners

LEWISTON, ME – The Greater Androscoggin Humane Society announces the winners of their Annual Summer Raffle. With over \$12,700 in tickets sales the winners were: Mary Bussell of Lewiston, winning \$500 cash; Emily Dias of Portsmouth, RI, winning \$300 cash; Beth Herman of Freeport, winning \$200 cash and Jaclyn Masters of Berwick

winning \$100 cash. All proceeds from the raffle directly benefit the Humane Society.

The Greater Androscoggin Humane Society provides a safe haven for over 3,000 sick, homeless and abused animals in the greater Androscoggin area per year. The primary support for the shelter comes from fundraising events and donations of con-

cerned citizens.

The Greater Androscoggin Humane Society is located at 55 Strawberry Avenue in Lewiston. If you are interested in learning more about volunteering at the Shelter or adopting an animal call 783-2311 or visit the website at www.SavingPetsInMaine.org. You can also join them on www.facebook.com/GAHumane.

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RESTAURANT GUIDE

PAGES 8 & 9

Public Skate with Barnabee to benefit YWCA Central Maine

AUBURN, ME – Ready to beat the heat on the ice while raising money for a great cause? People of all ages and abilities have the chance to skate with Barnabee, the beloved mascot of Norway Savings Bank, while supporting a local organization dedicated to providing programming for many in need in the Lewiston area.

A public skate is set for Sunday, July 13, at the Norway Savings Bank Arena, located at 985 Turner Street in Auburn. The event will be held from 4:20 p.m. to 5:20 p.m. Admission is \$5, with \$5 skate rentals for adults and children available. Half of the proceeds will be given to the YWCA Central Maine in Lewiston, which aims to eliminate racism and empower women while promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all.

Public skates are held several times each year at Norway Savings



Bank Arena, with Barnabee strapping on the skates and a community organization benefitting from each event.

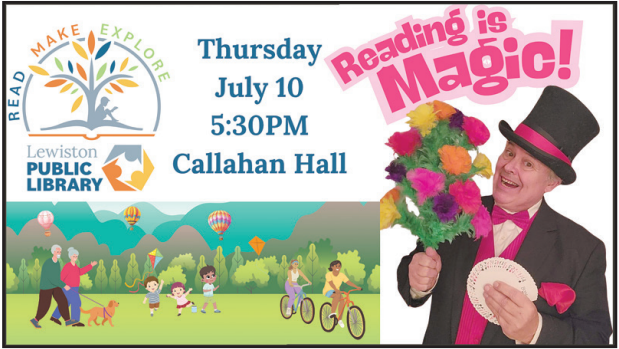
If you are not able to attend the public skate but would still like to sup-

port or learn more about YWCA Central Maine, visit www.ywcaine.org. For details about upcoming events and programs at Norway Savings Bank Arena, visit www.norwaysavingsbankarena.com.

LPL hosting Reading is Magic

LEWISTON, ME – The Lewiston Public Library will be hosting Magic Wes and his show Reading is Magic in Callahan Hall on Thursday, July 10th at 5:30PM for all ages.

Join us for this fun-filled show where books come to life with mind blowing magic, teachable moments and engaging storytelling. Kids won’t just hear a story-they will



experience it! By making reading feel magical, Wes inspires children to pick up more books and rediscover

the joy of reading. Reading is Magic is free, open to the public, and no registration is required.

Send all items for What’s Going On to the Editor.

Deadline is Friday by five.

Newsmakers, Names & Faces

\$29M to increase affordable housing, improve public services

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Susan Collins, Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, announced that multiple Maine localities will receive \$29,017,396 in federal funding through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Community Planning and Development (CPD) formula grant programs. CPD programs support states and communities as they construct and rehabilitate affordable housing, improve public services, and address homelessness. The grant awards are distributed through multiple HUD programs, including the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), the Housing Trust Fund (HTF), the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program, and the Recovery Housing Program (RHP).

“This funding will help communities across our state expand access to stable and affordable housing while improving essential local services and supporting job creation,” said Senator Collins. “As Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I will continue to champion investments in housing and

community infrastructure so that more Maine families and individuals can find a safe place to call home.”

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) This program supports the development of viable urban communities by funding housing, public infrastructure, and job creation programs that primarily benefit low- and moderate-income residents.

The funding for this program is allocated as follows:

- State of Maine – \$11,867,952
- City of Portland – \$1,807,636
- Cumberland County – \$1,509,068
- City of Bangor – \$833,082
- City of Lewiston – \$788,103
- City of Auburn – \$485,861
- City of Biddeford – \$424,428
- HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME)

This program provides formula grants to build, buy, or rehabilitate affordable housing for rent or homeownership, or to provide direct rental assistance to low-income households.

The funding for this program is allocated as follows:

- State of Maine – \$4,076,946
- City of Portland – \$800,654
- City of Auburn – \$462,520
- Housing Trust Fund (HTF)

This program funds the production and preservation of affordable housing for extremely low- and very low-income households.

The funding for this program is allocated as follows:

- State of Maine – \$3,134,373
- Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)

This program helps individuals and families quickly regain stable housing after experiencing homelessness or a housing crisis.

The funding for this program is allocated as follows:

- State of Maine – \$1,398,052
- City of Portland – \$161,146
- Recovery Housing Program (RHP)

This program provides temporary housing support for individuals recovering from substance use disorders.

The funding for this program is allocated as follows:

- State of Maine – \$1,267,575.

WinterKids welcomes three new board members



Brean Witmer

WESTBROOK, ME – WinterKids, Maine’s nonprofit champion for children’s health and outdoor winter learning, proudly announces the addition of three new members to its Board of Directors: Marnie Grumbach, Brean Witmer, and Brent Vanni.

Each of these dynamic individuals brings a wealth of professional expertise—and a shared passion as parents for getting kids outside, moving, and learning in nature. Their leadership reflects WinterKids’ ongoing commitment to inclusive, high-quality programming that fosters joyful, healthy habits through outdoor winter play.

“We are thrilled to welcome Marnie, Brean, and Brent to the WinterKids board,” said Courtney Holub, Executive Director of WinterKids. “Their deep personal and professional



Brent Vanni

ties to wellness, education, and the outdoors will strengthen our programs as we celebrate 25 years of joyful outdoor learning.”

Marnie Grumbach, founder of Fluent IMC, brings extensive experience in integrated marketing and nonprofit branding. Her strategic insight and creative leadership will enhance WinterKids’ ability to tell compelling stories and connect with families across the state.

Brean Witmer, Director of Research and Evaluation at the Great Schools Partnership, has over a decade of expertise in education policy and programming. Her data-driven, equity-centered approach will support the organization’s mission to ensure all children have access to outdoor winter learning.

Brent Vanni, Product Development Manager at L.L. Bean, is a leader in



Marnie Grumbach

performance outerwear innovation. His firsthand understanding of outdoor gear and commitment to active lifestyles will elevate WinterKids’ statewide partnerships and programming.

As WinterKids celebrates its 25th anniversary, this expanded board reflects a forward-looking vision—one where every child, regardless of background, has the opportunity to thrive outdoors.

About WinterKids: WinterKids is an industry leader dedicated exclusively to inspiring and increasing outdoor physical activity for children and families in Maine, turning our longest season into a time of adventure, health, and connection.

We help children develop healthy lifelong habits through education and fun outdoor winter activities. For more information, visit www.winterkids.org.

Nominations open for Leaders & Luminaries Awards

PORTLAND, ME – As part of its 150th year celebration, Camden National Bank proudly announces that nominations are now open for its 2025 Leaders & Luminaries Awards. These awards are designed to recognize five exceptional nonprofit board members who demonstrate visionary leadership and a deep commitment to advancing their organization. A total of \$25,000 in grant funding will be awarded

to the honorees’ respective nonprofit organizations.

“Our steadfast support to local nonprofits is more than our responsibility - it embodies our identity as a community bank,” said Renée Smyth, Executive Vice President and Chief Experience & Marketing Officer at Camden National Bank. “As we celebrate our 150th anniversary, we are especially proud to recognize individuals whose unwavering dedication

and quiet leadership play a transformative role in shaping more resilient, vibrant communities.”

Since launching the Leaders & Luminaries Awards in 2011, Camden National Bank has awarded \$264,000 to 68 Maine nonprofits, celebrating board members who exemplify strategic direction, financial stewardship, and support of their organization’s mission.

The nomination period will remain open through September 12, 2025. For more application details and eligibility requirements, or to submit a nomination, visit <https://www.CamdenNational.bank/leadersandluminaries>.

The 2024 award recipients, totaling \$22,000, included Alan Caron of ClimateWork Maine, Chris Houle of the Maine Academy of Modern Music, Katie Weiler of Saltwater Classroom, and Mike Wilson of The Center for Grieving Children. In addition to these four \$5,000 grants, a \$2,000 Spotlight Award was presented to William “Bill” Buckley of The Challenger Learning Center.

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

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Seniors Not Acting Their Age Serene Kayaking on Stevens Pond

Over the past few years, my wife, Nancy, and I have explored some of central Maine’s finest small ponds and lakes in kayaks. We’ve found them to be an entertaining alternative to sea kayaking on the ocean and whitewater paddling in rivers and streams.

While sea kayaking offers the challenges of open water navigation coupled with tidal changes, and whitewater paddling requires constant attentiveness in an exciting downriver environment, lake and pond paddling provides relaxing opportunities to enjoy boating in more controlled, peaceful circumstances. Flatwater paddling on ponds and lakes has become an important outdoor activity for us.

We’ve paddled, and I’ve written, about several small ponds and lakes in the last couple of years, including Runaround Pond in Durham, Megunticook Lake in Camden, and Branch Pond in Palermo. Serene paddling in exceptionally scenic environments is a commonality they share.

I recently conducted a solo exploration of Stevens Pond in Liberty. The picturesque pond met our criteria so Nancy and I planned a trip.

Weather is an important consideration for our pond and lake trips. Serenity is difficult to experience in bad weather. We look for warm sunny days with

light winds. Some wind is preferable in the spring to keep the flies away. A Goldilocks day was identified in early June.

Most paddle boats are adequate for lake and pond outings. We use flatwater kayaks because they track well, have minimal exposure to winds and ours are comfortable. Canoes designed for flatwater offer a good alternative.

Nancy paddles a 17-foot fiberglass Current Designs Solstice. The sleek Solstice is quite fast and the outfitting is exceptionally comfortable. She uses a rudder to facilitate turning the long vessel. I also have a Solstice but prefer to use a 12-foot plastic Casco 120 for lake and pond paddling. The rugged plastic design is very durable and the short hull facilitates easy turning. However, given its heavier weight, wider beam and shorter length, the Casco is slower than the Solstice. I often find myself hurrying to keep up.

The weather was warm and sunny with light winds when we arrived at the small boat landing on Route 173 in Liberty. Two people were leaving in a canoe as we unloaded our kayaks and gear.

We departed southwesterly from the landing ramp. A large irregular tract of land named Quigg Island dominates the center of the pond. Much of Quigg Island is a forest

preserve owned by Georges River Land Trust.

We turned left into a narrow channel that separates the mainland from the northern end of Quigg Island. After navigating through the passageway, the eastern sector of the pond opened up to a cluster of small islands.

We proceeded to the eastern shoreline and then maneuvered south in shallow water through a maze of tiny passages between the islands. The area was decorated with scores of yellow pond lilies just beginning to blossom. Only low-draft paddle boats can access these waters.

Once the southeastern end of the pond was reached, we turned west and progressed between more islands in very shallow water. After rounding a short peninsula that extends out from the southern shore, we paddled to what appeared to be the southwestern terminus of the pond. Instead, an attenuated opening leads to a surprisingly large body of water called Howes Cove.

Howes Cove is a fascinating place to explore. Two miniature islands seem to stand guard over the entrance. Kayaking deeper into the cove, we crossed through a captivating congested garden of lily pads.

Exiting the cove, we traversed open water north to Quigg Island. A tiny brook separates the south-



A kayaker paddles through a garden of lily pads in Howes Cove on Stevens Pond



A tandem canoe team pushes through a narrow channel on Stevens Pond



Nancy Chase begins a kayak trip on Stevens Pond

western extension of the island from a narrow mainland peninsula. Quigg Island Road literally crosses through it and leads to what appear to be some private camps. When we arrived, a tandem canoe team was pushing through the brook.

Nancy and I decided to forgo dragging through the minuscule rivulet and take the long route back instead. We paddled north along the eastern shoreline of rugged Quigg Island and

west through the northern channel. Following a visit to the dock at Quigg Island Forest Preserve, we returned to the Route 173 boat landing completing a very entertaining day of exploring.

My book, Maine Al Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine narrates the best lake, pond, river, and sea kayak trips in Maine.

Ron Chase resides in Topsham. His latest

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

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

Heat wave safety for older adults: Staying safe, healthy in summer

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

Experts are forecasting that 2025, especially this summer, will be particularly hot, which may pose heightened health risks for older adults, according to a University of Southern California study.¹ Seniors may be more susceptible to heat-related illnesses like heat stroke as well as complications from chronic conditions like diabetes and high blood pressure that are worsened by extreme heat.

How older adults can stay cool

Plan ahead – Follow local weather reports to ensure you have enough food, prescription medications and other home “staples” to get through a heat wave.

Stay hydrated – Drink plenty of water, even if you are not thirsty. Limit caffeinated and alcoholic beverages. Drinks with electrolytes are also all right.

Use cooling strategies – Take cool showers, use fans, or place damp washcloths on your neck and wrists to help lower your body temperature.

Limit physical activities outdoors (particularly between 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.) – If you must go out:

Wear lightweight and light-colored clothing, sunglasses and brimmed hats;

Apply sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher; Bring water; and

Take frequent breaks in the shade or air-conditioned spaces.

Certain medications may make dehydration or sunburn more likely. So, whether you are staying inside or heading outside, check with your care provider to make sure you are taking the proper precautions.

Older adults and their caregivers can work together to summer-proof their homes. Keep shades down when the sun is most intense. Strategically place fans, particularly in

doorways between rooms or in front of window air conditioning units to better circulate air. Install ceiling fans, including temporary ones that can be placed in light bulb sockets.

How caregivers can help support older adults

Check in – Be alert to signs of heat-related illness like confusion, weakness, flushed skin, dizziness, or excessive sweating. Seek medical attention if your loved one is experiencing symptoms of heat stroke, such as hot, dry skin, a rapid pulse, confusion or unconsciousness.

Help with activities so older adults can limit time outside – Volunteer to run errands, including picking up prescriptions and food shopping.

Find out about community services

“Cooling stations” or other public places, like libraries and community centers where older adults can go;

Proactive check-in
See Heat Wave, page 12

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3 money management lessons to learn from social media

By Evergreen Credit Union

Published for World Social Media Day – June 30

Whether it's by intentional learning or subconscious biases that form over time, hours of scrolling through platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube have changed how people view their personal finances. According to a 2023 report from the National Endowment for Financial Education, nearly 60% of Americans say they use social media to learn about personal finance.

While this makes financial literacy resources more accessible to our population, it also paves the way for influencers to capitalize on the market of money managing and financial counseling.

For many, scrolling through curated posts and reels is a gateway to setting a budget, learning to invest, and becoming inspired to pay off debts. Evergreen Credit Union, based right here in our community, has seen this shift firsthand. As more members reference social media in daily conversations about their finances, the credit union is leaning into this trend, helping community members spot smart money moves vs potentially harmful advice.

Social media has made financial education more accessible in theory, but now rather than just learning from advice, we need to discern between advice that is helpful or potentially harmful. Some posts come from credible experts, while others are from self-taught influencers sharing what worked for them, but not necessarily what will work for you.

These are 3 key takeaways from social media about financial education:

1. Unfollow Accounts that Give You Financial FOMO

The internet is full of luxury lifestyle content, making it easy to fall into the trap of comparing your bank account to someone else's highlight reel. Financial FOMO (fear of missing out) can quietly erode your confidence and push you toward impulsive decisions that don't align with your goals or values.

Just like we spring-clean our homes, it's okay to clean up your feed. Mute or unfollow accounts that



Photo Courtesy of Evergreen Credit Union – (Left) Emma Pierce, Communications Specialist and (Right) Jeanna Coates, Certified Financial Counselor

make you feel inadequate about your financial situation, even if they're meant to be aspirational.

Alternatively, following creators who offer transparency by sharing real budgets, setbacks, and strategies, can help normalize everyday financial wins. It's not about keeping up with influencers, it's about staying true to your own priorities.

2. Try a Budgeting App

Many viral videos on financial TikTok and Instagram Reels introduce people to simple, easy to use budget tracking apps, automated savings tools, or even debt payoff calculators.

"These tools can take the guesswork out of budgeting, especially for busy families," explains Jeanna Coates, Certified Financial Counselor at Evergreen. "We've seen members save thousands just by using apps that give a clear picture of where their money is going."

Whether it's an app or a service provided by your credit union, technology makes it easier to build good habits. Find something that fits your lifestyle and stick with it to see results in your finances.

3. Vet Financial Influencers

Not all influencers are created equal. While some social media finance gurus have extensive backgrounds in economics or financial planning, others are simply sharing personal anecdotes or even outright misinformation.

Before taking any advice, try a quick background check. Look for signs that the person is a certified financial planner, has formal training, or is citing reputable sources.

You can always ask your financial counselor about something you saw online, they might not know the specific influencer, but they will be happy to talk about how the advice could apply to you.

Social Media as a Starting Point, Not the Finish Line

While scrolling through financial content online can open the door to important conversations and new ideas, it's rarely the full story. Social media is a starting point for more in-depth conversations tailored to your personal goals.

"The best financial plans are personal," says Coates. "They consider your goals, your family, your income, and your community. Use social media to get inspired, then bring those ideas to someone you trust to help you apply them."

As we celebrate World Social Media Day, consider taking a fresh look at your feed. With a little curation, some critical thinking, and the right tools, even your next scroll session could bring you one step closer to financial freedom. For more information, go to egcu.org/education.

More about Evergreen Credit Union:

Evergreen Credit Union is Maine's 5th largest credit union, serving over 32,000 members throughout southern Maine. Evergreen offers financial education for free with personalized private sessions with a certified financial counselor, online interactive quick reads, and more. For more information about Evergreen's financial education and wellness resources, visit egcu.org/education.

Maine's free community college scholarship ends with class of 2025

AUGUSTA, ME — Maine's Free College Scholarship ends with the Class of 2025 graduates after state lawmakers declined to fund future graduating classes in the budget signed by the governor on Monday.

The Free College Scholarship, which started in fall 2022, is a last-dollar scholarship that covers 100% of tuition and mandatory fees at Maine's community colleges for recent high school graduates. The state previously approved the Classes of 2023-25 for the scholarship, which will continue to be available to those students. Qualifying high school graduates have up to two years post-graduation to enroll, and up to four years to complete an associate degree, so Free College Scholarship students will continue to be enrolled at the colleges for several more years.

It would take a separate act of the legislature to continue the scholarship beyond the Class of 2025.

"It's dispiriting to have such a successful program benefiting so many people – students, their families, Maine employers – come to an end," said David Daigler, president of the Maine Community College System (MCCS). "We'll continue our mission to provide affordable, relevant education and training that prepares people for good jobs in Maine – but it will be harder to reach all the deserving, motivated, and hard-working students who came to the colleges because of the Free College Scholarship."

"I want each one of the potential students who are disappointed they won't get the scholarship to know that Maine's community colleges are still very, very affordable, and we'll help them any way we can to make ends

meet," Daigler said. Tuition and fees are \$4,156 a year for a full-time student and more than 50% of MCCS students qualify for federal Pell grants that often cover those costs.

The state budget signed Monday includes one-time funding of \$20 million for MCCS to pay for the Free College Scholarship for current students and the Class of 2025; a 4% increase to base funding; and one-time funding to cover new paid family medical leave (PFML) costs.

Since fall 2022, 17,826 Free College-eligible students have enrolled at Maine's community colleges. In fall 2024, there were 8,989 Free College-eligible students enrolled, out of a total enrollment of 21,385 students. Enrollment has increased 23% since the pre-pandemic fall 2019 enrollment of 17,327.

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

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Arts & Entertainment

Lisbon Credit Union announces local scholarship winners

LISBON, ME – Lisbon Credit Union is delighted to announce the recipients of its annual Rochel “Russ” Livernois Memorial Scholarship program, awarding four \$2,500 scholarships to outstanding local high school seniors. This year’s winners have demonstrated exceptional academic achievements, community involvement, and a strong commitment to pursuing higher education.

“We are incredibly proud of these remarkable students,” said Sarah Perkins, CEO of Lisbon Credit Union. “Their dedication and passion for making a positive impact in their communities are truly inspiring. We are honored to

support them as they take the next steps in their educational journeys.”

The 2025 Rochel “Russ” Livernois Memorial Scholarship Recipients Are:

Adeline Burkhardt – Lisbon High School. Plans to attend: University of Southern Maine. Intended Major: Nursing

Ava Rivet – Oak Hill High School. Plans to attend: University of Southern Maine. Intended Major: Nursing

Deborah Lubamba – Lisbon High School. Plans to attend: University of Southern Maine. Intended Major: Finance

Hannah Card – Lisbon High School. Plans to attend: Bowdoin College.

Intended Major: Psychology

Each of these students submitted impressive applications, including thoughtful essays on how their education will help them make a positive impact in their communities. The selection committee was impressed by their stories and aspirations.

The Lisbon Credit Union developed the Rochel ‘Russ’ Livernois Scholarship Fund in 2000 to help local graduating seniors realize their dreams. Mr. Livernois served as Treasurer/Manager from the Credit Union’s beginning in 1959 through 1985. The scholarship fund honors his years of service and dedication.

Community Little Theatre announces 86th season lineup

AUBURN, ME – The L/A Community Little Theatre (CLT) has announced its 86th season will open on October 30 with the musical “A New Home,” which was first performed in 1995 as “Lewiston: A New Home.”

“A New Home” is an original musical that tells the rich and complex history of Lewiston. Written and composed by Lewiston native Paul G. Caron and presented in 1995 for the Lewiston Bicentennial, this production brings to life the stories of Lewiston’s Indigenous, Irish, Franco-American, and African immigrant communities, whose contributions have shaped the city’s identity and culture. The sold-out performances of “Lewiston: A New Home” received wide acclaim for the show’s musical score and the heartwarming authenticity of its stories. An original cast album was released in December 1995, and the show was performed again to sold-out audiences in 1996. In the thirty years since the original production, major events – both good and tragic - have occurred in Lewiston and are now represented in the musical’s revival to enhance its relevance and historical significance.

“A New Home” will run October 30-November 9, and all performances will be held at the Lewiston Middle School Auditorium.

On one deeply cold and magical midwinter night, the citizens of “Almost, Maine” -- not organized enough for a town, too populated for a wilderness -- experience the life-altering power of the human heart. Relationships end, begin, or change beyond recognition, as strangers become friends, friends become lovers, and lovers turn into strangers. Propelled by the mystical energy of the aurora borealis and populated with characters who are humorous, plain-spoken, thoughtful, and sincere, “Almost, Maine” is a series of loose-



ly connected tales about love, each with a compelling couple at its center, each with its own touch of sorcery. Directed by Jackie McDonald, “Almost Maine” will run from February 20-March 1, 2026.

A beloved classic, “The Secret Garden” will come to the CLT stage in April. Britny Anderson will direct this non-musical adaptation, a poetic adventure that enthralls and delights. A recently orphaned child named Mary Lennox, is forced to leave her home in India to live with her uncle in a mansion on the moors of Yorkshire. There she hears mysterious crying down the halls and fears that the housekeeper and the doctor are plotting something. Through the sympathy of a young housemaid and her brother, Mary comes to know what love means. Together, they discover answers to the mysteries that plague them and experience the restorative powers of nature and self-realization. “The Secret Garden” will run from April 10-19.

CLT will present a trip down memory lane in June with “The Marvelous Wonderettes!” This jukebox hit features four high school friends performing at their 1958 prom—and later, their ten-year reunion—set to the soundtrack of your favorite ‘50s and ‘60s hits like “Lollipop,” “It’s My Party,” and “Respect.” Packed with charm, comedy, and classic tunes, this energetic, feel-good musical is a celebration of friendship, nostalgia, and girl-group harmony that will have you singing along all night! Sophie Wood and Justin Morin will co-direct this feel-good musical that will run from June 19-28.

Audiences will be invited to “follow the Yellow Brick Road” in August with the unforgettable ad-

An original musical that tells the rich and complex history of Lewiston, “A New Home” will open CLT’s 86th season in October.

venture of “The Wizard of Oz!” This beloved musical brings L. Frank Baum’s classic story to life with all your favorite characters—Dorothy, Scarecrow, Tin Man, Cowardly Lion—and the iconic songs you know and love, including “Over the Rainbow” and “We’re Off to See the Wizard.” A heartwarming journey full of magic, courage, and friendship, “The Wizard of Oz” is a delightful experience for the whole family. This journey to the wonderful land of Oz, directed by Brandon Chaloux, will run from August 7-16.

All productions, with the exception of “A New Home,” will be held at CLT on 30 Academy Street in Auburn. Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m. with Sunday matinees at 2:00 p.m.

Subscribers to CLT’s new season can enjoy savings of 20 percent, priority seating, one free flex pass, and free ticket exchange. Season subscriptions are now available online at www.laclt.com. Current subscribers have until September 30 to reserve their current seats. For more information, contact the box office at boxoffice@laclt.com or leave a message at 783-0958.

L/A Community Little Theatre is a volunteer, non-profit organization that has produced live theatre since 1940. It strives to provide affordable and quality entertainment in the performing arts as well as education, training, and experience in theatre for area youth.

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MEMIC Group announces 2025 award winners



PORTLAND, ME – The MEMIC Group, a national leader in workers’ compensation insurance, proudly announces the 2025 MEMIC Award recipients. These honors celebrate employers and individuals who demonstrate outstanding commitment to workplace safety, employee well-being, and workforce partnership.

Excellence in Worker Safety & Employee Care
Recipient: Sargent Corporation

Sargent Corporation, a 100% employee-owned construction company headquartered in Orono, Maine, received MEMIC’s top honor for Excellence in Worker Safety & Employee Care.

Through its CARE program — which stands for Committed, Accountable, Responsible, and Empowered — every employee-owner pledge to prioritize safety. In 2024, Sargent employees worked over one million hours with zero lost-time injuries — a milestone proudly featured on their homepage.

Sargent has consistently demonstrated integrity, responsiveness, and a collaborative spirit in its partnership with MEMIC, working seamlessly alongside Cross Insurance to deliver exceptional results.

“Receiving this award is an honor,” said Cameron Haggar, Sargent Safety Director. We want to thank MEMIC for recognizing the dedication to safety that is genuinely embodied by individual Sargent employee-owners in the field. Their commitment to looking out for one another, taking the time to plan, and identifying risks is what ultimately contributes to creating a safe and healthy work environment.”

In addition to receiving the award, Sargent was honored with a \$2,500 grant from The MEMIC Group to donate to a charity of its choice. Sargent proudly selected the Travis Mills Foundation, an organization dedicated to supporting post-9/11 veterans who have been injured in active duty or as a result of their service. To learn more about the impactful work of the Travis Mills Foundation and explore opportunities to support their mission, please visit their website at www.travismills.org.

MEMIC Mission Award for Industry Leadership
Recipient: Dr. Dana Kerr, University of Southern Maine

The inaugural



MEMIC Mission Award for Industry Leadership was presented to Dr. Dana Kerr, Associate Professor and John T. Leonard Endowed Chair in Risk Management and Insurance at the University of Southern Maine (USM).

Dr. Kerr has strengthened the workers’ compensation system through education and workforce development. Under his leadership, USM’s Risk Management and Insurance program boasts a 90% placement rate, and he has helped more than 275 MEMIC employees earn the Workers’ Compensation Professional (WCP) designation. In 2023, he revised the national WCP coursework to improve industry education standards.

“I’m honored to receive the first MEMIC Mission Award and grateful for the partnership we’ve built over the years,” said Dr. Dana Kerr. “MEMIC has been instrumental in helping our Workers’ Compensation Professional program grow since I started it in 2008. I want to thank my students, including all those at MEMIC who have gone through the WCP course and the five RMI grads who are now members of the MEMIC team.”

Excellence in Workforce Partnership
Recipient: Kevin Bunker, Developers Collaborative

The Workforce Partnership Award recognizes Kevin Bunker, founder of Developers Collaborative, for his visionary efforts to address Maine’s housing crisis — one of the greatest barriers to workforce attraction and retention. Bunker’s work in sustainable, smart-growth development has provided affordable housing and revitalized communities. Among his most impactful projects is Freedom Place, a 38-bed transitional facility for women recovering from addiction and homelessness. The facility was converted from a planned luxury condominium project.

“As I get older, I find myself caring less about money and more about people,” said Kevin Bunker. “Putting people before profit and creating opportunities for the most vulnerable has become my driving

purpose. It finally feels like I’m doing something that truly matters.”

Bunker’s values-driven leadership aligns with MEMIC’s mission to improve workforce well-being and create opportunities for those most in need.

Horizon Scholarship Honorees

Since 2001, the Horizon Scholarship has awarded over \$290,000 to 49 scholars—spouses and children of workers seriously injured on the job. Funded in memory of Harvey Picker, a co-founder of MEMIC, the scholarship honors families facing adversity by supporting their higher education goals.

The 2025 recipients are Arie Decker of New York and Manuela Kalonda of Bridgeport, Connecticut. Both have demonstrated extraordinary resilience and are each awarded a \$10,000 scholarship to support their academic journeys.

A Message from MEMIC President and CEO Michael Bourque

“The MEMIC Awards reflect the heart of our mission: protecting people,” said Michael Bourque, President and CEO of The MEMIC Group. “We don’t just insure workplaces — we partner with employers to prevent injuries, improve outcomes, and build cultures of care. These honorees show what’s possible when you truly prioritize people.”

The awards were presented at MEMIC’s Annual Meeting of Policyholders in Portland, Maine, on June 9, 2025. To learn more and watch recipient videos, visit memic.com/awards.

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Tick Lab showing elevated activity in midcoast counties

ORONO, ME – University of Maine Cooperative Extension Tick Lab recently published a research report in the Journal of Maine Medical Center highlighting trends in tick species distribution and the pathogens associated with each type. Notably, the epicenter of activity in Maine is clustered in midcoast Maine — Hancock, Knox, Lincoln and Waldo counties — where submission rates are high and the prevalence of pathogens is elevated.

“Passive Tick Surveillance at the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Tick Lab: A 6-Year Retrospective” confirms the important role the black-legged tick (*Ixodes scapularis*) plays in Maine’s tick-borne disease landscape and emphasizes the need for surveillance of emerging species and pathogens, including those that cause Lyme disease, anaplasmosis, babesiosis, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, ehrlichiosis and Powassan virus.

The comprehensive database of ticks used for the study is compiled from samples submitted by members of the public located across the state. Researchers then used the data to determine trends in the distribution of tick species and related pathogens.

“The lab’s passive tick surveillance program can effectively detect the establishment of ticks in new areas, indicate changes in pathogen prevalence and show fluctuations in seasonality,” said Griffin Dill, coordinator of the Tick Lab. “This data is important in determining public health risks and can be used to guide targeted intervention strategies, education campaigns and proactive measures to manage ticks. Taken with

other surveillance efforts, the findings can provide deeper insight into drivers of tick ecology and human exposure risk.”

Over the six years of the study, the lab received more than 22,000 tick specimens for testing from all 16 of Maine’s counties and from 466 municipalities, reflecting strong public engagement in the program and a growing awareness of ticks and tick-borne disease risks. Although multiple species were submitted, the black-legged tick — a vector for Lyme and other serious tick-borne diseases — was a dominant and broadly distributed species across the state.

The highest number of samples was received from Cumberland County. However, when accounting for the population size of each county, the annual submission rates per 100,000 residents were the greatest from Hancock, Lincoln, Knox and Waldo counties. Ecologically, this coastal region maintains diverse habitats, abundant wildlife host species and increasingly mild winters, all of which can favor tick survival and pathogen transmission. These same counties also report some of the highest human incidence rates of Lyme disease, anaplasmosis and babesiosis.

While black-legged ticks and the bacteria that causes Lyme disease re-

main common, increases in other species and pathogens reinforces the need for continued surveillance and additional testing for less common tick-borne pathogens.

Funding for ongoing UMaine research on ticks and tick-borne pathogens is supported by nearly \$6.2 million in Congressionally Directed Spending secured by U.S. Sen. Susan Collins, currently chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee. Additionally, an annual state appropriation directly supports the operations of the tick lab and enables UMaine to maintain testing affordability for Maine residents.

Maine residents can submit ticks for identification and testing by completing the online submission form at ticks.umaine.edu and mailing the sample to UMaine Extension Tick Lab, 17 Godfrey Drive. Identification is free; pathogen testing is \$20 per tick. The website also provides information on how to protect yourself and your pets and how to manage your property to reduce your risk of tick encounters.

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

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Summer road trips: Tips for safety, not stress

News provided by
Mercury Insurance/
PRNewswire

LOS ANGELES, CA – According to a recent survey from GasBuddy, 69% of Americans plan to take a road trip this summer, and of those, 40% say they expect to be on the road for more than five hours. If you’re among the millions with travel plans, Mercury Insurance wants to help ensure that your vehicle is up for the task.

“Road tripping has long been a summer tradition for many families, but it’s important to take a few precautions before heading out,” said Kevin Quinn, Vice President of Auto Claims for Mercury Insurance.

“Ensure that your vehicle is up to date on maintenance, and that all lights and signals are functional. Additionally, check that your tire pressure and tread wear are acceptable, and pack an emergency kit that includes essentials like jumper cables and basic tools to handle unexpected roadside issues.”

Here’s a breakdown of recommendations from Mercury to prepare for a road trip:

Maintenance checks: Regular maintenance, such as oil changes and fluid checks, is critical before a long trip. Ensure that your air conditioning is in working order to beat the summer heat. Top off your

engine coolant to prevent overheating and check your windshield washer fluid.

Tire safety: Proper tire maintenance — including checking tire pressure, alignment and tread wear — is vital for safe driving and fuel efficiency. You can check your tire pressure at home by purchasing a digital tire pressure gauge. If possible, carry a spare tire as well in case of an emergency.

Lighting system check: Ensure all lights and signals are functional — including headlights, high beams, tail lights, brake lights and turn signals — to communicate effectively with other drivers.

Have an emergency kit: A well-stocked emergency kit should include items like:

- Road flares
 - Jumper cables
 - A quart of motor oil
 - A gallon of coolant
 - A first-aid kit
 - Blankets
 - Drinkable water
 - A flashlight and basic tools like a screwdriver, pliers, an adjustable wrench, spare tire, and jack and lug nut wrench
 - Nonperishable food
 - Plan ahead if traveling
- See **ROAD TRIPS**, page 14

TSA: Family-friendly summer travel tips

News provided by
Transportation Security Administration

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is staffed and ready to screen over 18.5 million travelers at the nation’s airport security checkpoints during the upcoming Fourth of July holiday. This year’s projection includes Tuesday, July 1, through Monday, July 7, with the highest passenger volume – approximately 2.9 million – expected on Sunday, July 6. TSA screened nearly 3.1 million travelers on Sunday, June 22, the busiest single day in the agency’s history.

“TSA continues to work closely with our industry partners and ensure our airport security checkpoints are fully staffed and prepared to handle the heavy rush of traffic,” said TSA Acting Administrator Ha Nguyen McNeill. “We are deploying technologies and procedures to improve security and enhance the passenger experience, including for

families. We ask travelers to pack their patience, especially during peak travel days, as we work to provide maximum hospitality to our customers.”

For families with vacation plans, TSA has practices in place to expedite screening and make traveling with children less stressful.

Children 12 and under may accompany a TSA PreCheck®-enrolled parent or guardian in TSA PreCheck lanes without restriction.

Children will not be separated from their parent/guardian.

Strollers, baby carriers, and car and booster seats are allowed through the checkpoint but must be screened by X-ray.

Modified screening procedures are in place to reduce the likelihood of a pat-down.

Text us at 275-872 (“AskTSA”) or @AskTSA for quick answers to questions about going through the TSA checkpoint.

Passengers with disabilities or medical

conditions who require additional assistance may contact TSA Cares by calling (855) 787-2227 at least 72 hours in advance of their flight.

Additionally, passengers should bring their REAL IDs or other acceptable forms of IDs to the checkpoint. Since implementing REAL ID on May 7, nearly 94% of passengers are presenting a REAL ID or another acceptable form of ID, such as a passport. Travelers can find a full list of acceptable IDs on TSA’s website.

As a reminder, travelers need to “Prepare, Pack, Declare” when flying with firearms. Firearms must be unloaded and locked in a hard-sided container and transported as checked baggage only. TSA encourages all travelers to pack smart by starting with an empty bag and reviewing the list of prohibited items before heading to the airport.

For more information on preparing for airport security screening, visit TSA.gov.

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Maine’s 2025 Summer Update

Be sure to check out these happenings in Maine this summer, provided by VisitMaine.com!

Thoreau-Wabanaki Trail Festival

The 19th Annual Thoreau-Wabanaki Trail Festival commemorates the ways of the Wabanaki people and poet, naturalist philosopher Henry David Thoreau’s three trips into Maine’s North Woods, two of which were launched with Penobscot guides on Moosehead Lake. Among the scheduled events are a Birch Bark Canoe Gathering & Exhibition, Thoreau Nature Walks, Dark Skies: Aurora Borealis Photography, and lectures including “The Tonic of Wildness: Henry David Thoreau’s Excursions to the Maine Woods” and “Wabanaki, Thoreau & The Power of Place.” All events will be held in the Greenville area. Running from July 23 to 28, 2025, the mission of the Thoreau-Wabanaki Trail Festival is to encourage the understanding, appreciation, and stewardship of Maine’s unique cultural and natural heritage and to provide spiritual renewal in Maine’s North Woods for all Maine residents and visitors.

Bates Dance Festival

The Bates Dance Festival (BDF) returns this summer from July 11 to August 1, 2025, bringing together an exceptional roster of artists, educators, and students for three weeks of contemporary dance education and performances. This year, BDF proudly features the premiere festival appearance of the iconic Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company, presenting a mixed repertory, including their seminal works Continuous Replay and D-Man in the Waters, as well as offering masterclasses and participating in community engagement events. Now in its 43rd season, Bates Dance Festival remains one of the pre-



mier destinations for dance education and performance in the United States. Set against the backdrop of Bates College in Lewiston, the festival fosters a dynamic space where professional and emerging artists collaborate, train, and present groundbreaking work.

Penobscot Marine Museum Opens Sardine-land

The Penobscot Marine Museum in Searsport has opened its latest exhibit, SardineLand. Showcasing the fascinating stories of Maine’s sardine industry, the exhibit takes visitors on a journey through the history of this major economic driver for Maine, which was a significant contributor to the state’s economy for much of the 20th century. The exhibit highlights the importance of Maine’s sardine industry and its impact on local culture and economy. The museum sourced stories from those who worked in canneries, fished for herring, and continue to live and work in coastal communities. SardineLand shares their experiences through artifacts, photographs, videos, and interactive activities, giving guests a unique opportunity to experience the processes that made Maine a center for the sardine trade for well over a century.

Maine Potato Blossom Festival

The Maine Potato Blossom Festival, a cornerstone of Aroostook County’s summer traditions, is kicking off its 2025 celebration with a collaboration with Spud Speedway. The Festival celebrates its 78th year, honoring the region’s storied agricultural heritage at Fort Fairfield from July 12 to July 20, 2025. It promises an unfor-

gettable week filled with live music, delicious food, thrilling races, and family-friendly events. New events include the Central Aroostook Chamber BBQ Cookoff & Spud 100 Race, the latter part of the R&R Street Stock Tour, bringing high-speed action to the track. There are new Drive-In Movie Nights with a Tribute to Veterans, Agricultural Tours featuring Molly the Trolley, and the Best Potato Recipe Competition. The Maine Potato Blossom Festival will continue its tradition of featuring live music, food trucks, competitions, a spectacular parade, fireworks, and

more.
Maine’s Summer Theaters

Maine has long cultivated and treasured its beloved summer theaters, historic venues that have welcomed locals and visitors for decades. It was on these stages that aspiring Broadway performers, directors, and producers held tryout productions and reinvigorated classic shows. These theaters were the training grounds for young talent and productions that, in some cases, went on to Broadway and Hollywood. Many of the theaters are architecturally significant, and they’ve become a feature of many a Maine summer vacation. Among them



RESTAURANT GUIDE

eat local

drink local

is Deertrees Theatre in Harrison, which was founded in 1936. The Ogunquit Playhouse is a coastal favorite, one of the last theaters that was part of the Straw Hat Circuit, the original summer stock theaters. There’s the Hackmatack Playhouse in Berwick, the Theater at Monmouth, the Maine State Music Theater

in Brunswick, and the century-old Lakewood Theater in Madison. It’s the country’s longest-running summer theater and has hosted many musicals that went on to Broadway, including “Life With Father,” one of the longest-running plays on the Great White Way. Go to Visit Maine for more details.

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Keep summer fun & safe for pets

LOUISVILLE, KY – As temperatures rise and summer adventures call, the TurfMutt Foundation, which champions healthy outdoor spaces for people and pets, encourages pet parents to keep safety in mind to ensure happy tails all summer long.

“Mulligan the TurfMutt and I really enjoy the dog days of summer,” says Kris Kiser, President & CEO of the TurfMutt Foundation. “But from unexpected storms to scorching pavement and even the choices we make in our backyards, a little preparation goes a long way in making sure our fur friends stay safe this summer.”

The TurfMutt Foundation shares these crucial tips:

Storm Smarts
Storms can be scary for pets. Always have a safe, quiet space for them indoors, and ensure their ID tags and microchip registration are current. It’s also smart to pack a pet emergency kit packed in case you need to evacuate. Include medications, water, food, waste bags, and anything else you might need to make your pet feel comfortable.

Beat the Heat
Always provide plenty of fresh water and shade, and a spot indoors for them to cool off during extremely



hot days. Choose the cooler parts of the day to walk your dog, and check the pavement temperature before heading out. If it’s too hot for your hand, it’s too hot for their paws.

Travel Ready
Planning a trip and want to take Fido along? A crate is the safest option in a car and it should be big enough for your pet to stand, sit and turn around. Never leave your pets in a hot car. Bring everything they need to stay healthy and comfortable – from food and leashes to medication and favorite toys.

Right Plant, Right Place

Your backyard is your pet’s playground, so plant with care. Choose non-toxic vegetation and always opt for real grass over artificial turf. Natural turf stays cooler under the summer sun, is gentler on paws, and provides vital environmental support. For more, consult the ASPCA’s list of toxic and non-toxic plants here.

Check out the TurfMutt Foundation’s International Backyarding Fact Book to learn more about the power of parks and other green space around us.

Training center to improve public safety innovation, collaboration

ALFRED, ME – Opening early 2026, York County’s First Responder Training Center will set a new standard for how Maine prepares police, firefighters, EMS, and dispatchers.

“There’s nothing like it in Maine,” said York County Chief Fire Administrator Roger Hooper. “This facility will dramatically improve the competence and confidence of our first responders.”

Equipped with classrooms, a tactical simulation center, and specialized infrastructure, including a steel box for live fire training, the Training Center will also feature a dedicated canine training program—a first for Southern Maine.

“We’re going to have a canine course,” explained Chief Deputy Jeremy Forbes of the York County Sheriff’s Office. “Right now, there’s no place for canines in Southern Maine to train. This will fill a critical gap.”

Forbes said the Training Center will foster skill-building across disciplines. “I think we already do a great job as first responders, but this will increase our training, knowledge, and communication,” he explained.



“It will help us learn from each other, stay updated, and work better together across departments.”

Wells Police Chief Kevin Chabot praised York County’s investment, describing it as “forward-thinking.” “We’re on the edge of the state line, and you don’t always see public safety prioritized like this,” he said. “York County identified a problem and acted on it—and that includes the Recovery Center, too.”

The York County Substance Use Treatment and Recovery Center is scheduled to open in the summer of 2026. While First County Foundation (FCF), the charitable arm of the York County Government is fundraising for the project, both state-of-the-art and best-in-class facilities will be operated by the York County Government.

FCF also recently took over the operation of First County Food Pantry.

Previously, the food pantry was managed by nonprofit York County Shelter Programs Inc.

“It’s an exciting time for us and the entire county of York,” noted Rachel Stansfield, FCF Chief Advancement Officer. “Our goal is not just to address emergent needs in York County, but to serve as a community hub for intra-agency collaboration.”

The focus now, however, is on completing the Training Center. “Every week, every day, more progress is made,” said Stansfield. “We appreciate Landry/French Construction and the work and care they are putting into this project.”

Founded in 2023, FCF is charged with a mission “to support and strengthen safe and healthy communities by resourcing transformational solutions to the emergent needs of York County.” To learn more, visit yorkcountyfcf.org.



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Home At Last Realty celebrates Grand Opening in Auburn

AUBURN, ME – A new name in Maine real estate is officially open for business. Home At Last Realty, a locally owned and independently operated real estate agency, recently celebrated its grand opening with a lively Taco Tuesday event, welcoming clients, referral partners, friends, and community members to mark the start of something special.

Founded by Michelle Gosselin, a seasoned professional with more than 30 years of experience in sales and advertising — and over six years in the real estate industry — the agency is built on a foundation of trusted relationships, exceptional service, and a deep commitment to helping people find their place in Maine.

“I’ve always believed that home is more than a place — it’s a feeling,” said Gosselin. “Opening Home At Last Realty is about creating a space where clients feel supported, informed, and empowered at every



step. Our mission is to open doors to new beginnings.”

The agency currently includes a team of five agents and is actively growing to meet the needs of clients throughout the state. From first-time homebuyers to seasoned investors, Home At Last Realty offers full-service support across a wide range of residential real estate needs.

With a warm, com-

munity-centered approach, the agency plans to continue hosting events and supporting local initiatives as they grow their presence throughout Central and Southern Maine. For more information or to connect with a local agent, visit www.homeatlastrealty.me or contact Michelle Gosselin directly at michelle@homeatlastrealty.me or 207-754-4998.

Pre-Apprenticeship students graduate

LEWISTON, ME – Since January, students in the Pre-Apprenticeship Trades classes have been hard at work, not only gaining valuable hands-on training but also developing their English language and communication skills for the workplace.

The students celebrated their graduation on April 25 at the Adult Learning Center at Gov. Longley School in Lewiston, less than a week before National Apprenticeship Day on April 30. The United States Department of Labor established Apprenticeship Day to recognize the importance of connecting skilled workers to potential employers.

Instructor Allan Brown commended his students for the wealth of experience they bring from their former countries, ranging from roles as electricians to project managers of at large manufacturing plants. Brown focuses on workplace English,

trades-related math (such as measuring in feet and inches), workplace safety and understanding employment expectations in the United States.

Jason Merritt, construction teacher at Lewiston Regional Technical Center, has also played an important role in the program. As part of the Trades Academy course, Lewiston Adult Education partnered with Merritt and the LRTC facility to offer students a series of hands-on training opportunities and industry certifications.

“They came to this class eager to learn,” Merritt said. “They want to get into the construction and trades industry so they’re learning the basic skills needed to become an entry-level carpenter or laborer for local businesses.”

The program has strong support from area businesses and state partners including Hahnel Brothers, Industrial Roof-

ing Company, Lewiston Public Works, Eastern Maine Development Corporation, the Maine Department of Labor and the Maine Apprenticeship Program.

Throughout the course, students have earned industry-recognized certificates including OSHA 10 Construction Certification, Basic Life Support CPR, aerial lift, scissor lift, and forklift certification, along with hand and power tool safety, and proper use. Included in the course is WorkReady, a state-certified soft skills training.

“Employers are going to love them,” Brown added.

Local businesses interested in employment training support are encouraged to visit Lewiston Adult Education to explore how we can assist with pre-apprenticeship opportunities or on-site English language acquisition.

Sen. Collins tours fire station, SAM Outdoor Education Center

CLINTON, ME – U.S. Senator Susan Collins toured the current fire station in Clinton and reviewed plans for a new station made possible by \$2,000,000 in Congressionally Directed Spending she secured through her role on the Senate Appropriations Committee. The existing 5,000-square-foot station is too small to support the needs of Clinton’s current fire and rescue operations and cannot accommodate the updated equipment the department plans to purchase.

“Touring the current fire station today gave me a clear picture of the challenges facing Clinton firefighters and EMTs to swiftly respond to emergency situations. I am so glad I could support Clinton’s first responders and residents with this funding for an upgraded facility, and I appreciate Deputy Fire Chief Travis Leary for sharing these plans with me,” said Senator Collins.

Senator Collins has secured nearly \$45 million in Congressionally Directed Spending for 28 fire stations across the State of Maine since Fiscal Year 2022.

Following the tour of the fire station, Senator Collins headed to Augusta to visit the Sportsman’s Alliance of Maine (SAM) Outdoor Education Center, where she met with SAM Executive Director David Trahan as well as local Scout members Jacob and Elizabeth Blais. Both Jacob and Elizabeth are working toward becoming Eagle Scouts, and as part



of Jacob’s Eagle Scout project, he designed and built a kiosk with maps and information about local plants for the Center.

“I was so pleased to talk with Jacob and Elizabeth, Scouts in Troop 603 in Augusta. Organizations like Scouting America and the Sportsman’s Alliance of Maine do an excellent job conserving our environment and teaching

future generations about Maine’s rich outdoor heritage,” said Senator Collins.

In Fiscal Year 2023, Senator Collins secured \$700,000 in Congressionally Directed Spending to support SAM’s efforts to collaborate with the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife on research related to expanded hatchery production.

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



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Maine Connections Academy celebrates Class of 2025

AUGUSTA, ME – Maine Connections Academy, a tuition-free online public school serving students in grades 7-12 statewide, celebrated its 11th graduation on Friday, June 6th, with an in-person ceremony for its Class of 2025.

Students, faculty and family members gathered at Merrill Auditorium in Portland to commemorate the milestone achievement, including several graduates from Kennebec, Somerset, and Waldo counties in the central region of the state.

A total of 94 students received diplomas statewide. The Class of 2025 featured graduates from 62 different towns in all 16 counties across Maine, showcasing the school’s ability to serve students regardless of geographic location. Forty-nine of the 94 students came from towns in Central Maine.

Among Maine Connections Academy’s graduating class, 35 percent are planning to attend two- or four-year colleges or universities, including Boston College, Marymount Manhattan College, Thomas College, Trinity Laban Conservatoire and the University of North Carolina. Additionally, 27 percent plan to join the workforce,

while others plan to pursue vocational training, serve in the military, or take a gap year.

The following students from Androscoggin, Oxford, Kennebec, and Sagadahoc Counties are among Maine Connections Academy’s Class of 2025*:

Luke Carey – Augusta
Arianna Reid – Augusta
Owen Bray – Bowdoin
Sam Basselet – Chelsea
Ashton Schiner – Franklin
Camryn Heyer – Gardiner
Kyløe Wilson – Hallowell
Edwin Ballentine – Lewiston
Mackenzie Higgins – Lewiston
Sahara Lee – Lewiston
Justin Malia – Lewiston
Jacob Porter – Lewiston
Tobi Smith – Lewiston
Mathew Turner – Lewiston
Kristina Tibbetts – Roxbury
Kyla Conroy – Sabattus
Hailey Wright – Windsor
Teegan Marble – Winslow
Jacob Orff – Woolwich

Olivia Cutone, of Kennebunkport, was recognized as valedictorian. In her address to her classmates, she talked about their unique journey through high school in a virtual learning environment and the skills they developed that will serve them well in their future endeavors.

Cutone acknowledged that graduating from high school is a major milestone, but emphasized that their educational foundation has prepared them for whatever comes next. Cutone read a passage from Robert Frost’s *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening* and reminded her fellow students that they “have taken the road less traveled... by choosing the less traveled path of online school, we have prepared ourselves differently than the more traditional high schoolers,” she said.

The salutatorian, Adeline Shanahan, thanked the school’s supportive teachers and staff in their speech, highlighting the importance of community even in a virtual setting.



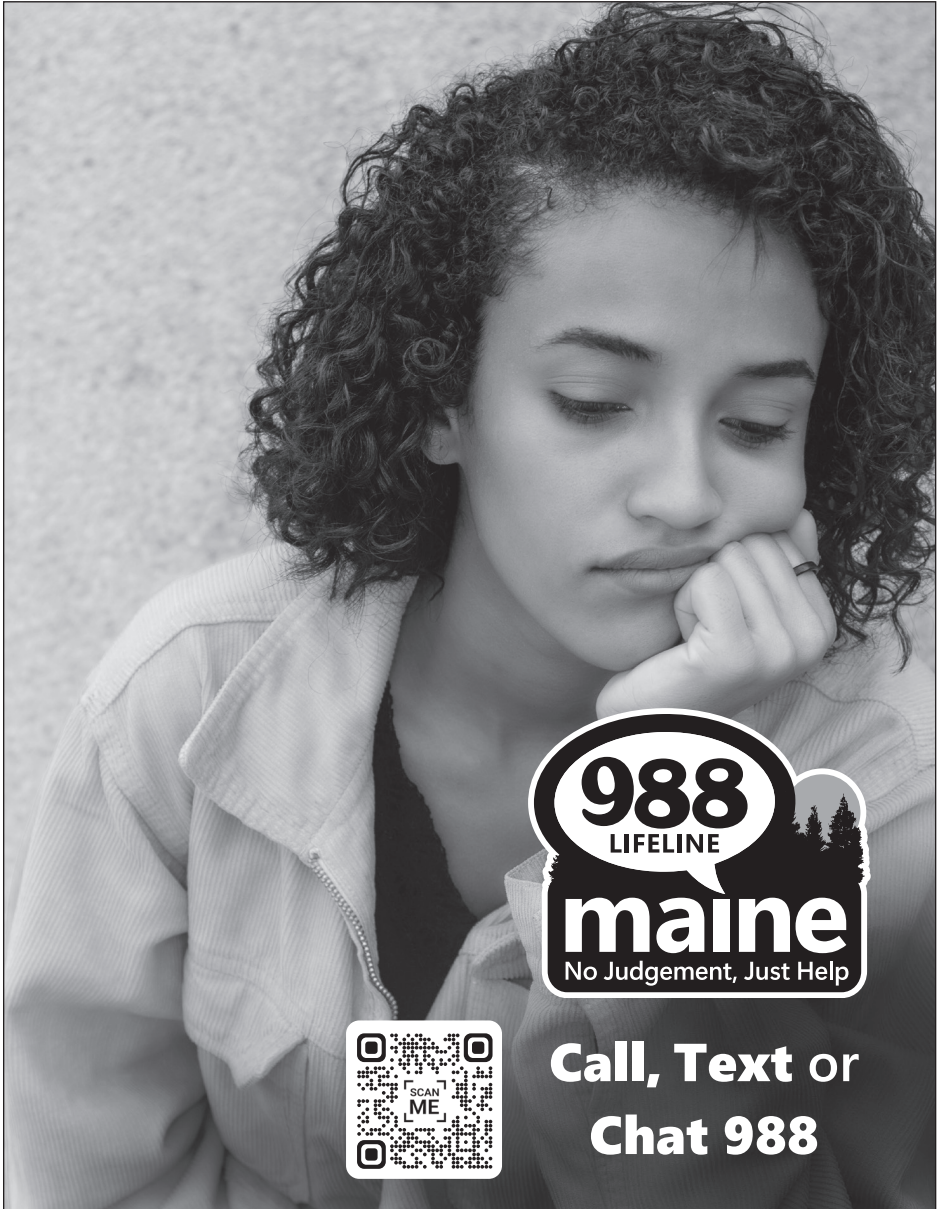
Maine Connections Academy alumna Melinda White Tevis addressed the graduates as the featured guest speaker.

Tevis, who was Salutatorian of the Class of 2016, graduated Summa Cum Laude from Thomas College in 2019. In her address, Tevis spoke about how her online education at Maine Connections Academy helped her develop the self-discipline and resilience that have been crucial to her personal and professional success.

“Say yes before you feel ready, even if they scare you a little,” she said in her speech. “Some of the best moments in my life came from taking chances I wasn’t 100% sure I was ready for. Growth happens in those in-between spaces—when you’re brave enough to try. And it doesn’t come from waiting until you feel prepared. It comes from showing up, learning as you go, and choosing courage even when you’re unsure.”

Maine Connections Academy students benefited from the flexibility and personalized learning approaches offered by the school. The virtual model has allowed students from Augusta, Waterville, and surrounding communities to pursue their educational goals while balancing other responsibilities and interests, including athletics, performing arts, and early college opportunities.

*NOTE: Not all students from the area may be included for privacy reasons.




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Heat Wave
Continued from page 4

programs or telephonic “heat advisory” alerts;

Local news station advisories; and

“Summer safety” programs at local community centers, municipal halls or local hospitals

for older adults and their caregivers to learn more about staying healthy and safe.

Helping older adults during the summer months, especially during heat waves, requires some planning; awareness of the health, the home and

the daily needs of our loved ones; and what support is available in their local communities. With some effort, older adults may stay safe while enjoying the fun things about summer.

This information is for educational purposes only and is not a substitute for the advice of a doctor. Consult your doctor prior to making changes to your lifestyle or health care routine.

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1 University of Southern California, “Ambient Outdoor Heat and Accelerated Epigenetic Aging among Older Adults in the U.S.,” February 2025.

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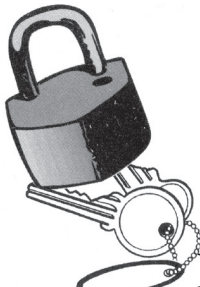
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July 1-5
RANGELEY – The Rangeley Friends of the Arts will produce a live theater event, “Chicago”, the musical. This show will feature a live orchestra and cabaret seating is available. Show dates are July 1,2,4, at 7PM, July 5 at 5PM. Tickets are \$20 adults/\$10 youth. To reserve your seats visit our website at www.rangeley-arts.org.

July 10
LEWISTON – The Lewiston Public Library will be hosting Magic Wes and his show Reading is Magic in Callahan Hall on Thursday, July 10th at 5:30PM for all ages. Join us for this fun-filled show where books come to life with mind blowing magic, teachable moments and engaging storytelling. Kids won’t just hear a story-they will experience it! By making reading feel magical, Wes inspires children to pick up more books and rediscover the joy of reading. Reading is Magic is free, open to the public, and no registration is required.

July 13
AUBURN–Ready to beat the heat on the ice while raising money for a great cause? People of all ages and abilities have the chance to skate with Barnabee, the beloved mascot of Norway Savings Bank, while supporting a local

Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

organization dedicated to providing programming for many in need in the Lewiston area. A public skate is set for Sunday, July 13, at the Norway Savings Bank Arena, located at 985 Turner Street in Auburn. The event will be held from 4:20 p.m. to 5:20 p.m. Admission is \$5, with \$5 skate rentals for adults and children available. Half of the proceeds will be given to the YWCA Central Maine in Lewiston, which aims to eliminate racism and empower women while promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all.

July 18
LEWISTON – At 10am the Lewiston Public Library Children’s Department will be offering the program Seashell Picture Frame Keepsakes. Caregivers and their children will be able to decorate a keepsake picture frame with a variety of seashells.

July 26
LEWISTON – The Lewiston Public Library Children’s Department will be offering the program Within the Whale, an immersive marine science experience where guests can step inside a life-size inflatable humpback whale

to explore its anatomy and learn about ocean conservation. Fun, educational, and perfect for all ages! There will be four available times for patrons to participate in the 30-minute program. The starting times are: 10:30am, 11:00am, 11:30am, and 12pm. Each session is limited to 20 participants, so registration is required. Signups will be at the Children’s information desk. Patrons can register in person, by phone, or by email. This free Summer Reading program will take place in Callahan Hall on the third floor of the library.

July 30
LEWISTON – At 12PM the Lewiston Public Library Children’s Department will be offering the program Woven Herb Garden Baskets. Kids and teens will be provided with materials to create their own woven basket for growing small plants. Various herb seeds, soil, and paper cups to sit inside the woven baskets will also be provided so participants can start their own windowsill herb garden. This program is recommended for kids and teens ages 5 and older. Children under the age of 8 must be supervised by a caregiver.

This activity will take place at the back tables in the Children’s Department on the third floor of the library. This program is free, and no registration is required. All materials will be provided.

Aug 9
GORHAM – Makers Market & Pick Your Own Blueberries Fest at Orchard Ridge Farm in Gorham, August 9th from 10-2 (rain date August 10th, 10-2)

We will have 30 Vendors selling their goods including Ceramics, Jewelry, Woodworking, Illustration and Painting, Vintage Clothes, Stained Glass, Soap and Body Products & More. There will be live music, farm animals and we will have 2 food trucks! We are also having a BAKE SALE (blueberry themed) fundraiser for ARLGP with all the funds raised will go to help the shelter continue doing the amazing work they have been doing for years.

Aug 11-15
MAINE – Are you ready to advocate for a child’s best interests? If so, Maine CASA hopes you can join us for our August 11-15, 2025 training. For more information about becoming a volunteer, please contact Maine CASA Legal Services Advisor Darren Defoe at 213-2864 or by e-mail at casa@courts.maine.gov.

Mondays through Aug 18
LEWISTON – The Lewiston Public Library, in partnership with Art-Van, will be offering art programs in the Children’s Department for children ages 5-14 every Monday from June 23rd-August 18th from 3:00PM-4:30PM. Children aged 5-8 must be accompanied by an adult.

1st, 3rd Wednesday of every month
LEWISTON – Join Lewiston Public Library for Bumps & Babies on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday every month starting June 4th from 10:30am to 11:30am in the Children’s Department.

Bumps & Babies is

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a support group that provides a safe, compassionate space for individuals navigating the emotional and physical challenges of pregnancy and the postpartum period. Members can share experiences, receive encouragement, and connect with others facing similar struggles, such as anxiety, depression, or the joys and adjustment to parenthood.

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.

Every Third Thursday
LEWISTON – The Lewiston Farmers’ Market is excited to announce the introduction of “Third Thursday” markets, which will take place every third

Thursday of the month, June through September from 4:00-7:00 pm on the green space at 75 Lincoln St.

Saturdays
AUBURN – THOUSANDS OF BOOKS for sale at the APL Bookstore on Saturdays 9:30-1:00. Gently used books of all types, DVDs, music CDs and puzzles & games - new items added every week. Kids’ books are 50 cents and all other books are \$3 or less! Stop by the lower level of the Auburn Public Library for great deals. Auburn Public Library, 49 Spring Street, Auburn.

Sundays
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.

Road Trips

Continued from page 8

eling in an EV: Make sure your vehicle is fully charged before departing and map out charging stations along your desired route. Learn more about EV road tripping here.

“It’s better to find a problem in your driveway than on the side of the road,” said Quinn. “By taking these precautions, you can greatly reduce the likelihood of unexpected incidents and help ensure a safe and enjoyable journey.”

For more road tripping prep tips, visit Mercury’s blog.



Finding a fulfilling career with flexibility and room to grow

Petra always knew she wanted to pursue a career that involved helping people. After studying nursing for a semester, and realizing that it wasn’t for her, she discovered her calling as a Mental Health Rehabilitation Technician/Community, or MHRT-C, was the perfect fit.

In that role, she works with individuals living with serious and persistent mental illness, helping them access support services in the community. That might include a wide range of tasks on any given day, from helping clients connect with food and childcare resources, to helping them enroll in college classes.

“I love getting to be a part of people moving forward in their lives,” she says. “I get to see people believe in themselves again.”

Petra is a part of the growing field of Behavioral Health, ensuring that Mainers with behavioral health needs have the support they need to stay safe, independent, and empowered to achieve their personal goals. There are thousands of openings with providers throughout the state. In addition to the rewarding nature of the work, Petra appreciates having flexibility with time to be there for her husband and two young children.

“I have a lot of control over my schedule,” she says. “I really do get to enjoy my kids’ childhood.”

Emily became a Mental Health Rehabilitation Technician-I, or MHRT-I, shortly after getting her associate’s degree, and her son was diagnosed with autism. “I wanted to be prepared to meet his needs and be as knowledgeable as possible,” she said.

The position, working with individuals’ serious mental illness in supported residential settings, turned out to be a gateway to a new path that she could never could have imagined. Emily went on to become a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, get her Doctorate in Social Work, and teach college classes, all as a mother of three. Today, as the Principal Investigator for Behavioral Health Workforce Initiatives at the Catherine Cutler Institute at the University of Southern Maine, Emily oversees MHRT-related certifications and training initiatives across the state. As she reflects on her path, she sees her time as an MHRT-I as pivotal.

“It helped me truly understand the profound impact behavioral health work could have, not only on the clients I served, but also on my own sense of purpose and fulfillment,” she says. “To be able to see people have those light-bulb moments, really discover who they are and witness their resilience; it’s amazing.”

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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“I love getting to be a part of people moving forward in their lives. I get to see people believe in themselves again.”



MAKER MONDAY

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July 7th & Aug. 4th

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Ocean State Job Lot celebrates grand opening of Auburn store

AUBURN, ME – Ocean State Job Lot (OSJL), the region’s premier discount retail chain with 175 locations across the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic, celebrated the opening of its second store in Maryland, located at 730 Center Street in Auburn, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Saturday, June 14. The 43,000 sq. ft. space is formerly home to a Big Lots and will provide customers with a bright, friendly, and convenient shopping experience.

OSJL executives joined Auburn Mayor Jeff Harmon, State Senator Bruce Bickford, and other local officials for a celebration that highlighted the company’s continued investment in revitalizing well-known retail sites and expanding job opportunities in the region.

As part of OSJL’s ongoing commitment to the communities it serves, the Ocean State Job Lot Charitable Foundation donated 250 backpacks to the Auburn-Lewiston YMCA.

In addition to the ribbon cutting, customers enjoyed free pictures with Bluey and complimentary glitter tattoos, donuts, and beverages. All event attendees also had the opportunity to win one of three \$150 Ocean State Job Lot



Representatives from OSJL, including District Team Leader Merrill Reid and Store Team Leader Trent Smith; Auburn Mayor Jeff Harmon, State Senator Bruce Bickford, and Bambi Williams, director of the Y’s Early Childhood Development program and Tessa Tomasi, director of the Y’s after-school programs.

gift cards.

“We’re thrilled to expand our unique brand of shopping to the Auburn area,” said Trent Smith, Store Team Leader, Ocean State Job Lot. “We’ve worked hard to create a bright, friendly, and convenient shopping experience for residents and visitors alike, and we’re grateful to

be part of this great community.”

This location has created new jobs for the area, including supervisory, full-time, part-time, and seasonal roles. OSJL expects to continue its expansion across the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic with additional store openings throughout 2025.

Documentary on Sen. Mitchell to premiere at MIFF



Photo credit: Fine Point Films

WATERVILLE, ME – The Maine Film Center will present a screening of The Negotiator during the 28th annual Maine International Film Festival (MIFF), which will be held July 11–20, 2025, in Waterville. The documentary surveys the life and work of Senator George J. Mitchell, who was born in Waterville and served as the United States special envoy to Northern Ireland during the 1990s.

In 1995, President Bill Clinton appointed Senator Mitchell as his economic

envoy to Northern Ireland. Mitchell later chaired the multi-party peace talks that led to the Good Friday Agreement in 1998. The film follows his involvement in the peace process, including travel between Northern Ireland, Washington, D.C., and Maine, and focuses on the efforts required to reach a political settlement.

Directed by journalist Trevor Birney, The Negotiator uses interviews, archival material, and contemporary footage—including on location in Waterville—to ex-

plore Mitchell’s role in the negotiations and the broader context of U.S. foreign engagement. Birney previously produced KNEECAP, which closed last year’s MIFF. The screening of The Negotiator is sponsored by the Unity Foundation, and will be introduced by the film’s producer Stephen Douds.

The film will be shown at the Waterville Opera House on July 16 at 7PM. Festival passes and tickets are available now at [MIFF.org](https://www.miff.org).


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