

## NSB surprises Trinity Jubilee Center with \$2K holiday donation

**LEWISTON, ME** – In gratitude for the work and impact of one of Maine’s most essential support service organizations, Norway Savings Bank was pleased to drop by Trinity Jubilee Center last week to deliver a surprise \$2,000 donation to the organization, one of many such visits NSB staff will be making to various nonprofits in the coming weeks.

The “Holiday Helping Hands” donation is the latest contribution in many years of support from NSB, including a \$25,000 donation in June to assist with the completion of the organization’s new home on 123 Bates Street. Over the past 30 years, Trinity Jubilee Center has touched the lives of countless people in Lewiston and across Androscoggin County, serving the hungry, the homeless, and others in need, and helping neighbors get through difficult times and onto the road to self-sufficiency.



**Pictured (L to R):** Ryan Thompson, Commercial Loan Officer VP at NSB; Sabrina Nadeau, Personal Banker at NSB; Lin Dehetre, Branch Manager VP at NSB; Jessica McKenzie, Volunteer Coordinator for Trinity Jubilee Center; Malaiko Kayad, Immigration Integration Program Staff at Trinity Jubilee Center; Yasmine Barkad, Immigrant Integration Program Staff at Trinity Jubilee Center; (kneeling in front) Wally McCarthy, Operations Director/Day Shelter & Resource Center Manager at Trinity Jubilee Center.

“We are so grateful to Norway Savings Bank and all of our donors for making this possible and for believing in our mission, our community, and our neighbors,” said Erin Reed, Executive Director of the Trinity Jubilee Center. “Contributions from Nor-

way Savings and other institutional donors are quite literally strengthening the fabric of our community.” To learn more about Trinity Jubilee Center, the new facility, or the many ways you can offer support, visit [www.trinityjubileecenter.org](http://www.trinityjubileecenter.org).

## Free community lunch continues after SNAP benefits reinstated

**CHERRYFIELD, ME** – “Soup’s On!” began to help those affected by the loss of SNAP benefits will continue through the month until December 19 at Maine Seacoast Mission’s Downeast Campus in Cherryfield. The Mission will offer a lunch of soup and bread, Tuesday through Friday from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Lunches are open to all community members.

Roughly 40% of patrons visiting the Mission’s food pantry receive SNAP benefits, and even with SNAP benefits reinstated, the impact will reverberate with many still struggling. Pantry visitors often speak of having to choose between necessities, bills,

and food. Those who took part in the meal at the pantry were happy to connect with friends and neighbors, without the added burden or worrying about one meal a day. One community member remarked, “These warm meals are so thoughtful and helpful. Thank you!”

The pantry has seen an increase in patrons with 547 new households coming to the pantry last year. A monthly average of 300 people come to the pantry for support, and an additional increase in return monthly visits by existing households.

If you would like to donate to the Mission’s food pantry, you can make monetary donations at

<https://seacoastmission.org/donate/> or donate foodstuffs in-person at 6 Weald Bethel Lane, Cherryfield.

Rooted in a history of compassionate service and mutual trust, Maine Seacoast Mission seeks to strengthen coastal and island communities by educating youth, supporting families, and promoting good health. For more information, please visit <https://seacoastmission.org/>

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

## Oasis of Music to feature music of Drexel Gordon

**LEWISTON, ME** – The Oasis of Music will feature the music of Drexel Gordon on Wednesday December 10, beginning at 12:30. Gordon will bring his guitar, banjo and voice to perform a selection of his own songs.

Drexel Reed Gordon describes himself as a living enthusiast, long time singer, and a community musician. He plays for contradances with the Better Late Than Never band, jams with

a vocal/instrumental ensemble Sweet Gale, and occasionally is inspired to write a song. He has sung his songs for weddings, memorials, birthdays, poetry readings, music jams, community sings, earth days, farmers markets, spring and harvest festivals, wilderness programs, around campfires, and really anywhere home-made entertainment is appreciated. He grew up singing other people’s songs in church, school

and civic choruses and performing in college and civic theater musical productions.

Upon sound advice, Gordon says, he has not given up his day job as a physician specializing in Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine, currently practicing in Auburn, Maine.

The Oasis of Music is located at Trinity Commons, 247 Bates Street in Lewiston. Admission is free, with donations accepted.

## “Yankee Swap” at Merrymeeting Bay Trout Unlimited

**BRUNSWICK, ME** – A holiday themed “Yankee Swap” will highlight the December meeting of Brunswick’s Merrymeeting Bay chapter of Trout Unlimited.

Members and the public are invited to attend the Merrymeeting Bay monthly meeting of this national cold-water conservation organization as we gather sportspeople and conservationists on Tuesday, December 16, 2025, at Sea Dog Brewing, 1 Bowdoin Mill Island, Topsham. Social hour begins at 6:00 pm, the Swap starts at 7:00 pm. The event is free; dinner and drinks can be purchased.

The December meeting will feature a fun and traditional Yankee Swap and everyone is invited to participate. All participants are asked to bring a holiday-wrapped, new or lightly used fishing- or outdoor-oriented gift valued at \$15. Participants will pick, unwrap, and “swap” gifts according to game rules. It’s easy and fun for kids and adults

MMBTU monthly membership meetings are held at Sea Dog on the third Tuesday of each month, September through May. No admission fee. Open to members and non-members alike. Please join us. Our mission is to

conserve, protect, and restore our area’s cold-water resources and the watersheds on which they depend. Trout Unlimited is the nation’s oldest and largest cold-water fisheries conservation organization dedicated to caring for and recovering America’s rivers and streams so our children can experience the joy of wild and native trout and salmon. Across the country, TU brings to bear local, regional, and national grassroots organizing, durable partnerships, science-backed policy muscle, and legal firepower on behalf of trout and salmon fisheries, healthy waters, and vibrant communities.

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# Newsmakers, Names & Faces

## AARP News You Can Use – December 2025

### Letter to the Editor Supporting our veterans beyond the uniform

As we honored our veterans in November, it's important to recognize that their service doesn't end when they return home. Many face new challenges—whether it's finding employment, modifying their homes for accessibility, or caring for loved ones. AARP is proud to stand with veterans and their families by offering a wide range of free resources tailored to their unique needs.

Veterans seeking work, those needing home modifications due to service-related disabilities, or veterans wishing to learn more about local resources, can find that and much more through the AARP site entirely dedicated to veterans. Local VA offices in Maine are located in Augusta and Portland, and additional local veteran centers can assist further. The Veterans crisis line is 988.

Caregivers—often spouses or family members—can find meaningful resources through AARP's Military Caregiving Guide and Financial Workbook, which help organize care

plans, manage stress, and navigate complex financial decisions. Area Agencies on Aging can also serve as a gateway to many services and supports throughout Maine.

These tools can be a great place to start for veterans and their families. To learn more, visit [aarp.org/veterans](http://aarp.org/veterans) or contact your local VA center.

Let's continue to serve those who served us.

Erica Bell-Watkins  
AARP Maine Executive Council Volunteer  
Windham

By Joyce Bucciattini, AARP Maine Community Outreach Volunteer

A few weeks ago, a friend was describing his day spent stacking wood at his community's wood bank. He stated, "Even though the weather was still warm, winter's chill would be here soon." His town was ready to ensure the resources were in place to help their fellow Mainers stay warm, secure and connected.

Maine is fortunate to have a network of volunteer-led wood banks. Local wood banks offer resources to those experiencing a heating emergency and strive to build community resiliency and connections through neighbors helping neighbors. Community wood banks are supported by the Maine Wood Banks Network. A list of wood banks, their service areas and contact information can be found on the organization's website: [woodbanks.org](http://woodbanks.org)

Although wood banks offer an important resource, many Maine families depend on oil or electricity to heat their homes. The State of Maine Housing Authority offers energy conservation programs and heating assistance to eligible Mainers through the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) and other emergency programs.



communities is important for all ages. The National Institute on Aging reports that loneliness and social isolation have a negative effect on our health and well-being. Senior centers, your local Area Agency on Aging (visit [maine4a.org](http://maine4a.org)) and AARP Maine have a myriad of events and volunteer opportunities to combat cabin fever and build community. Libraries offer an amazing array of age-friendly activities. From offering internet accessibility and tech tips to children's story hours and book groups, libraries are a great place to meet others and try something new.

Maine volunteers and state agencies continue to uphold our values of neighbors helping neighbors to stay warm, secure and connected. Spending time with our families and friends while reaching out to those who may need some extra care is a real "Mainer way" to make sure the long winter months stay merry and bright for all of us.

Warmest wishes!

*Joyce Bucciattini is a retired middle school educator. She currently coordinates Delta Kappa Gamma's Read to Me program, is a tutor with Literacy Volunteers-Androscoggin, and is an active AARP Maine volunteer. She enjoys her gardens, being outdoors and traveling.*

We want to hear from you!  
Please submit your letter to the editor by 5pm on Friday for next weeks edition.

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### New England Cancer Specialists announces new board president

WESTBROOK, ME – New England Cancer Specialists (NECS) is pleased to announce a leadership transition within our Board of Directors. Following eight years of dedicated service as Board

President, Dr. Chiara Battelli will be stepping aside from her role at the end of the year. Dr. Battelli will remain an active member of the NECS Board and Executive Committee, continuing to help guide

the organization's mission and growth.

Under Dr. Battelli's thoughtful and collaborative leadership, NECS has achieved remarkable milestones. During her presidency, our organization:

Became one of the first oncology practices in the nation to earn ASCO Medical Home Certification, underscoring our commitment to patient-centered, high-quality care.

Became a founding member of the Oncare Alliance and the Oncology College

Expanded into New Hampshire with the opening of our Portsmouth practice, extending access to exceptional community-based cancer care.

Became the first Affiliate Member of the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, a historic partnership that brings world-class expertise and access to clinical

*See Cancer, page 10*

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News

makers, Names & Faces

FAME announces leadership team new hire, promotions

Tricia Curit joins Fontaine Family Team

**AUGUSTA, ME**—The Finance Authority of Maine (FAME) recently announced the hiring of a senior manager and the promotion of four employees to key leadership positions within the agency. The hire and promotions are the result of recent strategic planning and resultant organizational restructuring. The individuals are: Meredith Whitfield, Chief Communications Officer; Jonathan Poole, Chief Operations Officer; Sarah Nadeau-Balducci, Chief Risk Officer; Lisa Brown, Chief Human Resources Officer; and Bert Audette, Chief Information Officer.

FAME CEO Carlos Mello stated: “We are excited to introduce our impressive leadership team as part of the new organizational structure established to support the strategic achievement of FAME’s goals. This team will focus on aligning our efforts and driving progress in our strategic plan, while continuing to meet our mission of supporting Mainers in achieving and improving their financial outcomes. The expertise and leadership of this team will help us move forward with clarity and purpose.”

Chief Communications Officer: Meredith Whitfield

Meredith Whitfield joins FAME from her most recent role as Director of Financial Operations and Chief of Staff to the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer at Colby College. Prior to working at Colby, Meredith was the Chief Marketing and Communications Officer and Chief of Staff to the President at the University of Maine, where she led integrated communications initiatives, stakeholder engagement, and institutional reputation strategy. Whitfield’s background also includes senior leadership roles at Western Carolina University and Appalachian State University, as well as public policy experience in the United States Congress.

“I’m honored to join the outstanding team at FAME,” said Whitfield. “It’s a privilege to lead a group of professionals so deeply committed to empowering Maine people and businesses. I look forward to unifying FAME’s voice and bringing even more awareness to the tremendous work being done to support economic growth and affordable pathways to higher education.”

Whitfield holds a Master of Business Administration and a Bachelor of Arts from Appalachian State University.

Chief Operations Officer: Jonathan Poole

Jonathan Poole most recently served FAME as the Director of Strategic Growth. He previously worked at the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development and served in the United States Navy as a Surface Warfare Officer on a Bath Iron Works-built destroyer in the Pacific, as well as on an admiral’s staff.

“FAME is one of many organizations around the state that is striving to grow Maine’s economy and create better outcomes for Maine people. What is unique about FAME that makes it such an exciting place to work is its ability to support both businesses and families to achieve their goals. The fact that I get to work with people that are all motivated to support Maine people is unique and inspiring.”

Poole holds a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics from the United States Naval Academy and a Master Degree in International Public Policy and Diplomacy from University College Cork (Ireland).

Chief Risk Officer: Sarah Nadeau-Balducci

Sarah Nadeau-Balducci most recently served as Deputy General Counsel at FAME. Prior to that, she was a Senior District Attorney in New York, where she focused on litigation and long-term investigations including public and political corruption, violent crime, and firearms and drug trafficking. She previously served as vice president of compliance at one of the world’s largest investment banks. Her background also includes leadership roles at national nonprofits working on human rights and education.

“I’m proud to be at FAME and to be a part of the ecosystem supporting Mainers in their educational and professional pursuits. I am a first-generation college graduate and benefited from a FAME education loan during my undergraduate years. It’s important for Mainers to see FAME as a resource that can be a partner in reaching their aspirations.”

Nadeau-Balducci holds a Juris Doctor Degree from Cardozo School of Law, a Master of Public Administration from CUNY-Baruch College, and a Bachelor of Music from the New England Conservatory of Music.

Chief Human Resources Officer: Lisa Brown

Lisa Brown has served

as Director of Human Resources at FAME since February of 2013. Previously, she worked at Cianbro Corporation in human resources, where she was responsible for corporate human resources compliance and benefits administration.

“I am excited and proud to be part of a progressive team of leaders dedicated to advancing the people of Maine. Our employees are a foundational part of FAME’s mission, and by fostering a culture of continuous learning and development, we empower them to effectively serve the needs of Mainers.”

Brown holds a Master of Business Administration with a concentration in Human Resources from Thomas College and a Bachelor of Science with a minor in Human Resources from University of Maine Augusta.

Chief Information Officer: Bert Audette

Bert Audette has served as Chief Information Officer at FAME since September of 2022. Prior to joining FAME, Bert held similar positions at Eastern Maine Community College and at Unity College, where he was responsible for IT strategy and service delivery, and also led transformational technology initiatives.

“I’m excited to establish the enterprise architecture that will carry FAME forward into the future and enable us to continue to deliver on our goals.”

Audette holds a Master of Business Administration and a Bachelor of Science from Thomas College.

The Finance Authority of Maine (FAME) is a quasi-independent state agency whose mission is to enrich business and educational outcomes through relevant, timely financial support to Maine’s people. FAME’s vision is a Maine where all people have access to improved economic outcomes through business growth and education attainment. To learn more about FAME, please visit [www.fame-maine.com](http://www.fame-maine.com).

**MAINE** — Fontaine Family – The Real Estate Leader® is proud to welcome Tricia Curit to its award-winning Auburn team!

With deep roots across Southern and Central Maine, Tricia brings a strong connection to the communities we proudly serve.

Tricia grew up in Portland, Freeport, Lisbon, and South Portland, and now resides in both Monmouth and Windham. A graduate of Freeport High School, she continued her education at Andover College in Portland, where she studied accounting. Her professional background includes extensive experience in HR, payroll, finance, and HRIS—skills that contribute to her strong attention to detail and exceptional client care.

Family is at the heart of everything Tricia does. She has been married to her husband, Scot, since 1992. Scot has spent over 30 years with Pape Chevrolet, and together they’ve raised two sons, Aaron and Ryan, who have blessed them with four grandchildren—Olivia, Ella, Rowan, and Cora—and two beloved daughters, Marissa and Starr. Their family also includes four cherished fur babies.

Outside of work, Tricia enjoys an active and adventurous lifestyle. She and her family love going on cruises, soaking up sunny days on their pontoon boat, snowmobiling in the winter, and 4-wheeling on their side-by-side during the spring and fall seasons. Above all, they cherish time spent together at their family camp on Cochnewagon Lake in Monmouth.

Tricia’s strong family values, dedication, and lifelong connection to Maine make her a wonderful addition to the Fontaine team.

For real estate opportunities with Tricia Curit, she can be contacted by phone at (207)831-8142 or email [triciacurit@fontaine-team.com](mailto:triciacurit@fontaine-team.com).

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Fashion News

Tias Prom Project

Dedicated to providing dresses & confidence to young women

The Tatiana Morrell Foundation was created to honor the incredible spirit of Tatiana Morrell — a young woman whose light, kindness, and heart continue to inspire us every day. One of the ways we carry her legacy forward is through something truly special: collecting prom dresses for students who may not have the means to purchase one. Tatiana believed deeply in making others feel seen, valued, and beautiful — and this mission reflects that love.

Through every dress given, every smile shared, and every moment of confidence created — Tatiana’s spirit lives on. Thank you for being part of this journey with us. 🌟



The Story Behind Our Mission:  
To better understand our mission, you must understand our reasoning:  
Tia lived with a heart led by kindness and intuition. When she noticed a new student struggling, she stepped in to make a difference—providing her with a beautiful dress and arranging for her mother to do her hair and makeup. That simple act of love gave the girl, who never imagined attending such an event, the night of her life.

Tia believed every young woman should feel confident, radiant, and celebrated during life’s special moments. In her honor, we are dedicated to continuing that mission—ensuring that no girl misses out on the magic of prom, homecoming, or a school dance because of financial hardship.

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# Seniors Not Acting Their Age

## A Rehab Hike in Great Wass Island Preserve

The origin of the idiom “every cloud has a silver lining” is usually attributed to English Poet John Milton. Whatever the source, the optimistic advice is a viewpoint I subscribe to.

At present, I find it difficult to be cheery and upbeat while recuperating from knee replacement surgery. The daily repetitive regime of physical therapy, rehab walks, and icing with only minimal perceptible progress doesn’t lend itself to positive thinking. However, on an objective level, I realize that if I scrupulously follow the rehab protocol, I will probably regain effective use of my knee.

My wife, Nancy, proposed a more immediate silver lining. She suggested taking a short vacation in Washington County where we could complete some scenic coastal rehab hikes. Since we love the spectacular Downeast coastline, her recommendation seemed like a marvelous idea.

After a little research, we found a three-day stretch of good fall weather and several interesting hikes that appeared to be within my recovery limitations. The first was a trail system in Great Wass Island Preserve near Beals.

My only experience with Great Wass Island was sea kayaking around the island with a group of friends about a decade ago. The substantial island extends farther out into the

ocean than any other land mass in eastern Maine. Unknown to us at the time, a significant storm in the central Atlantic was causing sizeable offshore waves. We had a white knuckle paddle rounding the outside of Great Wass. The prospect of a hike seemed like a much more benign adventure.

The waters of the Gulf of Maine and the Bay of Fundy meet, and sometimes collide, near Great Wass Island. The result is a unique oceanic climate that likely explains the rugged coastline and the presence of several rare plants tolerant of extreme conditions. The location may also provide at least a partial explanation for our sea kayak misadventure.

The Nature Conservancy acquired Great Wass Island Preserve in 1978 and has established a 4.5-mile loop trail in the northern part of the island. The hike consists of three named trails: Mud Hole, Shoreline and Little Cape Point. After studying the trail descriptions, we decided that Mud Hole Trail was the best option given my rehab constraints. A partial exploration of the Shoreline Trail, which reputedly had the most spectacular views on the loop, was also a possibility.

To reach the preserve, we drove to Jonesport, crossed the Beals Island Bridge over Moosabec Reach and entered Beals. Once on the island, we followed Bay View Drive

and then Black Duck Cove Road to a parking area on the left.

A kiosk at the trail-head provides a large map and some very helpful information. We had printed an online trail map in advance and found it quite useful.

We followed a relatively flat trail with some log bridge work in a predominantly conifer forest for a short distance to a junction for the loop trail. A right turn marks the beginning of Little Cape Point Trail. Angling left onto narrow Mud Hole Trail, we progressed over more log bridges before climbing steeply over a series of twisting ledges to a sparsely wooded plateau.

The fall colors were brilliant as we proceeded northerly on a winding bedrock surface. After some easy hiking, we connected with the shore of a long attenuated cove called Mud Hole where a sign indicated we had traveled .4-mile from the parking area and Shoreline Trail was another .8-mile east.

We followed the rolling trail along the coast of Mud Hole. At one observation point, we could see the end of a peninsula on the opposite shore, an indication that Shoreline Trail was close.

Shortly after, we emerged onto the spectacular open ledges of Shoreline Trail. Unlike my last visit to the island, the seas were perfectly calm.

Shoreline Trail continues on unmarked ledges and huge boulders for 1.1 miles to Little Cape Point. Our trek ended when steep boulder scrambling was required. After lingering to enjoy the marvelous views, we took our time on the return.

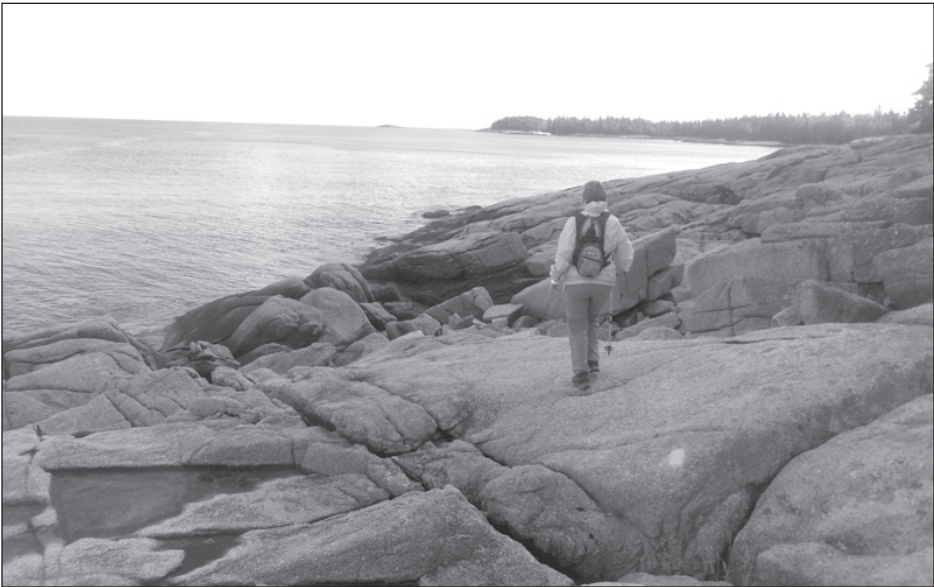
More interesting hikes are planned in the coming days. My book, Maine Al

Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine narrates treks on the best mountain hikes in Maine and backpacking trips in Baxter State Park and over the Saddleback Mountain Range.

The author of “The Great Mars Hill Bank Robbery” and “Mountains for Mortals – New England,” Ron Chase resides in Topsham. His latest book, “The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine” will soon be released by North Country Press. Visit his website at [www.ronchase-outdoors.com](http://www.ronchase-outdoors.com) or he can be reached at [ronchaseoutdoors@comcast.net](mailto:ronchaseoutdoors@comcast.net)



The rehab hike ends on Shoreline Trail



A hiker reaches spectacular Shoreline Trail



Brilliant fall colors were found in Great Wass Island Preserve

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# Visit Wiscasset Marketfest this weekend for seasonal fun

**WISCASSET, ME** – Wiscasset Holiday Marketfest is a shopping extravaganza for gifts and personal luxuries, but Marketfest is also a destination for seasonal activities to enjoy amidst the shopping hoopla. Have kids? Bring them along. To get in a holiday frame-of-mind, Marketfest is the place to go.

On Friday, Dec. 5, Marketfest offers off-season, self-guided tours of the Nickels-Sortwell House, a Historic New England property, ornamented beautifully in greens and seasonal splendor. Next door, in the house's barn, is the artisan shop where visitors will find a display of wreaths decorated by local businesses. Be inspired and cast a vote for People's Choice. Enjoy tastings through the day of honey or chocolate or cookies. Both locations are open all weekend.

In the early evening, a Merry and Bright Light Parade of cars, trucks, and other vehicles winds through the Village to announce the season with glowing gusto and to escort Santa to his Village workshop. Candy canes and cocoa, live sheep, food options, and a fire pit for s'mores make the evening warm and toasty.

Saturday, Dec. 6, brings Woodfield Farm's horse-drawn wagon to the Village. Hop on board for a unique way to experience the Village. Use the wagon as a free shuttle to your next destination or just sit back, enjoy the ride, and wave to the smiling onlookers.

Kids will appreciate the Children's Christmas Sale at the Wiscasset Public Library, a special shopping time just for them. The Friends of the Library assist children as they examine and purchase just right gifts for those they love.

On this day, the Heart 'n Soul Quartet roams the Village singing songs of the season while ice artist, Tim Pierce, carves live on the sidewalk leaving an icy, sparkling photo opp. behind.

Ah, the Christmas Cookie Challenge! Watch as judges sample the tasty submissions and critique the crumble and presentation. These foodie pros take their task to heart as they confer and determine best in show. Once the winner has been congratulated, lucky onlookers get to purchase a few for their own taste testing, with proceeds supporting Feed Our Scholars.

The town's Christmas Tree Lighting caps the day. As the sun sets, a chorus of school children sings songs of the season on the Common and invites a visit from Santa.

Sunday, Dec. 7, is the final day of Marketfest with one last chance to climb aboard the horse-drawn wagon for free rides around the Village. The historic Nickels Sortwell House, in its seasonal finery, is open for tours, for a modest fee, for one last day. The barn, transformed into an artisan gift shop, hosts a display of decorated wreaths and invites spectators, for the last time, to vote for their People's Choice.

Participating Village shops have been offering a free raffle for dining all weekend, with no purchase necessary, to win a \$100 gift certificate to a local restaurant. Today is the last chance to win.

The details for these and more Wiscasset Holiday Marketfest activities can be found on [www.WiscassetHolidayMarketfest.com](http://www.WiscassetHolidayMarketfest.com).

The sponsors who make Marketfest possible are Lead Sponsor Ames True Value Supply; Major Sponsors Carriage House Gardens, First Federal Savings, First National Bank, J. Edward Knight Insurance, Midcoast Federal Credit Union, Red's Eats, Rock Paper Scissors, Sherri Dunbar/Tim Dunham Realty, Water Street Kitchen & Bar, and Wiscasset Ford; with additional support from AEkeir Brewing, Bradbury Art & Antiques, Fiction Bookshop, M.W. Sewall, Red Bull Antiques, Sprague's Lobster, and The Bird Gallery.

Wiscasset Holiday Marketfest is a partnership between Wiscasset Creative Alliance and Wiscasset Area Chamber of Commerce.



Shoppers in the Holiday Gift Shop, located in the Nickels-Sortwell House barn on Federal St., take a look at the display of wreath, decorated by local businesses, before casting a ballot for their People's Choice. Wreaths will be on display during Wiscasset Holiday Marketfest, Dec. 5-7, and then given to local long-term care facilities. (Lucia Droby photo)



In 2024, Christmas Cookie Challenge judges, (l to r) Lily Burt, Daphne Cromwell, and Shane McCarthy confer before announcing the winning cookie. In 2025, home bakers will be competing on Saturday, Dec. 6, during Wiscasset Holiday Marketfest, and hosted by AEkeir Taproom, 111 Main St. (Bob Bond photo)

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

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# Arts & Entertainment

## Vivid Motion Dance presents Holly Jolly Follies

**PORTLAND, ME** – Mark your calendars - Portland’s longest running burlesque tradition is bringing a whole new show to town! Twenty-two years ago, Vivid Motion Dance brought their first burlesque show to Portland. And on Friday, December 12, the innovative and kinda quirky dance company opens its sassiest and classiest performance yet, Holly Jolly Follies!

Vivid Motion Dance’s latest original production follows an intrepid worker attempting to deliver all their packages in time for the holidays ~ and inadvertently landing themselves in fun and frisky situations. The show’s dirty and flirty dance numbers are set to a mix of holiday classics, retro 90s faves, and pop tunes from stars Daddy Yankee, Christina Aguilera, Niall Horan, and Madonna. Co-directed by Jessica Jane Means & MZ

and with live mixes from DJ Thunder (Bruce Tracy), you’re sure to discover all new ways to be both naughty and nice this holiday season.

Who will win the warehouse worker dance-off? Will Mariah make an appearance? How sexy can a shovel be? Will our Tom-Cat steal the show? Find out this December at Holly Jolly Follies!

**TICKET AND PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

**WHO:** Vivid Motion Dance, Portland’s innovative and kinda quirky dance company

**WHAT:** Holly Jolly Follies

**WHEN:** 7:30-9:30, December 12-14 & 18-20, 2025

**WHERE:** The Hill Arts, 76 Congress Street, Portland

**Discount** 10%:  
**Groups of 10+ use code** 10%25

This adults-only show opens at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, December 12 at The Hill Arts on Munjoy Hill in Portland ME. Performances will run through Saturday, December 20. Tickets are available at [vividmotiondance.org](http://vividmotiondance.org) or at [thehillarts.me](http://thehillarts.me). Lobby doors open one hour to show time. Adults (18+): \$25 advance / \$35 at the door

]Thursday, December 11 at 7:30pm is our purely donation based, Pay-As-You-Wish performance. Please RSVP to [tickets@vividmotion.org](mailto:tickets@vividmotion.org)

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

## USM Art Gallery presents Of Sibyls and Source

**PORTLAND, ME** – Of Sibyls and Source: Ranges and Ruptures is an exhibition of sculpture, textiles, video, and live performances that investigates ideas surrounding oracles, community, mapping, landscape, and geo-mythic space.

Moving through the world as artists, we become strangers and pilgrims in the broad sense, separated from home or daily life and traversing physical and cultural landscapes. These new loca-

tions awaken a sense of place when we are out-of-place. Sibyls, or oracles, are born of a rupture, an opening in the earth that speaks to something profound that we may feel intensely, but cannot fully understand.

Of Sibyls and Source: Ranges and Ruptures is a collection of work made in dialogue with the sites of Monti Sibillini National Park in Umbria, Italy, and Acadia National Park in Maine. These creative gestures tenderly explore the

possibility in timespace for mountains to touch, for springs to flow into each other, and for horizons to merge.

Join us in celebrating the opening reception for Of Sibyls and Souce on

Thursday, February 5, 2026, from 5:30 – 7:30 pm

At the Crewe Center for the Arts, 111 Bedford Street, Portland, ME 04101.

The event is open to attendees of all ages, free of charge.

## \$5.3M for local TRIO Student Support Services grants

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – U.S. Senator Susan Collins, the co-chair of the bipartisan Congressional TRIO Caucus, announced that the Department of Education has awarded a total of \$5,354,951 in TRIO Student Support Services grants to 11 Maine colleges and universities. These grants are given to colleges and universities to improve the retention and graduation rates of first-generation and low-income college students. The announcement comes after Senator Collins, Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, questioned Secretary of Education Linda McMahon on the proposed elimination of TRIO programs at an Appropriations hearing to review the Fiscal Year 2026

budget request for the U.S. Department of Education.

“I have seen the lives of countless first-generation and low-income students, not only in Maine, but across the country, changed by the TRIO program. I am glad the Secretary of Education followed through on the commitment she made to me at our Appropriations hearing to disburse these grants, and I will continue to urge the Administration to support this critical investment into our students and schools,” said Senator Collins.

The following Maine colleges and universities received Student Support Services grants:

University of Maine at Augusta - \$566,531

University of Maine at Farmington - \$352,530

Kennebec Valley Community College - \$352,531

Southern Maine Community College - \$544,728

University of Maine at Presque Isle - \$746,168

University of Maine - \$694,807

Central Maine Community College - \$620,879

Eastern Maine Community College - \$272,364

University of Maine at Fort Kent - \$356,773

University of Southern Maine - \$544,728

Washington County Community College - \$302,912

In June, Senator Collins announced the Department of Education’s release of TRIO Upward Bound Grants for Maine following her urging.

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# A Christmas Carol

adapted by Christopher Schario

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



# Bissell Brothers celebrates 8 years, \$111K in donations

**PORTLAND, ME** – Maine’s acclaimed craft brewery, Bissell Brothers, is proud to launch its eighth annual Four Weeks of Giving initiative, a month-long program dedicated to supporting Maine-based nonprofits during the holiday season. Since the program began in 2017, Bissell Brothers has donated \$111,000 to community organizations across the state, raised entirely through 100% of their draft beer sales on select Sundays each December.

What started as a simple idea – blending community initiative with the camaraderie of the holidays – has grown into a meaningful annual tradition for the brewery. Each year, Bissell Brothers selects four mission-driven organizations serving communities across Maine. The nonprofits chosen vary from year to year and aim to represent a broad range of causes statewide. On their designated Sunday, each organization is invited to table in the Bissell Brothers’ taproom, giving guests the opportunity to learn more about their work, raise extra funds, and build awareness. Additionally, monetary donations will be accepted throughout the duration of this year’s Four Weeks of Giving. Every draft beer purchased on each Sunday helps their goal towards a bigger donation.

This year’s Four Weeks of Giving lineup features four organizations serving wildlife, community empowerment, youth outdoor access, and food security:

Week 1 / Sunday Nov. 30: Skybird Wildlife Center

Week 2 / Sunday Dec. 7: Presente! Maine

Week 3 / Sunday Dec. 14: Teens to Trails

Week 4 / Sun. Dec 21: Wayside Food Programs

To further support Wayside, and in response to recent funding cuts affecting food aid programs, Bissell Brothers held an internal food drive and fundraising effort from November 6-19, collecting a pallet’s worth of donations.

The Four Weeks of Giving program reflects a long-standing belief at Bissell Brothers that local businesses should play an active role in giving back to the communities that support them. The initiative has become a cornerstone of the brewery’s December calendar, rallying taproom guests, staff, and partner organizations around a shared goal of year-end support.

“Four Weeks of Giving started as a way for us to show appreciation for the community that allows us to do what we do,” said Hester Bissell, Stewardship Coordinator and Co-Owner of Bissell Brothers. “Eight years later, it’s grown into one of the most meaningful parts of our year. We’re honored to uplift these organizations and help support the essential work they do across Maine, especially during the holiday season.”

Join Bissell Brothers in giving back this holiday season:

Gather For Good Every draft pour enjoyed at Bissell Brothers on Sundays between Nov. 24 and Dec. 21 directly contributes to the four featured nonprofits.

Support Local Non-Profits Learn more from each organization as they table in the taproom on their highlighted Sunday.

Keep the Momentum Going Monetary donations for the effort will remain active throughout the month every day of the week, extending opportunities to give.

Guests are invited to participate throughout the month at the brewery’s taproom on Thompson’s Point in Portland, Maine.

**QUICK FACTS:**

Four Weeks of Giving launched in 2017

\$111,000 donated to Maine nonprofits since the program’s inception

100% of Sunday draft sales (plus any additional monetary donations) are tallied each week to be split evenly amongst each organization

Additional internal food drive for Wayside gathered a pallet’s worth of donations

2025 Beneficiaries: Skybird Wildlife Center, Presente! Maine, Teens to Trails, and Wayside Food Programs

# Contractors honor safety performance, award recipients



**FREEPORT, ME** – The Associated General Contractors of Maine (AGC Maine) hosted its annual Safety Awards on Wednesday, November 19th at the Hilton Garden Inn in Freeport, bringing together more than 150 contractors, industry professionals, and safety leaders to celebrate the construction industry’s exceptional commitment to safety during the 2024 season.

The event recognized Maine contractors who earned National AGC Safety Awards (NASA) for maintaining exemplary safety records. Established in 1991, the NASA program allows AGC members nationwide to benchmark their safety performance and honors firms with industry-leading safety results based on company size and construction type.

AGC Maine was also honored, receiving a National AGC Chapter Safety Award from AGC of America in the 126–250 general contractor members category. The Chapter Safety Award recognizes AGC Chapters with strong member participation and outstanding collective safety performance.

This year’s Safety Awards program featured keynote speaker Kevin Cannon, CSP, ARM, Senior Director of Safety, Health, and Risk Management at the Associated General Contractors of America. With 27 years of experience in safety and health, including 19 years in construction, Cannon provided attendees with a comprehensive overview of regulatory/deregulatory activity and ongoing initiatives impacting the industry.

During his 16-year tenure at AGC of America, Cannon has served as the organization’s primary liaison on federal safety and health regulations, offering expert guidance on regulatory issues affecting the construction industry. His portfolio has recently expanded to include oversight of broader risk management challenges such as liability, insurance, and enterprise-level risk exposure. Cannon has also served on the Advisory Committee on Construction Safety and Health (ACCSH) from 2011 to 2025 and received the Distinguished Service to Safety Award (DSSA) - the National Safety Council’s highest honor - in 2025.

“We are incredibly proud to recognize the contractors who have demonstrated exemplary safety performance over the past year. Their dedication to protecting their teams, strengthening safety culture, and setting the standard for excellence in our industry is truly commendable. At AGC Maine, safety is foundational to everything we do - from training and advocacy to collaboration with state and federal partners. We congratulate this year’s National AGC Safety Award recipients and reaffirm our commitment to supporting a safer, stronger construction industry for all,” said Kelly Flagg, Executive Director of AGC Maine.

AGC Maine extends its appreciation to all participating members and partners who contributed to another successful year of promoting safety leadership across the state’s construction sector.

We want to hear from you!  
Please submit your letter to the editor by 5pm on Friday for next weeks edition.

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**November 8 & 9**

**Annual Makers Market Christmas Arts & Crafts Show**  
South Portland High School– 637 Highland Ave.  
**November 15 & 16**

**Santas Coming to Town Arts & Craft Show**  
Westbrook National Guard Armory– 120 Stroudwater St., Westbrook  
**November 22 & 23**

**46th Annual Thanksgiving Weekend Christmas in New England Arts and Craft Show**  
Augusta Civic Center– 76 Community Drive, Augusta  
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# Maine Music Society Chorale presents Beneath the Winter Stars



**LEWISTON, ME** – The Maine Music Society Chorale, directed by Dr. Richard Nickerson, is thrilled to announce its upcoming holiday concert, *Beneath the Winter Stars*, to be held on Saturday, December 13, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. and Sunday, December 14, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. at the Franco Center in Lewiston.

Come usher in the holiday season with this family friendly concert, celebrating time-held traditions and creating new ones. Featured works this year are John Rutter’s

Magnificat and Stars by Ēriks Ešēvalds, as well as a wonderful blend of timeless holiday music.

As part of the celebration, the audience will be invited to join the Chorale in a traditional holiday sing-along, adding to the joy and community spirit of the season.

The 80+ volunteer singers from the Lewiston-Auburn area, under the direction of Artistic Director Richard Nickerson and accompanied by collaborative pianist Randy Day, have been rehearsing for weeks to

deliver a performance that promises to inspire and uplift. With a perfect mix of festive traditions and new holiday gems, *Beneath the Winter Stars* will surely fill the Franco Center with the warmth, wonder, and excitement of the season.

**Ticket Information:**  
Tickets are available for purchase online at [www.mainemusicsociety.org](http://www.mainemusicsociety.org) or by calling the MMS office at 207-333-3386. We encourage you to buy your tickets in advance to secure your seats for this highly anticipated event.

# NSB makes surprise \$2K donation to New Beginnings in Lewiston

**LEWISTON, ME** – Representatives from Norway Savings Bank were thrilled to surprise the hard-working staff and volunteers at New Beginnings in Lewiston with a check for \$2,000 this week (picture attached, caption below), part of NSB’s “Holiday Helping Hands” campaign of providing many local nonprofits with an extra boost during the season of giving.

New Beginnings operates a 24-hour youth shelter named Marian’s Place on 491 Main Street, offers additional supportive housing, and sponsors a street outreach team to help youth from throughout Maine find safety. The staff provides a warm welcome to youth (ages 10-21), encouragement for family mediation, and case management. The organization helps develop life skills through education



**Pictured (L to R):** Ryan Thompson, Commercial Loan Officer VP at NSB; Chris Bicknell, Executive Director of New Beginnings; Sabrina Nadeau, Personal Banker at NSB; Lin Dehetre, Branch Manager VP at NSB; Zackary Lavoie, Director of Development and Community Relations for New Beginnings.

and employment support and provides prevention services to curb the risk of homelessness.

“Norway Savings Bank’s ongoing investment helps ensure that 24 hours per day and 365 days a year, young people can find a friendly face, kind words, a hot meal, and a warm, safe place to sleep when they have nowhere else to go,” said Chris Bicknell, Executive Director of New Begin-

nings. “We’re thankful for this help in supporting youth in meeting urgent needs and helping them improve their long-term prospects.”

New Beginnings has a 24-hour helpline for anyone in need of assistance at 207-795-4070. To learn more about the organization, including the many ways in which you can help New Beginnings with its mission, visit [www.newbeginmaine.org](http://www.newbeginmaine.org).

# Anchour named #1 Best Place to Work in Maine

**LEWISTON, ME** – A glass award reads Best Places to Work in ME 2025, #1 Small Employer Category (15-49 U.S. Employees), Anchour, set on a windowsill with autumn trees in the background.

Anchour, a Maine-based branding and marketing agency, has been named the #1 Best Place to Work in Maine in the small business category (15–49 employees) in 2025, as recognized by Best Companies Group and the Maine State Council of the Society for Human Resource Management.

This recognition highlights more than a great workplace—it affirms Anchour’s belief that the best brand work starts with culture. Known for helping consumer, retail, and purpose-driven brands evolve through strategy, storytelling, and design, Anchour is proud to lead by example.

“We built Anchour to be the kind of place we’d want to work at—and the kind of agency we’d want to hire,” said Josh Pritchard, Partner and President. “That means building trust, leading with care and transparency, and always pushing for great



work without burning out the people behind it.”

Best Places to Work in Maine is a research-based program that evaluates companies through both their internal practices and direct employee feedback. The result: a ranked list of employers who foster strong cultures, support growth, and build meaningful environments for their teams.

As an award-winning branding agency in Maine, Anchour has seen steady growth—expanding its national client roster, launching standout campaigns, and evolving legacy brands with clarity and creativity. But internally, success still comes down to one thing: people.

“We know that our

work is only as strong as the team behind it,” said Aimee Labbe, Vice President of Client Service. “We are always striving to create an environment where team members feel empowered, valued, and engaged. This award is a powerful reflection of that.”

Maine’s creative and technology sectors have become vital contributors to the state’s economy—fueled by a growing network of high-performing businesses that balance innovation with Maine’s signature craftsmanship and community values. Anchour’s recognition as one of the state’s best workplaces underscores that momentum and highlights the region’s expanding role in the national creative economy.

# St. Mary’s Health System earns ‘A’ Hospital Safety Grade

**MAINE** - St. Mary’s Health System earned an “A” Hospital Safety Grade from The Leapfrog Group, an independent national nonprofit watchdog focused on patient safety. Leapfrog assigns an “A,” “B,” “C,” “D” or “F” grade to general hospitals across the country using evidence-based measures of patient safety focused exclusively on errors, accidents, injuries and infections. St. Mary’s is one of only six hospitals in Maine to receive an ‘A’ this fall.

The grade is based on national data, expert review and evidence-based standards that measure how well hospitals protect patients throughout their care. Areas reviewed include safe medication practices, infection prevention, communication among clinical teams and the systems hospitals use to reduce preventable harm. The ‘A’ rating reflects strong performance across these measures and sustained attention to patient safety.

The Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade stands as the only hospital ratings program focused solely on preventable medical errors and injuries. The methodology is peer reviewed fully transparent and free to the public. Grades are updated twice each year in the spring and fall.

More information about St. Mary’s Hospital Safety Grade and resources that support safe care can be found at [HospitalSafetyGrade.org](http://HospitalSafetyGrade.org).

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**ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**  
Dr. Richard Nickerson

**BENEATH the Winter Stars**

Saturday, Dec. 13 • 7:00pm  
Sunday, Dec. 14 • 2:00pm  
FRANCO CENTER • LEWISTON

Celebrate the season with this family-friendly holiday concert featuring John Rutter’s *Magnificat* and *Stars* by Ēriks Ešēvalds. The program will also include familiar works and the annual sing-along to bring out the memories, spirit, and magic of the holiday season.

**EVENT SPONSORS:**

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# Corporate Partners donates 25 million meals

AUBURN, ME – Corporate Partners for a Hunger-Free Maine is a group of socially responsible businesses and corporate foundations that support Good Shepherd Food Bank of Maine’s mission through monetary gifts and/or food donations. With support from these like-minded businesses, the Food Bank is able to provide nutritious meals to neighbors facing food insecurity and ensure that everyone in Maine has access to the healthy food they need to thrive.

In 2024, 116 Corporate Partners helped provide more than 25 million meals to neighbors across the state. The Food Bank measures the impact in meals to honor the various ways Corporate Partners contribute.

“As we continue to see rates of hunger rise, Corporate Partners show their dedication to food security in Maine by giving generously and finding unique ways to further their support,” stated Georgia Jenkins, Corporate and Foundation Relations Officer. “With hunger currently at a ten-year high and our funding at a five-year low, partnership with Maine’s business community is more important than ever”

On April 2, Good Shepherd Food Bank held a breakfast for Corporate Partners at the Holiday Inn by the Bay. Heather Paquette, President of Good Shepherd Food Bank, Robin McCarthy, Chief Advancement Officer, and Shannon Coffin,

Vice President of Community Partnerships led a discussion about the state of hunger in Maine and the importance of the organization’s Corporate Partners.

The Food Bank also recognizes its Transformational Partner, Hannaford Supermarkets, for their exceptional partnership and commitment to Mainers experiencing food insecurity. In the last four years, Hannaford Supermarkets donated over 50 million meals in the combined value of monetary gifts, as well as food donations through their retail stores and their product recovery center.

“Hannaford has been with us since the very beginning and is one of our closest partners, with their relationship spanning nearly every department of the organization. Simply put, they are instrumental in our work and that of our network of community partners,” said Jenkins.

“The impact of Good Shepherd Food Bank on communities throughout our state is truly unmatched,” said Sherri Stevens, Community Impact Manager at Hannaford Supermarkets. “At Hannaford, we’re honored by this recognition and proud to support Good Shepherd’s mission to combat food insecurity by expanding access to the fresh, nutritious food that families need to thrive. We’re deeply committed to this partnership as we work together to end hunger in Maine.”

Good Shepherd Food

Bank’s 2024 Transformational, Visionary, and Leadership level Corporate Partners for a Hunger-Free Maine are:

Transformational Partner  
Hannaford Supermarkets donated the equivalent of more than 11 million meals through food and monetary donations in 2024.

Visionary Partners  
Donated the equivalent of 200,000+ meals in 2024

Ahold USA  
BJ’s  
New Balance Foundation  
NEWS CENTER Maine  
Poland Spring Water Co.  
Sam’s Club  
Shaw’s Supermarkets  
Sysco of Northern New England  
Target  
Trader Joe’s  
Walmart

Leadership Partners  
Donated the equivalent of 100,000+ meals in 2024

Albertsons Companies  
Foundation  
Dunkin’ Joy in Childhood Foundation  
Bimbo Bakeries USA  
Maine Credit Unions’ Campaign for Ending Hunger

Oakhurst Dairy  
Tyson Foods  
Viking Lumber  
Whole Foods Market

To learn more about corporate partnership, contact Georgia Jenkins, Corporate and Foundation Relations Officer, at [gjenkins@gsfb.org](mailto:gjenkins@gsfb.org).

# Compassion for patient earns CMMC nurse DAISY Award



LEWISTON, ME – Central Maine Healthcare has a new DAISY Award recipient. It is Kaylee McGowan, BSN, of Farmington, who works in medical and surgical oncology at CMMC.

The DAISY Award is an international program that recognizes nurses for their compassionate care and the difference they make in patients’ lives. Patients, their families, visitors, physicians and other

team members can nominate a nurse for the award.

Kaylee was nominated by Asha Mohamed, MD. Dr. Mohamed’s nomination letter is below:

“Kaylee cared for a patient who was a ward of the state with an attentiveness that went far beyond duty. Though he could only vaguely describe his symptoms, she listened intently and trusted her instincts when something did not feel right. Her work,

rooted in deep compassion, guided the team to escalate his care in a timely manner. Because of her persistence and unwavering advocacy, he was given the dignity of receiving the higher level of care he needed. Though he ultimately passed away, her fierce dedication ensured that he was not overlooked and that his voice—quiet as it was—was heard. She exemplifies the heart of nursing: advocacy.”

# EPA completes reviews at Maine Superfund sites

MAINE – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has fulfilled its statutory obligation and completed required comprehensive site cleanup reviews, known as “five-year reviews,” for five Superfund sites on the National Priorities List across Maine during the 2025 Fiscal Year.

As required by law, EPA conducts reviews at Superfund sites after cleanup remedies have

been implemented every five years. This comprehensive review of previous work helps ensure that EPA continues to evaluate the performance of cleanup efforts and determines whether any further action to protect human health or the environment is required.

The five-year review of each of these sites, which are available on EPA’s website, concluded that the remedies continue

to effectively protect human health and the environment and made recommendations for follow up actions where needed.

Completed Maine Five Year Reviews in Fiscal Year 2025:

Brunswick Naval Air Station, Brunswick, Maine  
Eastland Woolen Mill, Corinna, Maine  
Loring Air Force Base, Limestone, Maine  
Pinette’s Salvage

See EPA, page 14

## LEGAL NOTICE

### PETITION FOR A PARDON STATE OF MAINE

Augusta, January 15, 2026 - Notice is hereby given that a Petition for a Pardon for Katie R. Smith who was convicted of the crimes Theft by Unauthorized Taking or Transfer (E) Theft by Unauthorized Taking or Transfer (E)Theft by Unauthorized Taking or Transfer (E) PENCDCR-2013-00546, and Theft by Unauthorized Taking(C) Falsifying Physical Evidence (D) PENCDCR-2015-30129 is now pending before the Governor and a hearing will be conducted on Thursday January 15, 2026, at 9 A.M. Please visit the following link for Hearing details: <https://www.maine.gov/corrections/pardonboard>

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



Children's Room Renovation



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CHILL YOGA

# Chill Yoga Fest

Saturday, December 13th  
9:30am - 1:30pm

\$40 for all 4 classes or \$18 per individual class


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# Pre-apprenticeship construction programs launch statewide

**AUGUSTA, ME –** The Maine Community College System (MCCS) and The Associated General Contractors of Maine (AGC Maine) are partnering to launch a four-week, hands-on construction training program across the state to prepare Maine adults for meaningful careers in the construction trades.

The Maine Construction Academy Immersion Programs, managed by AGC Maine and funded by MCCS’s Harold Alfond Center for the Advancement of Maine’s Workforce, will launch next year at five community colleges. A certified pre-apprenticeship program, students receive hands-on training, industry-recognized credentials, and direct connections to employers. Graduates will be qualified to enter high-value registered apprenticeships or pursue certificate or degree programs to advance along career pathways within Maine’s growing construction industry.

The Maine Construction Academy Immersion Programs will launch at:

Central Maine Community College (CMCC) in Auburn, on March 3, 2026

Northern Maine Community College (NMCC) in Presque Isle, on March 16, 2026

Kennebec Valley Community College (KVCC) in Fairfield, on May 11, 2026

Eastern Maine Community College (EMCC) in Bangor, on May 13, 2026

Washington County Community College (WCCC) in Calais, on May 18, 2026

Funding from the Alfond Center comes from private philanthropic support and Maine Jobs and Recovery Plan funding. The program will be offered at no cost to trainees.

“We are proud to partner with AGC Maine to offer such a streamlined, low-barrier program that not only fast-tracks the



number of skilled workers into Maine’s construction industry, it creates a way for graduates to move seamlessly into apprenticeships or ongoing training to launch their construction careers. Partnerships like this between employers and the Harold Alfond Center for the Advancement of Maine’s Workforce are critical to scaling opportunities and strengthening Maine’s talent pipeline,” said MCCS Chief Workforce Development Officer Dan Belyea.

This strategic partnership is a result of a statewide Construction Industry Workforce Partnership launched in March 2025 by the Alfond Center that includes over 50 stakeholders from the construction industry, trade associations, union, education, and workforce development systems. The group collaborates to develop workforce training strategies to effectively and efficiently strengthen the skilled construction and trades workforce. (10/12/25 press release). The launch of the Maine Construction Academy Immersion Program across five community colleges is just one of the strategies developed to address workforce shortages in Maine’s construction industry. Other programs under development include new short-term training programs in carpentry, heavy equipment operation, and HVAC skills. For more information on construction and trades programs at the community colleges, visit this page: Construction Career Training in Maine

“This partnership represents an exciting

step forward for Maine’s construction industry and workforce development efforts,” said Kelly Flagg, Executive Director of AGC Maine. “The Maine Construction Academy Immersion Program gives participants a real-world introduction to the trades while connecting them directly to employers ready to hire. Together with the Maine Community College System and The Harold Alfond Center for the Advancement of Maine’s Workforce, we’re opening doors to rewarding, high-demand careers and helping to build the skilled workforce our state needs.”

Joan Dolan, Director of Apprenticeship & Strategic Partnerships at the Maine Department of Labor, shared her support for the initiative:

“The Maine Department of Labor is proud to support the Maine Construction Academy as a certified pre-apprenticeship program that opens doors to meaningful careers in the skilled trades. Through this partnership with the Associated General Contractors of Maine, the Harold Alfond Center for the Advancement of Maine’s Workforce, and the Maine Community College System, we are building stronger pathways into registered apprenticeship—and a stronger future for Maine’s workforce.”

The Maine Construction Academy Immersion Program reflects a shared commitment among AGC Maine, MCCS, and the Alfond Center to strengthen Maine’s workforce pipeline, expand access to quality training, and support the next generation of construction professionals.

# MAA leads effort to clean up Mount Desert Island

**GARDINER, ME –** The Maine Aquaculture Association (MAA) recently partnered with members of the aquaculture, fishing and conservation communities, state regulators, and local businesses and residents in a collaborative effort to clean up abandoned aquaculture gear in the Mount Desert Narrows of Blue Hill Bay.

The cleanup took place between Sept. 9 and 17, 2025. The aquaculture equipment, which included buoys, nets, floats and moorings, was located in Great Cove near Bartlett Narrows and Harwood Island.

In use since the 1990s, the aquaculture equipment was most recently used for mussel farming. However, the gear hadn’t been used in years, and there were concerns about it being a navigational hazard and an eyesore.

Once the lease expired, MAA received permission from the Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) to coordinate an effort to clean up, repurpose, recycle or dispose of the dilapidated gear.

“A cleanup like this isn’t normally our responsibility, but we made a special exception for this site that fell into disrepair due to a series of unfortunate events,” said MAA Community Engagement Coordinator Katherine Lipp. “There were some holdups with the original contractor hired to do the job, and, as an industry, we believe that when these systems fail, we need



The Ocean Bay made one of several trips from Bartlett Narrows to Bass Harbor with a full load of debris.

to work together to solve the problem.”

Cooke USA, which farms Atlantic salmon in Downeast Maine and has the infrastructure, equipment, personnel and expertise needed for such a project, offered to take the lead on extracting the gear from Great Cove. (The gear was not owned by Cooke USA.)

The cleanup took eight days to complete. For Cooke USA, the effort involved 10 employees of New DHC, whose vessels service Cooke USA’s Maine Atlantic salmon aquaculture operations, and was led by New DHC Production Manager Frank Lank. New DHC’s 72-foot barge Ocean Bay traveled from its home port of Eastport, providing a “workspace” for the crew. A 24-foot skiff was also brought in to assist with the cleanup.

The cleanup also involved Bass Harbor Marine, Acadia Roll-Offs, B&A Trucking, local fishermen, the Town of Mount Desert and Maine Coast Heritage Trust.

In total, the crew removed seven 70-meter plastic rings, using chainsaws to disassemble 3,220 feet of pipe into manageable pieces that were donated to

an individual who’s repurposing the plastic. The crew also hauled off a total of 240 yards of debris. Cooke USA’s in-house diving team, which is certified to work with high-tension, heavy objects, play a key role in the removal of 12 granite blocks used as anchors on the seafloor.

Working from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m., the crew put in a total of nearly 750 hours of work. The cleanup cost approximately \$26,735, including labor, fuel, and recycling and disposal costs. Cooke USA absorbed 100 percent of the costs.

“Being productive contributors to Maine’s working waterfront and good stewards of the environment means stepping up and offering our services and expertise in a time of need, including cleaning up aquaculture gear that isn’t ours,” said Lank. “I’d like to thank the Maine Aquaculture Association for its leadership and for coordinating the effort. I’d especially like to thank our dedicated employees who helped remove all this gear from Great Cove. They deserve a lot of credit for their hard work, professionalism and commitment to safety on the water.”

## Cancer

Continued from page 2

trials closer to home for our patients in Maine and New Hampshire.

Established new Survivorship, Radiation Therapy programs

Launched the Center for Breast Health, enhancing the continuum of care for patients.

Formed key partnerships with Central Maine Healthcare and Northern Light Mercy Hospital, providing their communities with NECS-led medical oncology services.

Named one of Maine’s Best Places to Work for the past three consecutive years.

Dr. Battelli has a strong history of engaging with the community and helping to guide cancer-focused non-profits. She was a founding member of the Cancer Safety Net Foundation and currently serves on the board of the Snell Foundation.

“It has been a tremendous honor to serve as Board President and to witness the strength, compas-

sion, and innovation that define this organization,” said Dr. Battelli. “What makes NECS so special is the collaboration between our physicians, staff, and community partners—all united by a shared commitment to deliver the best possible care for our patients. I am incredibly proud of how far we’ve come and excited for what lies ahead.”

Dr. Battelli’s vision and steady leadership have helped guide NECS through a period of extraordinary growth and transformation—including our move to Rock Row, which represents a new era of collaboration, innovation, and patient-centered care – and we want to take this opportunity to thank her for her tireless commitment to improving the lives of those with cancer.

As we look to the future, NECS is proud to announce that Dr. Devon Evans will succeed Dr. Battelli as the new President of the Board of Directors. Dr. Evans, a Medical Oncologist and Hematologist, has been with NECS since

2007 and has served on the Executive Committee for many years. He also serves on the boards of the Maine Cancer Foundation and The New England Oncology Foundation, bringing both regional perspective and deep understanding of the opportunities ahead for our organization.

“I’m deeply grateful for Dr. Battelli’s leadership and the legacy of excellence she established,” said Dr. Evans. “NECS is a unique and inspiring organization—we are independent, innovative, mission-driven, and always focused on what’s best for our patients. I’m honored to help lead our continued growth as we expand access to high-quality cancer care across Maine and New Hampshire.”

Dr. Evans will assume the role of Board President effective January 1, 2026. With his leadership, NECS will continue to advance its mission as a physician-led, community-based cancer care provider dedicated to improving the lives of patients across Maine and New Hampshire.



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MaineHealth announces \$1.6M landmark gift

FAME welcomes new Director of Business

**PORTLAND, ME** – MaineHealth’s Center for Health Improvement today announced a groundbreaking \$1.6 million donation from Maine entrepreneur and impact activist David Evans Shaw to launch the SHAW Challenge, a comprehensive four-year initiative designed to transform how Maine communities address the youth mental health crisis.

As part of a larger effort to support youth mental health, Shaw provided additional funding to the Hearts of Pine Foundation to expand after-school wellness programming, building upon Hearts’ existing soccer impact programming, as well as support to the [University of New England for its Shaw Innovation Fellows Program](#) that will create new pathways for student innovators to contribute solutions to the youth mental health crisis.

The SHAW Challenge represents a bold departure from traditional crisis-response models, instead applying proven public health strategies to build mental wellness, resilience and supportive school environments across seven Maine school districts serving thousands of students.

“Maine’s children are our most precious resource, and they’re facing a mental health crisis that requires immediate, coordinated action,” said David Evans Shaw, founder of Black Point Group, IDEXX Laboratories and other successful organizations. “By investing in evidence-based programs through MaineHealth, grassroots community work through Hearts of Pine and empowering the next generation of innovators through the Shaw Innovation Fellows Program, we’re building a comprehensive approach that strengthens mental health awareness, resilience and wellbeing for every young person in our schools.”

Across the nation—and here in Maine—youth mental health has reached crisis levels. One in three Maine youth report feelings of persistent sadness or hopelessness, and one in five have seriously considered suicide. Youth mental health emerged as the top priority in the most recent Community Health Needs Assessment, that is used by hospital organizations to guide their investments in community well-being.

While many programs exist—such as mental health skill-building curricula and school-based counseling—schools have consistently expressed

the need for a coordinated ‘one-stop shop’ that organizes and integrates these efforts. The SHAW Challenge answers that call.

“The SHAW Challenge represents a turning point in how we respond to this crisis,” said Dr. Dora Anne Mills, Chief Health Improvement Officer at MaineHealth. “We’re taking a public health approach—not just reacting to crises, but proactively building resilience and skills, strengthening connections and improving mental wellbeing for all young people.”

Launching in January, the initiative will pursue five core goals using proven public health strategies across seven participating school districts:

Foundational Understanding: Facilitated conversations orienting youth and families to mental wellness

Social Infrastructure: Peer-led social connectivity, emotional health promotion and suicide prevention through the Sources of Strength program

Protective Factors: Implementation of a School Cellphone Policy, with resources from the American Academy of Pediatrics

Skills for Mental Health: Curricula to enhance wellbeing skills

Capacity to Respond: Training in Mental Health First Aid to address mental health and substance use challenges

Preliminary participating school districts include:

Wiscasset School Department (Lincoln County)

RSU 20 - Searsport Public Schools (Waldo County)

Brunswick School Department (Cumberland County)

MSAD 17 - Oxford Hills School District (Oxford County)

RSU 73 - Spruce Mountain Regional School District (Franklin County)

Sanford School Department (York County)

Biddeford School Department (York County)

These schools were chosen based on MaineHealth’s capacity to serve them. However, the desire is to expand this program beyond this pilot phase to other school districts that want to participate.

The initiative’s strength lies in its collaborative approach, bringing together healthcare expertise, community engagement, student innovation and education leadership.

Hearts of Pine Foundation will expand its after-school soccer programming in elementary and/

or middle schools within participating districts, creating safe, engaging spaces where young people can build connections and develop emotional, social and leadership skills through joyful, collaborative play.

“These after-school programs recognize the power that soccer has to be a tool for emotional, social, and communal development in the lives of Maine’s youth,” said Gabe Hoffman-Johnson, Founder of Portland Hearts of Pine and the Hearts of Pine Foundation. “We’ve already seen the incredible results of these programs with Rosati in Lewiston and the Soccer Project here in Portland. To be working alongside David Shaw, MaineHealth and schools across Maine, we’re thrilled to expand the ways in which we use this game for good.”

The University of New England’s Shaw Innovation Fellows Program will offer internships with the SHAW Challenge, enabling student innovators to apply their creativity and skills to real-world mental health challenges.

“Innovation is at the heart of UNE’s mission to improve lives and communities,” said James Herbert, Ph.D., President of the University of New England. “The Shaw Innovation Fellows will bring fresh perspectives and entrepreneurial thinking to this critical challenge, while gaining invaluable experience in applying

*See MaineHealth, page 14*

**AUGUSTA, ME** – The Finance Authority of Maine (FAME) is excited to welcome Charlotte Mace as the new Director of Business. Mace brings with her vast expertise in helping Maine businesses grow and expand. As Director of Business, Mace oversees FAME’s capital access strategies and tools, which support Maine businesses and the economy.

Prior to joining FAME, Mace served as Director of the Office of Business Development at the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD). For more than six years, she led the state’s efforts to attract investment and expand existing businesses. In 2020, DECD named Mace State of Maine Manager of the Year.

Before joining DECD, Mace was Executive Director of Biobased Maine, a nonprofit trade association that promotes the sustainable use of renewable biomass.

“I have long been aware of the significant impact FAME has had on Maine businesses and the economy, overall,” Mace



Charlotte Mace

said. “I am very excited to use my skills and experience here at FAME to improve the access to capital for Maine businesses and entrepreneurs at every stage.”

The Finance Authority of Maine (FAME) is a quasi-independent state agency whose mission is to enrich business and educational outcomes through relevant, timely financial support to Maine’s people. FAME’s vision is a Maine where all people have access to improved economic outcomes through business growth and education attainment. To learn more about FAME, please visit [www.famemaine.com](http://www.famemaine.com)

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**Dec 4**  
SCARBOROUGH – Storm Warriors of the Maine Coast: Stories of the Life-Saving Station at Biddeford Pool 6:30 PM

Join us at Scarborough Public Library for a talk by Richard Parsons, as he talks about his book “Storm Warriors of the Maine Coast: Stories of the Life-Saving Station at Biddeford Pool,” the research and writing process, and how this book came about. Books will be available for purchase and signing.

**Dec 5**  
SCARBOROUGH – KIDS Clothing Swap at Scarborough Public Library 10am-12pm Friday, December 5

Let’s have a swap! Bring your washed, gently used clothing and other apparel items, FOR KIDS CLOTHES ONLY, at the day and time of the event. We’ll do a self-sort onto labelled tables, and then take what you like! Bring a bag!

**Dec 5**  
WISCASSET – The Wiscasset community is invited to welcome Santa to the Village when a Merry and Bright Light Parade drops the rotund fellow off at his workshop, 7 Lincoln St., on Friday, December 5, around 5:45pm.

**Dec 6**  
GORHAM – Gorham Arts Alliance is having a Holiday Fair at 34 School Street in Gorham from 9:00 until 2:00. The Fair will have Arts and Crafts, a Silent Auction, White Elephant sale and Bake Sale. All the proceeds will benefit the newly formed Gorham Seniors

# Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

Co-op, a group created by Lisa Becker, for senior citizens in Gorham and neighboring towns to feel supported, engaged and not alone. Its mission: to inspire, empower and educate seniors within a welcoming, creative and supportive community so they may overcome isolation and loneliness. Lisa Becker passed away on August 19, 2025. A memorial fund was established in her name with proceeds supporting the efforts of the Gorham Senior’s Co-op. To donate or learn more about us please visit: gorhamarts.org/seniorcoop.

**Dec 6 & 7**  
GORHAM – Casco Bay Wind Symphony “Sounds of the Season” A Musical Holiday Celebration With Dr. William Kinne, Musical Director on Saturday, December 6, 2025 7:00 to 9:00 PM AND Sunday, December 7, 2025 2:00 to 4:00 PM at McCormack Performing Arts Center Gorham High School 41 Morrill Ave. Gorham, Maine 04038

**Dec 11**  
NEW GLOUCESTER – Free artist event at Unity Environmental University. Each event highlights a Maine-based artist with a pop-up exhibition, lecture, and catered reception. Our forthcoming event: Dean McCrillis: Reading Sign: Expanding on observations through process on December 11<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm, 70 Farm View Dr, New Gloucester, ME 04260.

**Dec 12, 13**  
BATH – Twisted Christmas: A Nice & Naughty Evening of Entertainment Friday December 12th and Saturday December 13th at 8:00 p.m. Longreach Kitchen & Catering 387 Whiskeag Road, Bath. \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door. Tickets available online at StudioTheatreofBath.com/

twistedchristmas  
**Dec 13**

LEWISTON – Join us at the Lewiston Public Library for our next fundraising event to support the Children’s Department renovation, Chill Yoga Fest on Saturday, December 13th with classes going on from 9:30AM – 1:30PM in Callahan Hall.

There will be four 45-minute classes- All Levels Hatha, Chair Yoga, Stretching, Breathing & Meditation, and Children’s Yoga! \$40 full pass, or \$18 per individual class. See LPL’s website to purchase tickets.

**Dec 13 & 14**  
AUGUSTA – The Augusta Symphony Orchestra invites you to celebrate the magic of the holidays with two performances at South Parish Church, 9 Church Street in Augusta. Join us on Saturday, December 13 at 7:00 p.m. or Sunday, December 14 at 3:00 p.m. for a festive program filled with timeless classics and holiday favorites.

**Dec 15**  
LISBON FALLS – The Knights of Columbus Council 10019 will be sponsoring an American Red Cross Blood Drive at the parish hall of Holy Trinity Church on 67 Frost Hill Avenue Lisbon Falls on Monday December 15th from 1:00 PM until 5: PM To make an appointment please call 1-800-733-2767, or visit RedCrossBlood.org: HTC Come to give from Dec. 8th to the 18th and receive a \$15 Amazon Gift Card by email.

**Jan 22**  
NEW GLOUCESTER – Free artist event at Unity Environmental University. Each event highlights a Maine-based artist with a pop-up exhibition, lecture, and catered reception. Matt Russ: Moments of Clarity at 5:00 pm, 70 Farm View

Dr, New Gloucester, ME 04260.

**Feb 26**  
NEW GLOUCESTER – Free artist event at Unity Environmental University. Each event highlights a Maine-based artist with a pop-up exhibition, lecture, and catered reception. Ian Trask: Art from the Waste Stream at 5:00 pm, 70 Farm View Dr, New Gloucester, ME 04260.

**Ap 9**  
NEW GLOUCESTER – Free artist event at Unity Environmental University. Each event highlights a Maine-based artist with a pop-up exhibition, lecture, and catered reception. Ben Potter: Pollen and Gatorade: Materials and Connotations in the Landscape, at 5:00 pm, 70 Farm View Dr, New Gloucester, ME 04260.

**May 28**  
NEW GLOUCESTER – Free artist event at Unity Environmental University. Each event highlights a Maine-based artist with a pop-up exhibition, lecture, and catered reception. Edwige Charlot: Artist talk, at 5:00 pm, 70 Farm View Dr, New Gloucester, ME 04260.

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MaineHealth  
Continued from page 11

their education to solve problems that matter deeply to Maine families.”

School leaders welcome the comprehensive, coordinated approach.

“The mental health and well-being of our students is of the utmost importance,” said Jeremy Ray, superintendent of Biddeford School Department. “The SHAW Challenge provides our schools with invaluable resources, training, and community support to address these critical issues head-on. By fostering collaborative partnerships, we can create nurturing environments where all students have the opportunity to thrive academically, socially and emotionally. This initiative is precisely the kind of comprehensive approach our education system values to support our students.”

Beyond the seven initial districts, the SHAW Challenge will convene a statewide Shaw Youth Public Mental Health Council in December, bringing together partners from across Maine—including NAMI Maine, state agencies, Maine Youth Thriving and others—to learn from one another, communicate about this emerging field and coordinate efforts to maximize impact.

EPA  
Continued from page 9

Yard, Washburn, Maine Saco Municipal Landfill, Saco, Maine Background

The Superfund program, a federal program established by Congress in 1980, investigates and cleans up the most complex, uncontrolled, or abandoned hazardous waste sites in the country and endeavors to facilitate activities to return them to productive use.

There are many phases of the Superfund cleanup process including considering future use and redevelopment at sites and conducting post cleanup monitoring of sites.

Throughout the process of designing and constructing a cleanup at a hazardous waste site, EPA’s primary goal is to protect human health and the environment, the agency’s core mission. At many sites, EPA continues to ensure it remains true to EPA’s core mission, by requiring cleanup reviews every five years. It is important for EPA to regularly check on these sites to ensure the cleanup remedy is working properly. These reviews identify issues (if any) that may affect the protectiveness of the completed remedy and, if necessary, recommend action(s) necessary to address them.

For more information about EPA’s Superfund program, visit [www.epa.gov/superfund](http://www.epa.gov/superfund)

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If interested in any of the following trips or upcoming trips, please contact Claire Bilodeau at 784-0302 or Cindy Boyd at 345-9569. If we are not available, please leave a message and we will call you as soon as we can.

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

**May 23-31, 2026 – BILTMORE ESTATE & ASHEVILLE, N.C.** - This trip includes 9 days and 8 nights lodging, 8 breakfasts and 6 dinners. You

will have a full day at the Biltmore Estate and experience the Biltmore House and Gardens. You will also visit the Antler Village and Winery. You will have a guided tour of Asheville and the magnificent St. Lawrence Basilica. We will experience a drive on the Blue Ridge Parkway (America's Most visited park unit). We also visit the Thomas Wolfe Memorial State Historic Site. These are the highlights of the trip and there is so much more that we will see. On our way home we stop at the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University. Price for this trip is \$1,245.00 per person double occupancy. A \$75.00 deposit per person is due upon signing up. The trip includes the bus driver tip and all tour gratuities. Add \$349.00 for single occupancy. Final payment is due 3/16/26.

**OCTOBER 18-23, 2026 – SHIPSHAWANA, INDIANA** - This trip includes 6 days and 5 nights lodging, 3 breakfasts and 3 dinners. You will have a full day guided tour of Indiana's Amish Country with a tour of an Amish Homestead and an Authentic Amish Dinner. We will experience Cook's Bi-

son Ranch with a scenic Wagon Tour of their majestic ranch while seeing the bison up-close and even feeding them. We will spend time shopping and having lunch at Shipshewana Trading Place which is constantly ranked one of the top five Flea Markets in the Country. We will see the show "Loves Comes Softly" at the Blue Gate Theater. Price for this trip is \$865.00 per person double occupancy. A \$75.00 deposit is due upon signing up. Trip includes bus driver tip and all tour gratuities. Add \$305.00 for single occupancy. Final payment is due 8/11/26.

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

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