

Summer fun, music take center stage at the Franco Center

LEWISTON, ME – The Franco Center is heating up the summer with a trio of unforgettable events for the whole community! From a family-friendly street festival to an inspiring concert and a laugh-out-loud piano showdown, there's something for everyone this July and August.

Franco Center hosts its first-ever Summer Fest: Fête d'été in Little Canada Saturday, July 26 | Noon–5 p.m. | Oxford Street Parking Lot

Join us for a lively, outdoor celebration featuring a bounce house, dunk tank, outdoor bar, hot dogs, hamburgers, and more. Families are encouraged to bring picnic blankets or lawn chairs and enjoy the festivities, which will take over part of Oxford Street for the day.

A highlight of the event is the Cornhole Tournament, with prizes for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners. Registration is \$10 per player and payable at the event.

"This event is all about community," said Jake Hodgkin, the Franco Center's production manager. "We wanted to create a fun, inclusive day for all ages that celebrates the heart of Little Canada. Whether you're tossing



Dueling Pianos duo Jim Tyrrell and Amy Thomason led an interactive music performance at the Franco Center in February. Dueling Pianos will return to the Franco Center Aug. 23 but rather than perform on stage, the duo will play their pianos center-floor among the audience. Photo credit: Franco Center staff.

bags in the cornhole tournament or relaxing with a burger and music, there's something here for everyone."

For more info about Summer Fest, contact Jake Hodgkin at 207-514-7753.

Amy Stacey Curtis Concert: A Story of Healing Through Music

Wednesday, July 30 | 6 p.m.–7 p.m. | Franco Center

The Franco Center is honored to present Amy Stacey Curtis, the 2025 winner of Maine's Got Talent, for a one-hour performance that tran-

scends music. After surviving a debilitating brain injury due to untreated Lyme disease, Curtis reclaimed her voice and life through learning the ukulele. Her journey—marked by courage, creativity, and community—has touched thousands across social media.

"This concert is more than just a performance—it's a testament to the power of music to heal and connect," said Theresa Shanahan, executive director of the Franco Center. "Amy's

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eat local

drink local

RESTAURANT GUIDE

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Now open: Ralph Steadman exhibit showcases 60 years of art

LEWISTON, ME – Embark on a visual adventure through the culture-shifting and fearless life of one of the most influential artists of our time with "Ralph Steadman: And Another Thing," open through Oct. 11 at Bates College Museum of Art. The exhibition includes 149 objects that deftly capture Steadman's artistic practice.

"The vast selection of work by this iconic artist fills the whole museum and provides an opportunity for everyone — from longtime fans to newcomers — to engage with Ralph Steadman's incomparable works

and experience the unique mind and defining style of such a pivotal creative in American culture," said Samantha Sigmon, curator, Bates College Museum of Art.

Over the last six decades, Ralph Steadman has carved out a career by presenting his uncanny perspective — one that resonates with viewers.

"It's essential to have some form of expression within your reach that gives you something to dwell upon," Steadman stated. "But if I feel something is important, it may not be important to someone else. I don't want to

change anyone's mind in an aggressive way. I hope they see my drawings and it makes them think about why I drew it and what opinion I am trying to express."

Steadman is famous for his long collaboration with journalist and author Hunter S. Thompson and the development of Gonzo journalism in works such as "The Kentucky Derby is Decadent and Depraved," first seen in Scanlan's Monthly and the novel "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas." Their form of journalism continues to influence today's online news

See Steadman, page 11

Trades, education training coming to Lewiston Adult Ed

LEWISTON, ME – Lewiston Adult Education is launching two workforce training programs designed to help adult learners prepare for rewarding careers. The two programs, Trades Academy and Educator Pathway, will begin in July and August and are open to students who meet work and language requirements.

Trades Academy began on July 21 and consists of two levels. Level one will cover math, measurement, safety and hand tools. Level two will include occupational safety training, forklift certification and the use of power tools. Students must suc-



cessfully complete level one and meet all class requirements and expectations before advancing to level two.

Classes will be held on Mondays and Tuesdays during daytime hours at the Adult Learning Center at Gov. Longley School, 145 Birch St. in Lewiston. Interested students must have a work permit or have applied for it before class begins, have a CASAS reading score of 220 or higher and have the ability to speak English at an intermediate level.

The second program, The Education Pathway, is scheduled to begin on Aug. 7. It will prepare students to become Educational Technicians III in Lewiston Public Schools. Students will learn about

classroom management, lesson planning, assessments and technology integration. They will also earn a Work Ready certification. Priority will be given to applicants with a background in education.

Classes will be held on Thursdays and Fridays during daytime hours at the Adult Learning Center.

For more information, call Lewiston Adult Education at 207-784-2928 and ask for Josee Castonguay or Questia Kabemba.

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

Within the Whale

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

Bridgton Hospital to host 33rd Annual Golf Tournament



BRIDGTON, ME – Bridgton Hospital is hosting its 33rd Annual Golf Tournament on Wednesday, September 10, 2025, at Bridgton Highlands Country Club.

This long-standing tournament has raised more than \$1.5 million over the years to support the many services and programs offered by Bridgton Hospital.

“We are grateful to the businesses and community members who have come out year after year for Bridgton Hospital’s golf tournament,” said Bridgton Hospital President Stephany Jacques, RN. “The proceeds from this year’s tournament will support critical services for the Emergency



Bridgton Hospital President Stephany Jacques, RN, (second from left) with members of her golf team last year

Department – a lifeline for the communities of the Lakes Region.”

Player registration and sponsorships are available now at www.cmhc.org/bridgton-golf. The \$150 player registration fee includes breakfast, lunch, refreshments throughout the course, player gifts, prizes and more. Sponsorships from \$1,000 to

\$5,000 are packaged to include year-long recognition as a Bridgton Hospital Corporate Sponsor, a team of four players and recognition at the tournament.

To register, sponsor or learn more about the tournament, please contact Central Maine Healthcare’s Office of Philanthropy at (207) 795-2685 or email giving@cmhc.org.

DOL offers unemployment guidance, resources

MAINE – The Maine Department of Labor is re-sharing unemployment insurance guidance and resources for any possible federal employees affected by layoffs.

Topline information includes:

Prepare—Get as much information as you can

Print your paystubs – last one paid before 03/31/2025 and last one paid before 06/30/2025

Print your 2024 W-2 Before filing your claim, read through the unemployment FAQ for federal workers

File Immediately, even without all documents

Call 1-800-593-7660 to file your claim in Maine as soon as you separate from your employer. Documents will be collected for verification once your claim is started.

You must start your

first unemployment insurance claim by phone. After your first claim is done, you can file weekly claims online.

File even if appealing the termination

Don’t panic about a \$0 determination— Federal wages aren’t reported in state systems, so your initial claim may show \$0. As wages are verified your Monetary Determination will be updated.

Request a wage affidavit if delayed— If your agency doesn’t respond within 12 days, you can complete an ES-935 affidavit to speed up your claim.

Once your initial claim is in system, you will find this form in your account under Correspondences.

Check messages regularly—State agencies may request additional information, so frequently check your portal, email, and mail.

Certify and job search weekly— You must certify unemployment and actively search for work each week to continue receiving benefits.

The Maine Department of Labor’s Rapid Response team holds a weekly session via Zoom at 10 a.m. every Wednesday to go over top line information for laid off workers, such as unemployment insurance, health insurance options, training and job search resources.

On Thursdays from 10-11 a.m., there are also weekly virtual office hours on applying to state jobs. Topics include the application process in state government, career paths and opportunities, and tips for improving your job search.

The full guidance and Rapid Response information for affected employees can be found here: www.maine.gov/labor/federal-workers/.

Maine Community Foundation launches two new grant programs

ELLSWORTH & PORTLAND, ME – The Maine Community Foundation (MaineCF) has launched two new grant programs: Land for Communities and the Maine Women’s Fund.

Land for Communities

The Land for Communities (L4C) grant program supports community land projects that increase relationships to land for underserved geographies and populations in Maine. L4C offers support for land acquisition and land-based projects and will accept grant proposals twice per

year. Grant application deadlines are March 16 and Sept. 15.

There will be an informational webinar on Wednesday, July 23, from noon-1 p.m. Visit mainecf.org/l4c for criteria, requirements and to register for the webinar. The webinar recording will be available shortly after.

Maine Women’s Fund

The Maine Women’s Fund (MWF) grant program makes bold investments that transform the lives of women and girls. MWF offers two-year general support

grants. Multi-year grants of \$15,000 will be awarded in 2025 and again in 2027. The grant application deadline is Sept. 15.

There will be an informational webinar on Tuesday, July 22, from noon-1 p.m. Visit mainecf.org/mwf for criteria, requirements and to register for the webinar. The webinar recording will be available shortly after.

The Maine Community Foundation brings people and resources together to build a better Maine through strategic giving, community leadership, personalized service, local expertise and strong investments. To learn more about the foundation, visit www.mainecf.org.

Bill to signed into law to prevent student homelessness

AUGUSTA, ME – On July 1, Gov. Janet Mills signed into law LD 384, “An Act to Prevent Student Homelessness,” a bill sponsored by Sen. Joe Rafferty, D-Kennebunk.

“I am grateful for the support of my colleagues and Gov. Mills for helping get this important piece of legislation over the finish line,” said Sen. Rafferty. “Students should only have to worry about things like their grades, sports and making friends — not if they’ll have a roof over their heads at night. This legislation takes steps to ensure more students are safely housed, and that is a measure worth investing

in.”

The law will establish the Student Homelessness Prevention Program within the Department of Education. The purpose of the program is to provide direct financial assistance to students and their families so they may find stable, permanent housing, avoiding vulnerability to homelessness. This is done by providing designated McKinney-Vento liaisons, which each Maine school has, with the ability to provide students facing housing instability emergency financial assistance in an amount of up to \$750 per student.

In the 131st Legis-

lature, Sen. Rafferty led the effort to create a pilot version of the Student Homelessness Prevention Program. The measure became law with overwhelming support, and has been popular and successful in Maine schools.

“It has been so refreshing and such a change to actually have something tangible to be able to offer families when they reach out for help,” wrote one school district in response to the pilot program. “For the longest time, it’s been tough not being able to do a whole lot to help other than making referrals and getting families on waitlists. To be able to actually be able to help in the moment of hardship is so wonderful.”

According to the Maine Affordable Housing Coalition, over 73 percent of evictions in Maine occur as a result of less than \$1,300 in outstanding costs, highlighting the precarious financial situations that many families in our state are facing.

The new law will take effect on September 24, 2025.

Sen. Rafferty represents Senate District 34, which includes Berwick, Cape Porpoise, Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, North Berwick and Wells in York County.

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

SeniorsPlus presents Margaret Ross Award for volunteerism

LEWISTON, ME – Kathy Brooks of Greene was honored at the June 30 annual meeting of SeniorsPlus with the presentation of the 2025 Margaret Ross Award. Brooks was honored for more than four years of volunteerism at SeniorsPlus, including 367 hours last year alone. The award, presented annually, recognizes an individual who has made significant contributions to the agency and the larger community. SeniorsPlus is the designated Area Agency on Aging focusing on Androscoggin, Franklin and Oxford counties.

Brooks is an administrative volunteer in the agency’s Lewiston office, working three days a week answering phone calls, directing clients, and doing anything asked of her. She is also a SeniorsPlus ambassador to the town of Greene. She uses agency statistics and facts to make the case for municipal support. She has garnered support from the town through her attendance at town meetings. Beyond her work on behalf of SeniorsPlus, Brooks finds time to volunteer at the polls in her community.

“Kathy truly embodies the spirit of the Margaret Ross Award, giving of her time to not only SeniorsPlus but to her town as well,” said Betsy Sawyer-Manter, President and CEO of SeniorsPlus. “She



Holly Zielinski, outgoing Board Chair, left, congratulates Kathy Brooks, the recipient of the 2025 Margaret Ross Award for volunteerism at SeniorsPlus, Western Maine’s designated Area Agency on Aging.

is an incredible asset to SeniorsPlus, and we would love to clone her many times over.”

Since 1972, SeniorsPlus has been improving the lives of older adults and adults with disabilities. As the designated Area Agency on Aging for Western Maine, SeniorsPlus provides statewide services with an emphasis on Androscoggin, Franklin and Oxford counties for core services (i.e. nutrition and information and assistance) that support independent living, healthy aging, and fight isolation. The overall program goal of SeniorsPlus is to assist

older people and adults with disabilities in its tri-county area to remain safely at home for as long as possible. The mission of SeniorsPlus is to enrich the lives of older people and adults with disabilities, their families and communities, and to support them to make informed choices. SeniorsPlus envisions a future where all older adults and individuals with disabilities are engaged and respected while living quality, independent lives in the communities of their choice. Annually, SeniorsPlus serves almost 8,000 individuals and fielded 101,000 phone inquiries.

Norway Savings Bank appoints new CFO, Treasurer EVP

NORWAY, ME – Norway Savings Bank is pleased to announce that Richard St. Pierre (pictured) has been appointed Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer EVP. St. Pierre succeeds the retiring Brian Shibles, who has served at NSB for over 23 years, including 20 years as NSB’s CFO and 12 years as Treasurer.

St. Pierre arrived at Norway Savings Bank in December of 2023 as Senior Finance Officer SVP and has since overseen the overall management of the bank’s financial accounting, budget, investments, facilities management, and project management. He possesses more than 20 years of executive leadership experience, including over a decade in community banking.

“In his time at NSB, Rich has proven to be a tremendous addition, working closely with Brian and the Finance and Facilities Teams to prepare for his transition as well as overseeing the implementation of Norway Savings Bank’s



new Online and Mobile Banking platform earlier this year,” said Dan Walsh, President and CEO of NSB. “He has an extensive finance background and that prior experience combined with his calm and respectful demeanor make him the perfect choice as the bank’s new CFO and Treasurer.”

A Windham native and Biddeford resident, St. Pierre holds a Bachelor

of Science Degree in Accounting from the University of Southern Maine and later earned his Certified Public Accountant (CPA) designation.

In addition to his leadership role at NSB, St. Pierre currently serves on the board of Kennebec Valley Community Action Program as well as the board and loan committee of Southern Maine Finance Agency.

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WHY PEOPLE CHOOSE CHAMPOUX INSURANCE



Jonathan Knowlton
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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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CLT to host public reading of ‘A New Home’ on August 1st

AUBURN, ME – The Community Little Theatre (CLT) will host a staged reading of “A New Home” on Friday, August 1, at 7:30 p.m. The script will be read by veteran actors from CLT, and eight songs will be performed live. An original musical production, “A New Home” will be presented as CLT’s first production of the 2025-26 season, opening on October 30.

“A New Home” tells the rich and complex history of Lewiston. Written and composed by Paul G. Caron with a new adaptation of the original book by Michael Rosenthal, Richard Martin and Lynn Geiger, the show was first performed to sold-out audiences in 1995 for the Lewiston Bicentennial. This production brings to life the stories of Lewiston’s Indigenous, Franco-Amer-



ican, African, and other immigrant communities, whose contributions have shaped the city’s identity and culture. 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.

Anyone interested in the show is encouraged to attend the reading which will be held at CLT on 30 Academy Street in Auburn. It is open to the public at no charge.

Auditions for “A New Home” will be held at CLT at 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, August 10 and Monday, August 11. All cast members will be chosen after auditions have been held.

Information about the show, auditions, character descriptions, and more is available online at lact.com/a-new-home.

TWIN CITY TIMES

TWIN CITY PUBLISHING, Inc
Twin City Times • 89 Union Street, Suite 1014 • Auburn, ME 04210
Gorham Weekly • 28 State Street • Gorham, ME 04038

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(207) 795-5017

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Seniors Not Acting Their Age Excitement Abounds on the Dead River Throwback Cruise

The Dead River near West Forks always offers a thrilling whitewater adventure. When relatively inexperienced paddlers take on the turbulent river navigating old-style boats, added excitement is guaranteed. That’s precisely what the Dead River Throwback Cruise recently delivered.

A celebration of old-time boats and gear, the Throwback Cruise has become an annual tradition for my outdoor club, the Penobscot Paddle & Chowder Society (PPCS). Since 2017, club member, Kyle Duckworth, has organized the event. He selects the relatively low level dam release of 1800 cubic feet per second for the trip. However, prospective paddlers should not be misled; even at that modest level, the Dead River is a rollicking ride fraught with potential hazards.

As usual, I signed up for the cruise. I’m so old I automatically qualify as a throwback irrespective of my boat. As it happens, I regularly paddle a Dagger RPM kayak. First manufactured in 1996, the RPM is more than 25 years old so it meets the throwback criteria – according to me. My RPM has so many scratches, dings and dents, it looks much older.

This year’s Throwback Cruise was scheduled for late June. After a

seemingly endless stretch of rainy weather, we were finally the beneficiaries of a warm sunny day with light winds. However, blackflies were out in full force. Fortunately, the nasty intruders weren’t much of a problem once we were on the water.

A large group of PPCS Chowderheads met at the public takeout on Dead River Road in West Forks. Swarms of blackflies feasted on us as we loaded over thirty boats onto two trailers provided by Ironbound Outdoors shuttle service. A vast array of whitewater vessels were used by our group that included solo canoes, tandem canoes, solo kayaks and inflatables. Once loaded, we climbed into two vans that transported the entire entourage 16 miles to the put-in where Spencer Stream joins the Dead River.

The put-in is always a chaotic scene. Paddlers organize boats, assemble gear, inflate their air bags, dress for whitewater, perform a variety of other tasks and launch their boats. Kyle announced that everyone should run the first rapid, Spencer Falls, and meet at the beach on the left immediately below for a safety talk.

Sixteen miles of almost continuous whitewater ensued. A tandem canoe

team flipped and swam in big waves at the bottom of Spencer Falls. Club members quickly rescued the two paddlers and their boat, a scene that would be repeated several times during the day.

Once everyone was assembled at the beach, Kyle reviewed safety instructions and separated us into two groups so it was easier to account for paddlers. My group consisted of 15 boats. Since I was kayaking, my responsibility was to lead less experienced kayakers through the more difficult rapids. Another kayaker, Gary Cole, performed sweep duties.

Our group easily negotiated the first few rapids and then completed a problem-free descent of lengthy more difficult Minefield. Shortly after, we stopped for lunch at Hayden’s Landing.

Following a long delay, the second group arrived and reported two time-consuming rescues had occurred including a second mishap for the unfortunate tandem canoe team. A mile downriver, they aborted their trip and took off at the only alternative takeout called Gravel Pit.

After some easy whitewater below Gravel Pit, the difficulty of the rapids increased. Most of our crew successfully



Paddlers assemble at the Dead River put-in



A kayaker navigates through Lower Poplar Falls



Senior Jean Miller paddles through big waves on Spencer Falls

navigated through twisting Elephant Rock Rapid, but a kayaker accidentally paddled into a hydraulic and swam. Shortly after, another tandem canoe team capsized and had a long swim. In both cases, determined Chowderheads reunited boats and boaters.

Everyone flawlessly maneuvered through Mile Long, the longest rapid on the river. One more major obstacle remained, Lower Poplar Falls.

Arguably Class IV at any level, Lower Poplar is a challenge for most boaters. Predictably, a few of the less experienced pad-

dlers had difficulties, but club members were always there to help. At the bottom, everyone relaxed and enjoyed the remaining two miles of quick water.

While mishaps are an inherent part of the whitewater sport, paddlers know that mistakes are instructive and result in improved skills. And, there is no better environment to experience whitewater problems than with fellow Chowderheads watching over you.

My book, *Maine Al Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine* narrates eight more exciting descents on the

best whitewater rivers and streams 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.ronchaseoutdoors.com or he can be reached at ronchaseoutdoors@comcast.net.

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USDA recognizes top Maine lenders

BANGOR, ME – USDA Rural Development has announced the 2025 Lenders of the Year to recognize the work of its top lending partners supporting rural homeownership. These lenders helped rural families and individuals buy homes across the nation, including in Maine last year through USDA Rural Development’s Single Family Housing Guaranteed Loan Program.

Awards are based on the quality of loan underwriting, loan origination volume, the volume of loans purchased in the secondary markets, the most number of new construction loans made, the most

manufactured home loans made, and other program activity benchmarks.

“Homeownership is more than just a milestone—it’s an anchor for strong, resilient communities and a driving force behind rural economic growth. Our lending partners play an essential role in that success, and we’re proud to recognize them today. I want to especially commend Bangor Savings Bank for earning both state and national honors this year. Their commitment to Maine’s rural residents sets a high bar and helps build a stronger future for our state,” said Director Butera.

The Top Five Lend-

ers in Maine were:

1st - Bangor Savings Bank

2nd - CMG Mortgage, Inc

3rd - Fairway Independent Mortgage Corp.

4th - Machias Savings Bank

5th - Guild Mortgage Company, LLC

USDA Rural Development’s national office also presented awards to the following lenders:

USDA 2025 Top Local Lender Champion Award

1st - HR Mortgage Corp, based in Puerto Rico

2nd - Gum Tree Mortgage, based in Mississippi

3rd - Jersey Shore State Bank, based in Pennsylvania

4th - Metroplex Mortgage Svcs, based in Florida

5th - Bangor Savings Bank, based in Maine

A full list of national awardees is available at: www.rd.usda.gov/newsroom/news-release/usda-holds-national-lenders-year-award-ceremony.

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Bestselling author headlines event to benefit Camp Susan Curtis

BROWNFIELD, ME – Bestselling Author of The Wild Robot series, Peter Brown, will take the stage at Stone Mountain Arts Center in Brownfield, ME on August 8th to discuss his wildly successful children’s novel, The Wild Robot. The Wild Robot, recently released as a major motion picture, is a #1 New York Times bestseller and a much beloved series of children’s novels.





The series explores love, belonging, and the intersection of technology and nature through the unforgettable story of a robot named Roz. Peter Brown will be joined on stage by award-winning Maine novelist Shannon Bowring.

The annual Evening with Maine Authors event supports Camp Susan Curtis, the only camp in Maine that provides a free, 10-day camp experience exclusively for Maine children from low-income households – an experience that this population of children often can’t access due to limited financial resources.



CAMP SUSAN CURTIS
Where Maine Children Grow


Ninth Annual
An Evening with Maine Authors
to benefit Camp Susan Curtis
Cocktail Hour, Dinner, Author Readings & Book Signing






Peter Brown **Shannon Bowring**

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This year’s event begins at 5:00 PM with a cocktail hour in the Queen Post Barn followed by a sumptuous buffet dinner in the Maine Hall. After dinner Brown and Bowring will read from their works and be available to sign

books. The evening also includes a former camper who will relate how they have benefited from the camp.

Tickets are limited and can be purchased online at <https://maineauthors9.eventbrite.com>.

AmeriCorps volunteer joins Sebago Fuller Housing

WINDHAM, ME – Jennifer Leslie, an AmeriCorps VISTA member from Ohio who is a retired engineer and the mother of five grown children, has joined the Sebago Lakes Region Fuller Center for Housing—which serves Windham, Raymond, and Standish—as a volunteer. Ms. Leslie, who previously served as a VISTA volunteer with Ending Hunger Corps addressing food insecurity at Eastern Maine Community College, is hosted by GoodWill VISTA Partnerships and will also perform volunteer service for Age Friendly Windham, which helps local aging adults “age in place” by launching a pilot

program to conduct audits for home safety and energy efficiency. Goodwill VISTA Partnership members contribute to the capacity-building and organizational development goals of local agencies, schools, and nonprofits to make sustainable change in areas that effect poverty.

In her role as an AmeriCorps VISTA member for Sebago Lakes Region Fuller Center for Housing, Ms. Leslie will contribute in a variety of ways to the nonprofit’s overall mission, which is to assist aging adults, veterans, and people with disabilities with home repairs so they can live in safe, secure homes.

“For over a year, we searched for an Americorps VISTA volunteer to join our efforts in serving others at Sebago Fuller Housing,” said Diane Dunton Bruni, Board Chair, President, and Founding Member of the organization. “Our prayers are answered! In her motivational statement on her application, Jennifer stated: “I am driven by a profound motivation to give back through service. This decision is a culmination of personal experience, values, and a deep-seated desire to make a meaningful difference in the lives of others. Everyone serves. In this way, we give away part of what God has blessed us with.”

Your 2025 care goals mid-year check-up: Things to consider

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

If your 2025 New Year’s resolution was to improve your health and well-being, and you have not made as much progress as you had hoped, it is not too late to refocus your efforts.

Review your list of health goals

Maybe your plan was to eat better, be more active, be more social, or just feel better and more energized. So, make a list, be specific and establish a timeline. And bring this with you when you go for your annual wellness visit or your next care provider visit.

Plan your care visits

Make a list of the care appointments you will need this year – but have not yet scheduled. This includes your annual wellness visit, screenings, dental and vision appointments, and vaccinations. Then start making those appointments. Care providers may be able to schedule appointments months in advance, which may offer you more scheduling options.

Prepare for your appointments

Jot down notes on how you’re currently feeling, any concerns you have, and your health care goals.

By doing this, you can help ensure that you remember important information to share with your doctor, which can help make the most of your time together.

Catalog your “medicine cabinet”

Prepare a list of all medications you are taking. Also, don’t forget to include all vitamins and supplements. Share this with your primary care provider at your annual wellness visit or your next care provider visit. NOTE: Take care in disposing of expired or unneeded items. Go to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration site for some tips.

Review your benefits

In addition to covering wellness visits, tests, medicines and other medical care, see what other benefits may be included in your health insurance plan that may help you meet your health goals, including gym benefits and mental health support, and financial support for food and other necessities.

Want more health information

Ask your care provider for information, specifically around topics that were discussed during your visit. Go to your health insurer’s website for educational and benefits information. UnitedHealthcare members may go to www.unitedhealthcare.com. Search the Web for health

and care information from “trusted sites,” which may include academic medical institutions, health departments, and health-related non-profit institutions.

Check in with yourself quarterly

Take out your “health goals” list and your care provider’s health recommendations. Have you made progress toward these health goals? Perhaps you wanted to address dental or vision problems, lose weight, exercise more or focus on your mental health. If you have made progress, keep going. If not, it is not too late to start toward reaching your health goals. Go to UnitedHealthcare’s “There’s no time like now to schedule an annual wellness visit” for more information.

Research suggests that small, sustainable changes may lead to continued improvements in health. No matter where you are in meeting your 2025 health goals, every day offers a new opportunity to refocus on your health and wellness.

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

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Arts & Entertainment

Annual Pasture Walk Series comes to Hollis

HOLLIS, ME – University of Maine Cooperative Extension invites local farmers, service providers and agricultural stakeholders to the 2025 Maine Pasture Walk Series, an opportunity to explore and learn at five working farms throughout the state. The third stop in the free series will begin at 11 a.m. on Saturday, August 2 at Tibbets Farm, 192 Salmon Falls Rd., Hollis.

Attendees will have the opportunity to learn about livestock production systems, pasture management, forage species identification, climate-smart practices, regenerative grazing and more from fellow farmers and assistant Extension professor Jaime



Photo courtesy University of Maine Cooperative Extension.

Garzon. The Maine Pasture Walk Series is open and free for all participants. Future pasture walk events will be held in Rockport and New Sweden.

Visit the event webpage for more information and to register. To request a reasonable accommodation, contact Melissa Babcock,

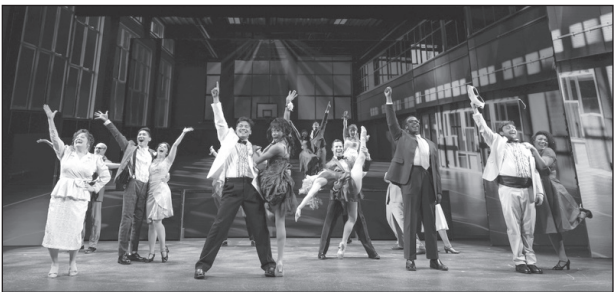
207.581.2788; melissa.libby1@maine.edu.

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

MSMT cuts loose with high-energy production of *Footloose*

BRUNSWICK, ME – Maine State Music Theatre continues its high-energy 2025 summer season with the electrifying Broadway smash *Footloose*, running July 16 – August 2 at the Pickard Theater on the Bowdoin College campus.

Based on the hit 1984 film and packed with unforgettable '80s anthems, *Footloose* is the ultimate feel-good musical. With showstopping dance numbers, a driving rock score, and a story about finding joy, love, and liberation through music, the production promises a thrilling summer night at the theatre.



When Ren McCormack moves from Chicago to a small town where dancing is outlawed, he sets off a teenage rebellion that challenges authority, heals old wounds, and ultimately brings a broken community back together. The score includes iconic hits like "Holding Out for a Hero," "Let's Hear It for the Boy," "Almost

Paradise," and, of course, "Footloose."

"Footloose was last produced at MSMT more than 20 years ago—and judging by the phones ringing off the hook when we announced it, I'd say we hit the revival at just the right time," said MSMT Artistic Director Curt Dale Clark. "This cast, this cre-

See MSMT, page 16

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Franco

Continued from page 1

story will move you, her music will lift you, and her presence on our stage is a gift to the Lewiston community."

Admission is by \$10 donation at the door.

Dueling Pianos: A Night of Music, Comedy, and Crowd Favorites

Saturday, August 23 | Doors at 7 p.m. | Show at 8 p.m. | Franco Center Heritage Hall

Back by popular demand, the Dueling Pianos show returns to the Franco Center for a night of non-stop fun. With "in the

round" seating, guests will be up close and part of the action as two talented pianists duel it out with audience-requested songs, banter, and surprises.

"This event sold out last time and people asked us to bring it back," said Susan Spellman, box office manager at the Franco Center. "It's fast-paced, hilarious, and one of the most entertaining nights you'll have all summer."

Enjoy drink specials and Happy Hour from 7–8 p.m. Full bar will be available throughout the evening.

Tickets: \$25 in ad-

vance, \$30 at the door. Reserve now: www.franco-center.org

Tickets can be purchased in person when the box office is open from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays, online at www.franco-center.org, or by phone at 207-689-2000.

The Franco Center is handicap accessible through its elevator entrance on the Lincoln St. Alley side of the building. Parking is available in the mill lot on Oxford Street or the Chestnut Street parking garage. The venue is located at 46 Cedar Street in Lewiston.



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NSB contributes \$1.5K to Boys & Girls Clubs of Southern Maine

SOUTH PORTLAND, ME – For more than a century, Boys & Girls Clubs of Southern Maine has provided youth development programs in a safe place to learn, have fun, and develop skills and interests that can last a lifetime. The organization’s mission is to inspire and enable all young people to realize their full potential as responsible, productive, and caring citizens. That impact is accomplished through summer camps, academic programs, literacy clubs, college and workforce readiness programs, and programs that promote interests in the arts, leadership, and more.

“Boys & Girls Clubs of Southern Maine prioritizes academic success with after school and summer programs for students of all ages, helping participants stay on track to graduate and formulate a plan for their future,” said Dan Walsh, President and CEO of Norway Savings Bank. “It’s incredible to see how students embrace curiosity and acquire a lifelong love of learning



along the way.” In addition, participants learn about healthy lifestyles, wellness, and the importance of physical fitness through education and access to healthy snacks and meals, 90,000 of which were served to Maine youth last year. The difference being made at clubhouses in Auburn, Lewiston, Portland, and South Portland has inspired longtime support from NSB, including a recent \$1,500 donation. “We are so grateful to Norway Savings Bank for their generous gift”, said Jen Pierce, Director of Operations at Boys & Girls Clubs of Southern Maine. “This donation will directly support our youth development programs—helping us provide activities to support health and wellness, mentorship, and essential academics to the members in our community. We truly appreciate the bank’s commitment to investing in the futures of our youth.” “We’re thankful for the work of Boys & Girls Clubs of Southern Maine,” said Walsh. “It inspires and guides young people to fulfillment and success. What could be better?” There are many ways to help Boys & Girls Clubs of Southern Maine. To discover how you can lend a helping hand or to learn more about the organization, visit www.bgcmaine.org.

Law to prevent financial exploitation of older Mainers

AUGUSTA, ME – On Monday, June 9, Gov. Janet Mills signed into law a bill sponsored by Sen. Anne Carney, D-Cape Elizabeth, that will enable financial institutions and credit unions to better protect certain customers, including those 65 years of age or older, from financial exploitation. LD 1445, “An Act to Prevent Financial Exploitation of Vulnerable Adults,” allows banks and credit unions to delay certain transactions that are suspected to be fraudulent, allowing time to get in touch with trusted contacts and law enforcement.

“Too many older Mainers are targeted for financial exploitation because of their likelihood to have retirement savings,” said Sen. Carney. “This law protects Maine people from predatory practices by creating a process that can bring exploitation to the attention of account holders, the people they trust and law enforcement. I applaud the creation of a stronger tool for banks and credit unions to help prevent older Mainers from losing their life savings to a scammer.” LD 1445 defines financial exploitation in statute. It also allows the “stop and hold” process

already in Maine law for broker-dealers and investment advisers to be used by banks and credit unions for customers who are 65 years or older or protected under the Adult Protective Services Act. The legislation enables a bank or credit union to delay a disbursement from an account if financial exploitation is suspected, with proper notification to account holders and the Office of the Attorney General. In addition, LD 1445 allows financial institutions to create a process for account holders to designate someone as a “trusted contact” for the bank or credit union to contact, along with the account owner, when a concern about fraud arises. Finally, the bill allows financial institutions and credit unions to provide confidential access or copies of records related to suspected financial exploitation to law enforcement agencies. This bill received support from banks, credit unions and older Mainers. In his testimony in favor of LD 1445 at its public hearing in April, Josh Steirman, Director of Government Relations for the Maine Bankers Association, said, “Fraud of all types is unfor-

tunately increasing — especially schemes targeting older Mainers. ... The bill includes several elements we view as essential: the financial institution must establish clear policy and procedures, reasonable documentation of suspected abuse must be present, and use of these mechanisms by any financial institution is encouraged but not mandated. We believe this program can prevent financial exploitation.” In her testimony in support of LD 1445 at the public hearing, AARP Maine Fraud Watch Program volunteer Pam Partridge of North Anson said, “I have personally heard bank employees say they have concerns about the increasing financial exploitation of their customers and that they are trained to know the signs of potential fraud and what to do as a response. Buying some time to report, investigate, and restore clarity to what is really going on during a scam is a very valuable prevention strategy. ... As they say, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” LD 1445 will go into effect 90 days after the First Special Session of the 132nd Legislature adjourns sine die.

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

The logo for Solar Systems of Maine features a cartoon moose with large antlers, wearing a green baseball cap and a green polo shirt with the company name on it. Below the moose is a large, stylized shield-shaped logo with the words 'SOLAR SYSTEMS OF MAINE' in bold, block letters. The 'SOLAR' part is in white with a black outline, and 'SYSTEMS OF MAINE' is in yellow with a black outline.

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A photograph showing a technician from Solar Systems of Maine, wearing a black shirt with the company logo and a green safety harness, working on a roof to install solar panels.

A photograph showing a technician from Solar Systems of Maine, wearing a black shirt with the company logo and a white hard hat, standing on a roof with solar panels.

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RESTAURANT GUIDE

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Mel's Hilltop Restaurant

Poland Spring Resort: A living legacy of hospitality, history, and heart

An interview with Cyndi Robbins by Millie Barnard

Set atop the rolling hills of Poland, Maine, Poland Spring Resort is more than just a retreat—it's a living landmark, deeply woven into the fabric of Maine's heritage. With its sweeping views, historic buildings, and multi-generational charm, the resort blends timeless hospitality with stories that span centuries.

A Journey Through Time:

What began as a humble stagecoach stop in



Cyndi Robbins, owner of Poland Spring Resort



A monument of Togo



Guests enjoying their food at Mel's Hilltop Restaurant

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the late 1700s became the birthplace of Poland Spring Water. By the mid-1800s, visitors flocked to the area to "take the waters," and the iconic Poland Spring House welcomed guests for generations.

Today, the heart and soul behind the resort is Cyndi Robbins, who first started working at Poland Spring at age 16. She met her future husband, Mel Robbins, a year later. Together, they slowly took over portions of the property, finally taking over the entirety in 1982, and began

an ongoing journey of restoration, development, and community connection.

Where History Lives On:

The resort is home to three remarkable historical treasures:

-The Maine State Building, constructed for the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, was brought back to Maine by the Ricker family and reassembled on site. Once a library and art gallery, it now houses a museum celebrating the history of Poland Spring, the World's Fair, and the bottling company.

-The All Souls Chapel, built in 1912, is non-denominational and still hosts weddings, services, and memorials.

-Poland Spring Bottling Museum & Spring House, displays a timeline of the company, pictures, artifacts as well as a hands-on children's area upstairs where kids can learn about the water cycle and Maine's natural resources through interactive displays.

Togo, the True Hero of the North:

One of the most surprising stories is that of Togo, the famed sled dog who helped save the town of Nome, Alaska in 1925. Togo retired to Poland Spring, and today a beautiful storybook trail honors his legacy. "It's a favorite with kids," says Robbins. "We see them run along the trail reading the story panels. It's a great mix of education and fun."

Activities for All Ages:

Poland Spring Resort offers more than just stunning views. The list of attractions includes:

-An 18-hole golf course, with leagues, tournaments, and beginner clinics for kids and adults

-Disc golf, mini golf, pickleball courts and tennis courts

-An outdoor swimming pool, shuffleboard, bocce, and catch-and-release fishing pond

-Public hiking trails—10 kilometers of paths, great for snowshoeing and cross country skiing.

-Fenn Park featuring

See Resort, page 10

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The Village Inn: Resilience, recipes, and a deep-rooted Auburn tradition



Owner Belinda Vallee, who runs the restaurant with her husband Michael Vallee and their son Mitchell Vallee

An interview with Owner Belinda Vallee by Millie Barnard

Tucked into the heart of Auburn, Maine, The Village Inn has been a comforting presence in the community for decades—welcoming generations of families through its doors with warmth, consistency, and a menu that locals swear by. With its old-school charm and no-frills approach to great food, the family-owned restaurant is more than just a dining destination—it’s a piece of Auburn’s soul.

“We’ve got customers who’ve been coming in for over 40 years,” said Belinda Vallee (Vallee), part of the family that has helped run The Village Inn through multiple generations. “We know their orders, we know their families—it’s not just a restaurant, it’s personal.” Vallee runs the restaurant alongside her husband Michael R. Vallee and their son Mitchell Vallee.

While The Village Inn is known statewide for its award-winning seafood and chowder, that’s just scratching the surface of what’s made it a local favorite for so long. “Our prime rib is one of our most popular dishes—we’ve got people who come in just for that, sometimes two or three times a week,” Vallee said. “And don’t forget our chicken parmesan—that one has its own fan club.”

Part of what makes the restaurant so unique is the sense of ritual and tradition baked into its operations. For over 40 years, The Village Inn has hosted special holiday meals on Easter, Mother’s Day, and Thanksgiving—a tradition that many families in the area look forward to year after year. “It’s something we’ve done forever,” Vallee shared. “People build their holidays around it. It’s not uncommon to see three or four generations at a table.”

That same respect for family and tradition even shows up in the little things—like how they still honor old coupons, no matter how many years have passed. “We had a customer bring in one the other day from who knows when,” Vallee said, laughing. “But that’s who we are. If your grandmother saved it, we’ll take it. It’s all part of the experience—part of feeling like you’re home.”

The restaurant’s story isn’t just one of long-standing comfort food—it’s also one of resilience. A fire forced The Village Inn to shut its doors for nearly two years, threatening to end its legacy. But the family and team behind the restaurant wouldn’t let that happen. “That was the hardest time,” Vallee admitted. “But we weren’t going to give up. The community was behind us every step of the way.”

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RESTAURANT GUIDE



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vice, and genuine relationships with customers.

“We’re not fancy,” Vallee said with a smile. “We just care about doing things right.”

In a world where restaurants come and go, The Village Inn is a reminder that consistency, heart, and tradition still matter. Whether you’re craving a comforting plate

See Village Inn, page 10



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RESTAURANT GUIDE

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Resort
Continued from page 8
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The golf program in particular shines, with youth summer camps and private lessons for all ages.

Mel’s Hilltop Restaurant & Main Inn Dining:

Visitors can grab a bite at Mel’s Hilltop Restaurant, where delicious meals are served in a relaxed setting. Outdoor seating was added during the pandemic and remains a popular spot. The Maine Inn also offers breakfast and is available for weddings and group events.

Events That Build Community:

Poland Spring Resort is a community pillar, hosting events throughout the year, such as a Spring Fling for Poland Fire & Rescue, Fourth of July Fireworks Fundraiser; Poland Spring Heritage Day each September, a free family event with crafters, live music, a car show, blacksmith demonstrations, and horse-drawn rides; Golf tournaments benefiting local causes, such as University of Southern Maine, Community Concepts, and the Poland Spring Museum. There are also weekly concerts on Monday evenings in the summer. A full calendar of events can be found on their website: Polandspringresort.com/.

A Home Away From Home:

What makes Poland Spring truly special is the people. “I’ve got guests who’ve been coming here every summer for 40 years,” Robbins says. “They’re part of the family

now.” The resort currently employs 148 people, many of whom return every season—and some have been with the Robbins family for over four decades. Robbins explains, “The whole staff is like one big family too. Each department has their manager, but they all know they can talk to me.”

Her own story is just as meaningful. Born in Chicago and raised across the country, Robbins moved to Maine as a teen and got her first job at Poland Spring in 1971. When her husband Mel passed away, her connection to the land and community

only deepened. When asked, her favorite place at the resort, Robbins smiles. “The porch of The Maine Inn at sunset—it’s unbeatable.” A Vision for the Future:

Each year, the resort team tackles a new renovation. This year, they’re working on the miniature golf course, adding nine more holes with an animal theme to go along with the current nine-hole course that showcases some history for the town of Poland.

Plans are underway to possibly extend some of the resort’s operations through the winter as well.

Plan Your Visit: With history to explore, nature to enjoy, and welcoming arms to greet you, Poland Spring Resort invites you to relax, reconnect, and become part of its enduring story.

Learn more at: www.polandspringmuseum.org and polandspringresort.com/.



Breakfast Buffet at The Maine Inn at Poland Spring Resort



The gazebo where outdoor events are held, including weekly concerts on Monday nights in the summer



The Maine Inn

Village Inn
Continued from page 9
of seafood chowder, a perfectly cooked cut of prime rib, or simply a place that feels like home, The Village Inn is ready to welcome you in.



Cindi Mcinnis, long time employee of The Village Inn, and her daughter Taylor Mcinnis who now works at the restaurant as well



Mural that shows the story of The Village Inn over the years



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Steadman

Continued from page 1

sources, editorial pieces, social media, videos, political punditry and podcasts. While “And Another Thing” pays tribute to Thompson and Steadman’s future-defining meeting and their famed collaborations, the exhibition leads viewers on a journey that is much more than a Gonzo exploration.

“And Another Thing” allows us to engage audiences with an exhibition that shows Steadman’s artistic evolution from his roots to the artist who continues to flourish, innovate and be in demand at 88 years old with interest from brands such as Nike, Harley-Davidson and Supreme, with whom he collaborated in the last three years,” said Sadie Williams, director of the Ralph Steadman Art Collection.

Beyond Gonzo journalism, political commentary has been a staple of Steadman’s work. The exhibition includes illustrations of President Donald Trump and former Presidents Richard Nixon, Gerald R. Ford, Bill Clinton, Barack Obama and Jimmy Carter. The works demonstrate his astute political satire that meshes their traits with the scandals that plagued their presidencies. Additionally, Steadman’s use of the high-contrast chiaroscuro technique in “American Melodrama” lampoons a gallery of presidents, ranging from Dwight D. Eisenhower to Ronald Reagan, who are depicted as theater performers on stage. The caricatures, their countenances exaggerated with insincere smiles, demonstrate Steadman’s razor-sharp satire.

“Steadman is well known for his direct and visceral drawing style and for changing and amplifying the face of satire through his illustrations,” said Andrea Lee Harris, the exhibition co-curator. “His art challenges us, teaches us and alters how we see the world. Showcasing Steadman’s genius, skill and imagination, the exhibition offers viewers a glimpse into the artist’s creative force. He has given us all a great gift and

raised the bar for the generations following in his footsteps. Steadman’s inspired exhibition will delight both diehard fans and uninitiated audiences eager to learn more.”

On display are his illustrated editions of literary classics such as Lewis Carroll’s “Alice in Wonderland” and Robert Louis Stevenson’s “Treasure Island;” Kurt Baumann’s “Dozy & Hawkeye;” the inventive books he authored such as “I, Leonardo,” “The Big I Am,” “The Little Red Computer” and “That’s My Dad” and so much more.

“I don’t think people realize how big some of the artworks actually are,” Williams added. “Usually, the art is reproduced in books, magazines and newspapers at an eighth or even a 16th their actual size, so it’s a completely different experience to stand in front of an original. You can see the audience really absorbing the works and taking it in.”

Beautiful works from “The Gonzovation Trilogy,” his collaboration with documentarian and filmmaker Ceri Levy about extinct and endangered birds and animals, sit alongside his more experimental collections such as “Paranoids,” caricatures of notable figures from history, entertainment and politics that Steadman created by reworking Polaroid photographs.

Steadman explained, “What you’re doing is pushing around a light-motivated material which is still in the process of change. It’s as if you started off with a perfect blueprint of someone which you could then alter according to your needs.”

Distorted images depicting famous writers and musicians, including David Bowie, Elton John, Bob Dylan and Dolly Parton are among those celebrities shown in the exhibition.

“Vintage Dr. Gonzo,” a life-size bronze sculpture by Jud Bergeron, inspired by Steadman’s drawings of Thompson, is also touring with the exhibition.

“We’re excited to be hosting ‘Ralph Stead-

man: And Another Thing’ this spring and summer at Bates,” said Malcolm Hill, vice president for academic affairs at Bates College and the interim director of the Bates College Museum of Art. “On an educational level, it’s nothing less than a history of culture spanning multiple generations and topics — politics, literature, Gonzo journalism. And the exhibition will overlap with performances at the Bates Dance Festival July 11 to August 2, so visitors to Bates can view works by Ralph Steadman at the museum during the day and then catch iconic dance performers such as the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company on stage in the evening.”

“Ralph Steadman: And Another Thing” is accompanied by a full-color, 207-page publication of the same name. Special hardcover and softcover editions will be available.

Following the presentation at the Bates College Museum of Art, the exhibition will travel to the Torrance Art Museum in Torrance, California, (March - May 2026) and the Barry Art Museum at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia (Jan. 29-June 20, 2027). It will also tour the West Coast through the fall of 2027.

During the summer months, the Bates College campus is home to the Bates Dance Festival, which will celebrate its 42nd season in 2025, running from July 11 to Aug. 1. The vibrant festival includes three weeks of dance intensives for young dancers and features world class performances in multiple venues. The exhibition will be open and free to the public during the festival.

For more information about the exhibition, programs and events at Bates College Museum of Art, visit www.bates.edu/museum/.

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

Guild Fine Craft Show returns to Bar Harbor

BAR HARBOR, ME – Guild Fine Craft Show: Mount Desert Island -produced by Shop Maine Craft - returns to College of the Atlantic with a dynamic indoor/outdoor event in downtown Bar Harbor, August 1 - 3. The show features a juried selection of fine handcrafted work by Guild level members of the Maine Crafts Association, along with distinguished guest exhibitors from across the region. Visitors can explore the work of 50 exceptional artists in a scenic coastal setting, meet the artists, and purchase one-of-a-kind pieces.

The Guild shows are a well-established artist marketplace welcoming the public to see, collect and learn about the highest quality craft items made by a membership of dedicated, talented and skilled artists. The show features work in many mediums including handmade jewelry, ceramics, basketry, wood, metal, fiber (decorative + wearable), paper, print, glass, leather and more. The show opens on Friday, August 1 from 5 - 8pm and will feature a live jazz trio.

“We’re excited to return once again to the stunning COA campus for this year’s show,” said Lizz Brown, Show Director. “This beloved event continues to grow, and we’re proud to showcase



Left to right: Works by Stephani Briggs; Dylan Levesh-Raabe; Purplebean Bindery; The Cultivated Thread; Jeffrey Lipton Pottery

the extraordinary craftsmanship of our Guild members alongside an inspiring group of guest exhibitors from across New England. It’s a weekend full of beauty, creativity, and connection in one of the most scenic locations in the state.”

\$5 weekend admission, and those under 18 may attend free of charge. Open FRI 8/1, 5 - 8pm and SAT 8/2 + SUN 8/3, 10am - 4pm. College of the Atlantic, 105 Eden Road, Bar Harbor, ME. For more information, please email:

Lizz Brown, Show Director at lizz@shopmainecraft.com or visit shopmainecraft.com

Summary:
Guild Fine Craft Show: Mount Desert Island

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Celebrate Maine’s wild blueberry heritage August 2-3

MAINE — When summer hits its peak in Maine, the wild blueberry barrens come alive—lush, buzzing with activity, and brimming with berries. This is more than a harvest; it’s a celebration of land, heritage, and the communities that make Maine, Maine. And the best way to experience it all? Wild Blueberry Weekend, returning August 2–3, 2025 for its fifth year of bountiful, berryful fun.

Created by the Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine, this statewide event brings residents and visitors directly onto working wild blueberry farms throughout Maine—many of them family-run for generations—to connect with the people and places behind Maine’s official state berry. It’s a chance to step into the rhythm of the season, meet the growers, and experience the true taste of Maine at peak freshness.

“Wild Blueberry Weekend is about celebrating what makes Maine special,” says Eric Venturini, Executive Director of the Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine. “It’s a joyful, hands-on way for folks to support local farms, explore the beauty of our unique, rugged landscape, and taste the wild difference for themselves.”

Rooted in Tradition, Growing Toward the Future

The wild blueberry is more than just a delicious summer treat. Its story spans thousands of years, beginning with the Wabanaki Nations who were the first to care for the barrens and developed the traditional land management practices still in use today. That heritage lives on in today’s growers, who combine time-honored practices with modern stewardship to sustain this remarkable crop—and the working landscapes that define Maine.

“Stewarding wild blueberry barrens is more than a job — it’s a deep-rooted Maine tradition,” says Ashley Field of Fields Fields Blueberries in Dresden. “We’re proud to carry forward this legacy, nurturing and sharing a truly wild superfood that has nourished people for generations. Wild Blueberry Weekend is a chance for farmers to open our fields, share our stories, and celebrate the magic of this powerful little berry.”

By visiting during Wild Blueberry Weekend, guests support these growers directly, strengthening

Maine’s local food system and celebrating a uniquely wild harvest that can’t be found anywhere else.

A Weekend of Connection, Flavor, and Fun

In 2023 and 2024 more than 10,000 people joined in the festivities, and this year’s event is bigger than ever. Dozens of farms across the state will open their gates, offering scenic tours, raking demonstrations, pints of freshly picked berries, handmade goods, and the chance to meet the faces behind the food. Attendees will find themselves sitting next to friends and neighbors at pancake breakfasts, enjoying sips of the season with visitors, taking in cooking demonstrations from some of Maine’s most celebrated chefs, and enjoying family friendly, hands-on opportunities to explore the barrens and dive into the fruitful history of Maine.

And the celebration doesn’t stop at the farm gate—restaurants, breweries, distilleries, and shops all across Maine will serve up limited-time wild blueberry creations that highlight the fruit’s bold flavor and nutritional punch.

Plan your adventure: www.wildblueberryweekend.com.

Tips to help Maine residents navigate health care

By Dr. Ana Stankovic, Chief Medical Officer, UnitedHealthcare of New England

In the past, an imperfect and often complicated health care system, along with rising costs, impacted consumers’ ability to easily access care.

In fact, nearly 11% of adults nationally and nearly 9% in Maine avoided care due to the expense in the previous year, according to the America’s Health Rankings 2024 Annual Report.

As technology continues to reshape many aspects of our lives, employers and health plans are increasingly offering new digital tools, benefits, and programs that aim to make the health care experience simpler, more affordable, and better.

Here are three tips to more easily connect with quality care and potentially save more money.

Take advantage of digital tools that help you compare care options: Many people like to research products before making a purchase, and the same is often true when it comes to health care. In fact, a recent study found that nearly half of people research doctors before scheduling an appointment.¹

Comparing care options ahead of time and making more informed decisions may result in better access to care and lower costs. Some employers and health plans now offer innovative solutions that aim to do just that. Talk to your employer and health plan about what’s available to you.

Understand what wellness programs are available. About 80% of U.S. businesses with more than 50 employees now offer wellness programs, according to a recent survey, but many people don’t fully take advantage of all that’s available to support their health and well-being.²

Some employer wellness programs can help people stay focused on their health goals, manage chronic conditions like type 2 diabetes and obesity, and even save more money, in part by utilizing technology.

You may be eligible for incentive-based wellness programs available through some employers designed to reward healthier choices. With these programs, eligible members can earn rewards for completing tasks like taking a health survey, getting an annual checkup, walking a certain number of steps, tracking hours slept and more.

You may be able to earn rewards through your health plan for activities like your annual wellness visit, getting certain preventive screenings. Talk to your health plan and employer to understand what’s available.

Make your mental health a priority. Taking care of your mental health is important to your overall well-being as your emotional frame of mind may impact your physical health. If you’re struggling, treatment may help you feel better and live a healthier life.

Mental health challenges continue to grow and can have a significant impact on working age adults and many others. To focus on just one condition, 40 million American adults suffer from anxiety disorders that can impact quality of life and well-being,³ and anxiety is now the No. 1 mental health issue among American workers.⁴

To address these challenges, many employers offer accessible and flexible mental health offerings — such as therapy apps and virtual counseling, which can provide convenient, confidential support.⁵

Some health plans also offer behavioral health care programs to help with substance use, stress, anxiety, depression and more. Some health insurers also have specially trained advocates available to help members find the right type of behavioral health care or resources.

Make virtual care a starting point. Virtual care, also called telehealth, has expanded from helping people who are already sick to detecting and preventing illnesses and more effectively managing chronic conditions.

Many people enjoy the flexibility offered by virtual care, and some plans are now built around it. Virtual care offers 24/7 access to urgent care, in addition to access to medical and behavioral health and other care via a smartphone, tablet or computer — and transitions to in-person support, when necessary.

Other options may include virtual primary care for regular health visits or virtual therapy for care from a behavioral health professional.

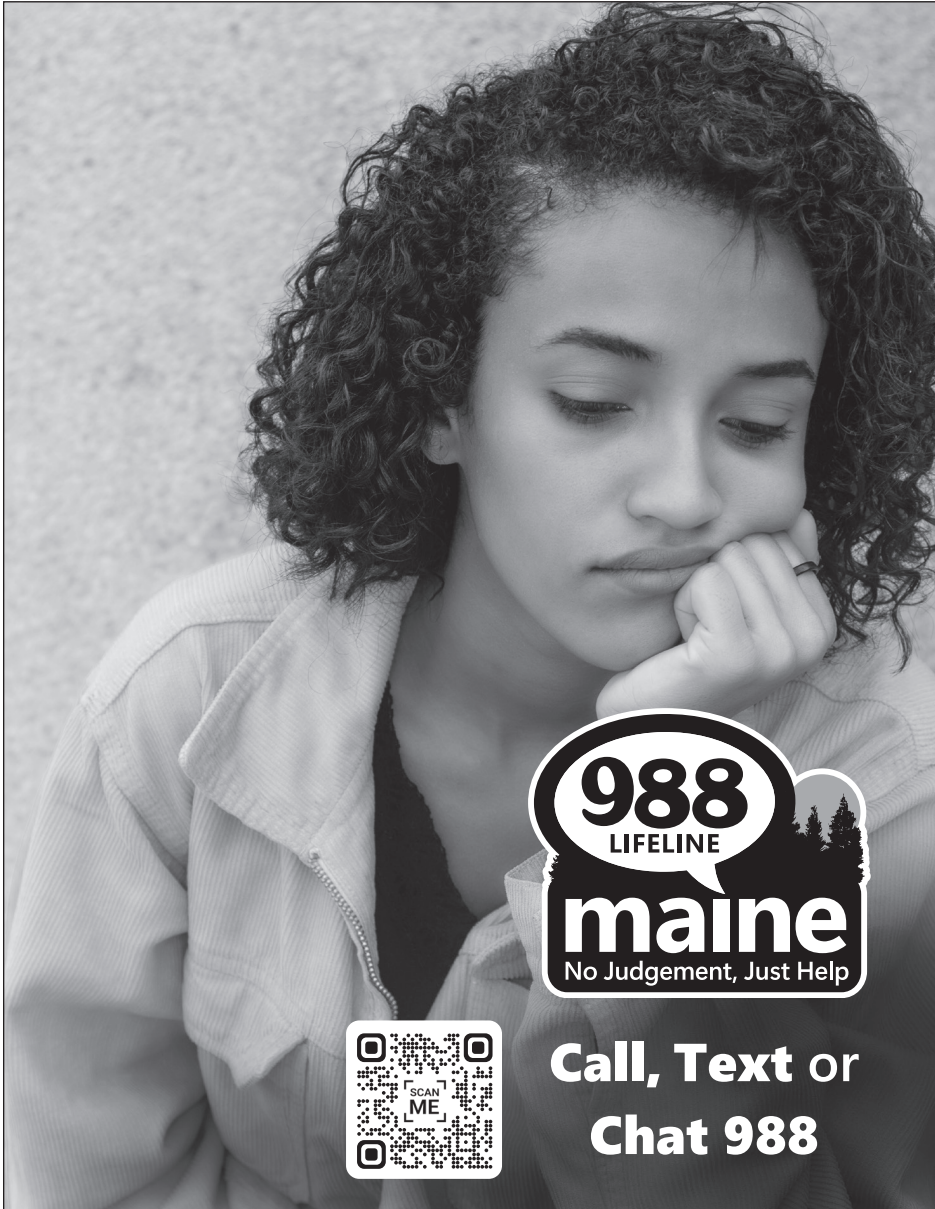
1 McKinsey & Company, 2024, Consumers rule: Driving healthcare growth with a consumer-led strategy

2 Electro IQ, 2025, Employee Wellness Statistics By Program Availability, Type, Frequency, Country, Category And Investment

3 Anxiety & Depression Association of America, Anxiety Disorders Statistics

4 Forbes, 2024, Anxiety Skyrockets To No. 1 Issue Among American Workers, New Study Shows

5 American Psychological Association, 2023 Work in America™ Survey.




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July 25, 26, 27
AUBURN – Grand Opening of Books-A-Million bookstore to 730 Center Street, formerly the location of The Sports Authority. Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at 11 am on Friday, July 25th. Local Author Signings including Patsy Baldus, Matt Cost and Peggy Deblois on Saturday, July 26th and Diane Madden, Cody Mower and Anthony Blasi on Sunday, July 27th.

July 25
WATERVILLE – Waterville Rocks, a free, outdoor summer concert series held annually at Head of Falls Park in Waterville, ME returns on Fridays, July 25, August 1, and August 8, with End of the Line, Atlanta Rhythm Section, and Mallett Brothers Band, respectively.

July 26
BUXTON – Try our delicious Haddock Supper Buffet - Saturday, July 26, 2025 - 5:00 pm at Living Waters Church, Parker Farm Road, Buxton. Suggested donation: \$10 Adult, \$5 Child, \$20 Family. Please note: We will offer the option of takeout containers for those who do not want to come inside for seating.

July 26
AUBURN – There will be a baked bean supper at Sixth Street Congregational Church at 109 Sixth Street in Auburn, on Saturday, July 26th from 4:30 until 6:00. There will be two

Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

kinds of beans, red hotdogs, brown hotdogs, coleslaw, assorted casseroles, assorted desserts, and beverage. The cost of the supper is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children 6 to 12; children 5 and under are free.

July 26
CANTON – Canton Historical Society celebrating 50th Anniversary. FREE events! Party 4:00-7:30PM w/mobile bar & food truck—both take cash or credit; history speaker at 2PM; museum & country store open 10AM-7:30PM. Raffles; FREE souvenir & cake. 25 Turner Street; handicap access. cantonmehistorical@gmail.com.

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.

July 31

WISCASSET – Summertime in Wiscasset, Maine, means Wiscasset Art Walk! On the evening of Thursday, July 31, from 4 to 7pm, artists, musicians, crafters, local residents, and visitors experience together the sights, sounds, and tastes of this charming Mid-coast Maine village. A Celtic thread runs through music and song during the Wiscasset Art Walk on Thursday, July 31, 4-7pm and later, in Wiscasset Village.

Aug 1
AUBURN – The Community Little Theatre (CLT) will host a staged reading of “A New Home” on Friday, August 1, at 7:30 p.m. The script will be read by veteran actors from CLT, and eight songs will be performed live. An original musical production, “A New Home” will be presented as CLT’s first production of the 2025-26 season, opening on October 30.

Aug 1, 2, 3
BAR HARBOR – Guild Fine Craft Show: Mount Desert Island at College of the Atlantic | 105 Eden Street, Bar Harbor, ME 04609. \$5 Weekend Admission | Under 18 Free. FRI, AUG 1: 5pm - 8pm. SAT, AUG 2: 10am - 4pm. SUN, AUG 3: 10am - 4pm.

Aug 8
LEWISTON – At 10am the Lewiston Public Library Children’s Department will be offering a Butterfly Footprints Keepsake program. Caregivers and their babies will be able to create a butterfly keepsake using their child’s footprints on a preprinted background. This program is recommended for caregivers and their children between the ages of birth-2 years old. Siblings are also welcome to attend. 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 9
OTISFIELD – The East Otisfield Free Baptist

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Church annual Lobster Dinner is being held on, Saturday, August 9th. The menu will include a 1 1/4 lb., lobster or ½ a grilled chicken, coleslaw, corn-on-the-cob, dinner roll, drawn butter, blueberry cake and other refreshments.

A total of 76 seats are available in 2 seatings, with the first at 4.30PM, the second seating at 6PM. Tickets should be purchased in advance from Maryanne Hill for \$25.00 for the Chicken Meal or \$30.00 for the Lobster Dinner. All tickets are sold on a first-come-first-serve basis.

Please call 310-8056 or email Maryanne at EO-FBCdinners@yahoo.com for your reservations. All proceeds will benefit multiple church projects. The lobster Dinner will be held at the church located at 231 Rayville Road, 1 mile off Rte. 121 in Otisfield. Hope to see you there.

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.

Aug 15
AUGUSTA – Augusta Symphony Soirée, the only ticketed concert in the ASO schedule, which will help support the ASO’s mission and expenses. Held at Jewett Hall on the University of Maine at Augusta campus (46 University Dr.), this elegant evening will feature chamber ensembles drawn from ASO musicians, including Concertmaster Anne McKee. The program will culminate with the ASO’s own Maestro Jinwook Park leading a lively winds and strings nonet with his violin rather than his baton.

The evening will open with a welcome reception at 7:00 pm during which supporters can meet each other as well as orchestra members. The concert will begin at 7:30 pm.

Aug 21
LEWISTON – Lewiston Public Library: Paint Night at the Library 5-7PM.
Nov 15
LEWISTON – Prince

of Peace Parish Christmas Craft Fair Saturday, from 9-3. Looking for crafters/artists at Holy Family Church Hall 607 Sabattus St., Lewiston. Prices for tables/spaces range from \$25-\$40! Contact Angela at adobson@une.edu

Mondays through Aug 18
LEWISTON – The Lewiston Public Library, in partnership with ArtVan, 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 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.



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.”



MSMT
Continued from page 6
ative team, and this music make for a perfect summer celebration.”

The MSMT production stars J. Antonio Rodriguez (MSMT Debut!, Tour: Hadestown 1st National Tour) as Ren McCormack and Maya Jerome Thomas (MSMT Debut!, Broadway: Harry Potter and the Cursed Child) as Ariel Moore.

Gregg Goodbrod (MSMT: Les Misérables, Jesus Christ Superstar, Aida, Sunset Boulevard, Miss Saigon, Grand Hotel, Ghost) returns as Rev. Shaw Moore, and MSMT favorite Charis Leos (Over 35 MSMT productions including White Christmas, 9 to 5, Always...Patsy Cline, Legally Blonde, Hello, Dolly!, and 42nd Street) takes on the dual role of Ethel McCormack and Betty Blast. Kristina Leopold (Broadway: SIX), fresh from her triumphant run as Julie Nichols in Tootsie, plays Vi Moore.

Eli Mayer (MSMT Debut!, Footloose at The Muny) plays bad boy Chuck Cranston, and Oliver Prose (MSMT Debut!, Broadway: New York, New York) appears as



lovable sidekick Willard Hewitt.

The featured cast includes Rachel Alvarez-Robinson, Lauryn Adams, Stemarciae Bain, Corey Barrow, Greta Cardoza, Brooklyn Bronson, Lani Corson, Bryan Fortunato, Morgan Gillott, David Girolmo, Payton Hines, Matthew Irani, Kelly Lomonte, Darren Lorenzo, Sabina Martin, Jack Sippel, Dylan Stukenberg, Todd Turner, Jake Urban, Nolan Um, and Nazaria Workman.

Footloose is directed by E. Faye Butler, choreographed by Tyler Hanes, and music directed by Jason Wetzel. The creative team includes scenic designer Chuck Kading, costume designer Jane Alois Stein, lighting designer Jeff Koger, sound designer

Shannon Slaton, video & projections designer Jerran Kowalski, and wig designer Kevin S. Foster II. Amy Bertacini serves as Production Stage Manager.

Footloose features a stage adaptation by Dean Pitchford and Walter Bobbie, based on the original screenplay by Dean Pitchford. Music is by Tom Snow with lyrics by Dean Pitchford, and additional music by Eric Carmen, Sammy Hagar, Kenny Loggins, and Jim Steinman.

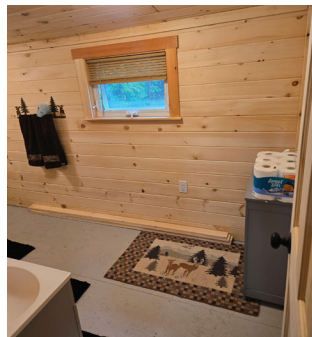
Footloose is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals (www.concordtheatricals.com).

For tickets and more information, visit www.msmt.org or call the MSMT Box Office at 207.725.8769.

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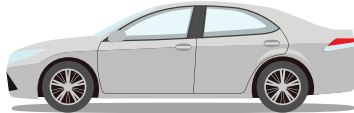
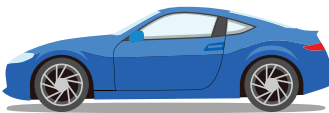
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