



TWIN CITY TIMES

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CLT's Almost Maine opens tomorrow!

AUBURN, ME - Community Little Theater announces the second show of its 2025-2026 season, Almost Maine is a romantic comedy told with a series of interconnected vignettes set in a northern Maine town. Almost Maine was written by John Cariani based on his own experiences growing up in Northern Maine.

Almost Maine takes place in the fictional town of "Almost" in Northern Maine. The town is so small it is "almost" a town. The story takes place on a magical winter night under the northern lights. The play focuses on "almost" moments, where love almost happens, or almost doesn't happen. Each vignette portrays a moment in time in which the char-



Brian Pfohl and Elise Christie

acters explore love, loss, connection, heartbreak and hope.

Director Jackie McDonald chose Almost Maine to be performed in February because the setting is Maine in winter so it was quite fitting. The story takes place during a

20 minute time frame with each vignette telling its own story within that time. Each vignette is unique and yet they all tie together. According to McDonald, this is the newest edition of the play and Cariani has updated the language

See *Almost Maine*, page 8

February Special Section American Heart Month page 9

100+ Women Who Care award Federation of Farmers' Markets

MAINE - Maine Federation of Farmers' Markets was selected as recipient of the February award by 100+ Women Who Care Southern Maine. Miriam Markowitz presented for the nonprofit. MFFM's mission is to cultivate vibrant, sustainable farmers' markets as a vital part of Maine's local food network—supporting farmers, strengthening communities, and ensuring everyone can access fresh, locally grown food. Their funding will help bridge the gap for low-income shoppers using SNAP benefits, especially considering recent federal cuts that limit access to these resources. Approximately \$25,000 will be donated to MFFM.

The two runner-up presenters were Nicki Griffin with Altrusa International of Portland and Karen MacDonald with Maine Teacher of the Year and Maine County Teachers of the Year. Each of these nonprofits will receive additional funding, made possible through the collective generosity of the 100+ Women Who Care Southern Maine community and its sponsors.

Founded in November 2014, 100+ Women Who Care Southern Maine is a vibrant community of women who raise funds for local nonprofits. With more than 525 members, the group has raised over \$800,000 for a wide range of causes, including support for veterans, teens, seniors, children with disabilities, domestic abuse survivors, and ani-



Miriam Markowitz and Deb Bergeron, founder of 100+ Women Who Care Southern Maine. Photo credit by Diane Campbell

mal welfare. Each quarter, members donate \$50 to a nonprofit chosen at their meeting. Three organizations present five-minute pitches, followed by a 5-minute Q&A, and then members vote to decide who will receive the funding — turning small gifts into big change.

To further assist the local community, all 100+ Women members are invited to the Elks Lodge at 1945 Congress Street in Portland on Thursday, February 26th at 10:00 am to 12pm to help assemble cleaning and hygiene kits for Maine Needs. Maine Needs supports long time Maine families, newly arrived immigrant families, those fleeing domestic violence, those leaving incarceration, those in recovery, veterans, and those who are unhoused, newly housed or experiencing

financial hardship. They have an urgent need for both types of kits to give to those in immediate need. FMI: deb100Women@gmail.com.

The next meeting is Monday, May 4, 2026, at The Elks Lodge on Congress Street in Portland. The door will open at 5:45 pm for networking followed by the meeting at 6:30 pm. Guests are invited to attend to learn more about the group.

For more details, visit: www.100womenwhocaresouthernmaine.com.

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

MCP announces cast of Ken Ludwig's "Moon Over Buffalo"

MONMOUTH, ME - The Monmouth Community Players, alongside Marquis Season Sponsors Great Falls Federal Credit Union and Levey, Wagley, Putman, and Eccher Attorneys at Law and Season Sponsors Winthrop Area Federal Credit Union and Readfield Insurance Agency, wish to announce the cast of their upcoming production of Ken Ludwig's "Moon Over Buffalo." The play, under the direction of Charles Burden, will run March 13-22, 2026 at historic Cumston Hall in Monmouth. Other production staff include Josie French-Sidelinger as Assistant Director, Danny Gay as Producer, Kayla James as Props Mistress and Ashley Violette as Costumer.

In the madcap comedy tradition of Lend Me a Tenor, the hilarious Moon Over Buffalo centers on George and Charlotte Hay,



Front row: Ginger Smith, Marisa MacDonald, Birdie Gay and Nancy Kenneally; Back row: Tim MacLeod, Isaac Boyd, Josh Oakes and Danny Gay.

fading stars of the 1950s. At the moment, they're playing Private Lives and Cyrano De Bergerac in rep in Buffalo, New York with five actors. On the brink of a disastrous split-up caused by George's dalliance with a young ingénue, they receive word that they might just have one last shot at stardom: Frank Capra is coming to town to see their matinee, and if he likes what he

sees, he might cast them in his movie remake of The Scarlet Pimpernel. Unfortunately for George and Charlotte, everything that could go wrong does go wrong, abetted by a visit from their daughter's clueless fiancé and hilarious uncertainty about which play they're actually performing, caused by Charlotte's deaf, old stage-manager mother

See MCP, page 14

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Newsmakers, Names & Faces

AARP Community Challenge grant applications now open

AARP Maine is thrilled to announce that the 2026 AARP Community Challenge grant program is now accepting applications. We hope that all eligible nonprofits and government organizations will apply for this once-a-year opportunity!

The AARP Community Challenge grant program is part of the nationwide AARP Livable Communities initiative, which supports the efforts of communities to become great places for people of all ages, especially people

50-plus. The grants fund quick-action, innovative projects related to public places, transportation, housing, digital connections, community resilience, and more. Here in Maine, we've seen tangible, long-term results from previous grantees. Recent local projects have included disaster preparedness initiatives, transportation improvements, community park and open space enhancements, and much more.

We encourage eligible organizations to ap-

ply by the March 4, 2026 application deadline. For more information, to submit an application or view past grantees, visit www.AARP.org/Community-Challenge. Since 2017, AARP has invested in over 2,100 projects – including 82 initiatives in Maine. Apply now and make sure your local project is considered for a grant this year!

Jane Margesson
AARP Maine Senior Communications Director
(207) 776-6301 (for verification purposes)

Welcome 2026 Maine REALTORS president

AUGUSTA, ME - Judy Oberg, REALTOR® begins her term as President of the Maine Association of REALTORS® for 2026.

Judy Oberg, REALTOR® begins her term as 2026 President of the Maine Association of REALTORS®. A REALTOR® since 1997, Judy joined Oberg Insurance and Real Estate Agency in Bridgton, a family-owned and operated business since 1934.

As Association President, Judy also serves as a Director for the Maine Association of REALTORS® with a dedication to real estate industry professionalism and active engagement with the Association's statewide advocacy efforts.

Judy has served as the President of the Western Maine Board of REALTORS®, the President of the Mountains to Shore Board of REALTORS® and received the Boards' REALTOR® of the Year Awards in 2012 and 2024.

She currently serves as a Director for the National Association of REALTORS® and represents



Maine on NAR's REALTOR® Safety Advisory Committee.

Judy brings a wealth of leadership experience to the Maine Association of REALTORS® through her local, state, and national commitment to the real estate industry and will lead the Association for 2026 with strategic vision and collaboration.

The Maine Association of REALTORS® represents 6,300 REALTORS® statewide involved in all aspects of residential and commercial real estate and 400 affiliated professionals involved

in real estate transactions such as lenders, closing agents, title agents, appraisers, building inspectors, and surveyors. In 2024, Maine's real estate industry accounted for \$18.3 billion or 19.5% of Maine's Gross State Product.

Since 1936, the Maine Association of REALTORS® has been the "Voice for Real Estate" and private property owners across Maine. REALTORS® grow Maine's economy, build Maine communities, and advocate for the rights to own, transfer, and use real property.

Maine B2B Trade Show coming up in Auburn

LEWISTON, ME - The Lewiston Auburn Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce is proud to present the Maine B2B Trade Show, returning on April 16, 2026, from 1:00 PM - 5:30 PM at the Norway Savings Bank Arena in Auburn, Maine. This highly anticipated event is designed to connect businesses across the state and New England, fostering new opportunities, partnerships, and industry growth.

The Maine B2B Trade Show is one of the largest business networking events in the state, drawing hundreds of professionals eager to showcase their products, services, and innovations.

The streamlined, single-day format allows businesses to make the most of their time. Attendees will experience unparalleled networking opportunities and the chance to exhibit their brand, generate leads, and explore new collaborations. The event will

conclude with a cocktail hour at 4:30 PM, providing a relaxed atmosphere for further networking and business discussions.

Businesses looking to maximize their presence at the show can secure single or double booths. Booth options include standard 10'x10' spaces with tables, chairs, and electricity, while double booths offer expanded 10'x20' spaces for increased exposure. Locked location booths provide guaranteed premium placement on a first-come, first-served basis. The deadline to reserve a booth is Friday, March 27th, 2026.

Sponsorship opportunities are also available, offering prime visibility and branding benefits.

For more information, booth registration, and sponsorship opportunities, please visit the event site or contact Justin Morin, Event Coordinator at Justin@LAMetroChamber.com.

Northeast Bank named to Piper Sandler's Sm-All Stars

PORTLAND, ME - Northeast Bank (NASDAQ: NBN) has been named to the Piper Sandler Sm-All Stars Class of 2025, an elite list recognizing 24 of the top-performing small-cap banks and thrifts in the country.

To earn Sm-All Star designation, financial institutions must maintain a market capitalization under \$2.5 billion and out-

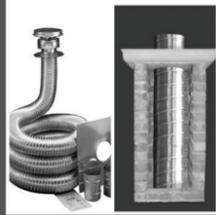
perform industry medians across key performance metrics, including growth, profitability, credit quality, and capital strength. For this year's analysis, Piper Sandler evaluated 316 banks and thrifts trading on major U.S. exchanges, ultimately selecting just 24 institutions for inclusion.

"Being named to the Sm-All Stars Class of

2025 reflects the successful execution of our business strategy and the dedication of our exceptional team," said Rick Wayne, President and CEO of Northeast Bank. "I am incredibly proud of what our team has accomplished and their continued commitment to delivering strong, sustainable results for our shareholders and customers."

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UMaine Extension offers webinar on managing pests



UMaine Extension’s upcoming webinar will share practical pest management tips to support healthy, high-quality cut flower crops. Photo courtesy University of Maine Cooperative Extension / Edwin Remsburg.

ORONO, ME - University of Maine Cooperative Extension will host a webinar on managing insect pests in cut flower production on Monday, March 2 from 6-7:15 p.m.

“Managing Pests in Cut Flowers” will help growers protect cut flower crops from pest damage that can lower quality and reduce sales. The session will be led by Jason Lilley, assistant Extension professor of sustainable

agriculture and maple industry educator with University of Maine.

During the webinar, participants will learn about common insect pests that affect cut flowers and how to manage them. Topics will include prevention methods and basic guidelines for safe and effective pesticide use. Attendees are eligible for 1 Maine pesticide recertification credit.

The webinar is part of UMaine Extension’s

Commercial Horticulture Webinar Series, held on the first Monday of each month.

Registration is required; sliding scale fee options are available. Register on the event webpage to attend live or receive the recording link. For more information or to request a reasonable accommodation, contact Rebecca Gray at 207.356.1348 or extension.gardening@maine.edu.

NSB donates \$10K to ME Venture Fund’s Maine Startup Challenge

PORTLAND, ME - In May, the Maine Venture Fund’s Maine Startup Challenge will encourage entrepreneurial thinking from all ages and across the state of Maine, stimulating the next generation of Maine business owners and entrepreneurs.

Norway Savings Bank is pleased to contribute \$10,000 to the Maine Venture Fund to serve as the headline and presenting sponsor of the competition.

“The Maine Startup Challenge is a business plan competition to boost Maine’s startup ‘ecosystem’ with four tiers: K-8,

High School, College, and Open,” said Nina Scheepers, Principal of Maine Venture Fund. “Business plans will be judged by a panel of Maine investors and entrepreneurs, and the competition will culminate in a recognition event in Portland to celebrate the winners in each tier. We are thrilled to have Norway Savings as a Presenting Sponsor and are so appreciative of the bank’s support.”

“We’re so impressed with the purpose and scope of the Maine Startup Challenge. Last year, it drew 150 submissions and in the three years since it began,

applicants have come from 15 Maine counties,” said Dan Walsh, President and CEO of Norway Savings Bank. “We’re happy to play a small part in encouraging great ideas, innovations, and thinkers who can play a key role in helping Maine’s economy and our communities flourish in the years to come.”

Applications can be submitted starting on April 1, 2026. For more information or to explore the process, visit www.maineventurefund.com/maine-startup-challenge or email lydia@maineventurefund.com.

Nominations now open for LA Metro Chamber’s Annual Awards

LEWISTON, ME - The Lewiston Auburn Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce is proud to announce that nominations are now open for the 2026 Annual Awards, celebrating the exceptional individuals and organizations who strengthen the region’s business community and enhance quality of life across Androscoggin County.

Each year, the Chamber’s Annual Awards shine a spotlight on both well-known leaders and the often-unsung champions whose dedication, innovation, and service make Lewiston-Auburn a place where businesses thrive and communities grow. From economic development trailblazers to passionate community advocates, these awards honor those who go above and beyond to move the region forward.

Community members, businesses, and organizations are encouraged to submit nominations in one or more of the following categories:

Ray Geiger Chamber Champion Award – The Ray Geiger Award is the highest honor bestowed by the Lewiston Auburn Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce. This prestigious award recognizes an individual who has demonstrated extraordinary commitment to advancing the Chamber’s mission and strengthening our communities through significant investments of time, energy, and resources.

Theresa Samson Women’s Business Leader-

ship Award – The Theresa Samson Women’s Business Leadership Award celebrates a successful female-identifying business owner or primary manager whose business achievements, leadership, and community contributions exemplify excellence. This award highlights the vital and growing impact of women-led businesses on our regional economy and inspires continued leadership and growth.

Ken Additon Economic Development Champion Award – This award recognizes a business, agency, organization, community, or nonprofit whose work or investments have made a meaningful contribution to the region’s economic vitality. Honorees may be recognized for advocating for businesses, creating jobs, fostering development, or attracting people and opportunities to the region.

Leading Through Change Award – The Leading Through Change Award honors a Chamber member whose leadership stood out during times of change. This individual demonstrated adaptability, resilience, and responsiveness while leading with both confidence and authenticity to support their team, organization, and community.

Heart of the Community Award – The Heart of the Community Award recognizes an individual whose passion, generosity, and expertise enhance the quality of life in our region. This inspiring honoree gives selflessly to their community and

helps make the area a better place to live, work, and play. Membership or employment with a Chamber member is not required for this recognition.

All nominations will be reviewed by a selection committee appointed by the Chamber’s Board of Directors and supported by Chamber staff. In some cases, nominees may be considered for a different category based on committee deliberations.

The Annual Awards provide an opportunity to reflect on the people and organizations who inspire us, advocate for progress, and invest in our community every day. The Chamber encourages everyone to think about the leaders, colleagues, and partners who are making a difference and help us share their stories.

Nominations are open now and will close on March 6. Community members are encouraged to discuss potential nominees with their teams, bring forward deserving candidates, and help the Chamber recognize the remarkable impact happening across Androscoggin County.

To submit a nomination, please complete the nomination form at lametrocc.com/Nominate

To register for the Annual Awards Celebration on May 21: lametrocc.com/AnnualAwards26

For more information about the 2026 Annual Awards or the Lewiston Auburn Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, visit lametrochamber.com or contact Justin@LAMetroChamber.com

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

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

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Info@TwinCityTimes.com
(207) 795-5017

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Seniors Not Acting Their Age Frigid Skiing on Remote Granny Cap Road

A climb of Granny Cap Mountain in a remote section of northern Somerset County on New Year's Day stimulated a plan to ski an old logging road on the south and east sides of the mountain. Like the mountain, the road is located about 15 miles northwest of The Forks and access is via snow and ice-covered Lower Enchanted and Hunter Roads.

While ascending Granny Cap, my son, Adam, suggested skiing the unplowed road the following day. Unnamed on all of our maps, we call it Granny Cap Road. After completing the mountain trek, we stopped to inspect the road conditions and found a snow base of about 18 inches. A large vehicle, probably a logging truck, had driven in after an earlier storm and that packed surface was subsequently covered with about three inches of fresh powder. Since the base was solidified snow and ice, we decided to use backcountry skis with metal edges to improve maneuverability on any slippery sections.

When we met at The Forks the following morning, the weather was a concern. A frigid, sunny morning, the temperatures were in single digits and



A skier travels north towards Granny Cap Mountain

wind chills below zero. And, winds were forecast to increase to gusty levels during the day. We dressed and packed for severe wind chills and carried hand warmers.

The adventure began early with an icy drive on Lower Enchanted and Hunter Roads. While traveling the same route the day before, we had fortuitously confirmed with a logging truck driver that no logging activity was scheduled for this day. So, a potentially hazardous encounter with a loaded logging truck on the narrow, icy roads would likely be avoided.

No traffic was met during the approximately 14-mile drive to our destination. Once on Hunter Road, frequent views of Granny Cap Mountain and

its towering west facing cliffs dominated the northern landscape. Arriving at the Granny Cap Road junction, we were able to clear a space on the side of the road sufficient to allow a logging truck to pass our parked vehicle.

Winds were swirling and temperatures bitter cold when we began skiing north on glistening snow towards Granny Cap Mountain. Our packs were laden with additional layers of clothing and emergency gear. Hand warmers were activated at the outset.

The skiing was excellent on the soft upper surface. After traveling on fairly level terrain surrounded by a sparse hardwood forest for a modest distance, the gradient steepened. The added exertion



A skier stops to add layers due to extreme wind chills

expended while climbing generated body heat but we had to cover our faces with balaclavas for protection from the biting wind.

Skiing conditions varied as we progressed upward. In open areas where the top layer of fresh powder was blown away, we had to negotiate over hardened snow and ice. The metal edges on our backcountry skis were invaluable climbing on those slick surfaces.

As we advanced further up the southern slope of Granny Cap, the landscape transitioned to a predominantly spruce forest. Close proximity to the mountain and dense spruce growth partially sheltered us from the arctic-like winds.

After about two

miles, we turned right in a northeasterly direction and began ascending steadily while continuing to benefit from some protection from harsh winds. However, when our bearing changed more northerly on an extended stretch of high ground, the wind chills worsened. We stopped to add layers and heavy-duty hooded parkas.

We persisted north along the eastern side of Granny Cap Mountain into unrelenting gusty winds until arriving at a long icy decline. Under normal conditions, we would have attempted the downhill challenge. However, the precarious descent coupled with intensifying wind chills seemed a risk too far. We reluctantly turned back.

The blustery gusts

were generally behind us during the return trip which lessened the impact of the wind chills. Especially welcome was a tailwind that helped propel us rapidly downward for the final two miles to our waiting vehicle.

Safely in a warm car, we celebrated our first ski trip of the year; and likely the coldest one of the winter for us. Navigating the icy, narrow roads to The Forks seemed relatively timid compared to skiing in subzero conditions.

My book, *Maine Al Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine* relates ski trips on the best Nordic ski trails in the state and narrates exciting skiing expeditions deep into Baxter State Park while in pursuit of mountaineering objectives.

The author of "The Great Mars Hill Bank Robbery" and "Mountains for Mortals - New England," Ron Chase resides in Topsham. His latest book, "Maine Al Fresco: The Fifty Finest Outdoor Adventures in Maine" is available at North Country Press and through online retailers. Visit his website at www.ronchaseoutdoors.com or he can be reached at ronchaseoutdoors@comcast.net

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Kids' Chance of America, MEMIC partner in national scholarship

MAINE - Kids' Chance of America (KCOA) has welcomed The MEMIC Group as a national scholarship partner, Chief Executive Officer Chris Letsos announced.

Through the partnership, KCOA will administer MEMIC's Harvey Picker Horizon Scholarship Program, which will provide a \$20,000 scholarship to a student whose parent

was critically or fatally injured due to a work-related injury.

"When a worker is killed or injured on the job, it impacts the entire family—especially the children," Letsos said. "MEMIC's scholarship will make a profound and lasting difference in the life of a student who has already endured unimaginable hardship. Kids' Chance is honored to ad-

minister this scholarship on MEMIC's behalf, helping ensure that hope and opportunity can follow even the most difficult circumstances."

Open to students who reside in a state served by MEMIC, the scholarship will be awarded to one student annually who applies through a Kids' Chance state organization. The scholarship will provide \$5,000 annually for four

years of education.

For nearly 25 years, MEMIC has independently administered the Harvey Picker Horizon Scholarship, awarding more than \$290,000 to more than 50 young scholars since the program's creation in 2001.

The winning scholarship will be announced at MEMIC's Annual Meeting of the Policyholder in June in Portland, Maine.

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Merrymeeting Bay Trout Unlimited Fundraising Banquet

FREEPORT, ME - Merrymeeting Bay Trout Unlimited Chapter #329 (MMBTU) 3rd Annual Fundraising Banquet Saturday March 21, 2026 Hilton Garden Inn, Freeport, Maine FISHING. CONSERVATION. COMMUNITY.

We hope you will attend the banquet with family and friends to learn about the exciting river projects underway around Maine. We bring together diverse interests to care for and recover rivers and streams, so our children can experience the joy of wild, native trout and salmon. We banded together. Picked up shovels. Rolled rocks. Planted trees. Together we have built coalitions. Passed state and federal laws to protect our rivers.

We are currently removing a dam on the Nezenscot River in Buckfield which will open up 12.9 miles of spawning, rearing and thermal refuge for the wild brook trout. To date we have raised \$411,600 towards a projected goal of \$615,000. Please help us close the funding gap by planning to attend. Proceeds from this dinner will go towards our dam removal goal!!!

WE ARE TROUT UNLIMITED!

Special dinner speaker will be Jeff Reardon, Maine Headwaters Project Manager for the Atlantic Salmon Federation based out of Brunswick, ME. For many years Jeff worked for Trout Unlimited on Atlantic Salmon and Brook trout conservation, assisting with the permitting and design of the Penobscot River Restoration Project and working as TU's lead in the Kennebec Coalition's Kennebec River advocacy. He has been working on river conservation in Maine since moving to his home in Maine in 1994. Jeff will

speaking about dam removal in Maine, including the Penobscot and Kennebec River dam removals.

The banquet will feature live and silent auctions along with exciting raffle prizes. Enjoy a fine meal prepared by the chefs at the Hilton Garden Inn, dining in a lovely banquet hall.

Fishing Trips, Outdoor Gear, Local Merchants

Fishing trips to Patagonia, Downeast Maine, and family fun trips to Mexico and Ireland and more

Fish Patagonia! 5 days fully guided with lodging and meals from Pointer Outfitter's; Global hunting & fishing adventures, trip will be either for 2 or 4 angler's.

2 nights for 2 people at Cobb's Pierce Pond Camps donated by Andy Cobb

A striped bass fly fishing seminar, 6 hours for 2 on the Kennebec River with refreshments & custom flies by Ray Minchak, saltwater fly-fishing expert and MMBTU President.

A full day of fly fishing for 2 people with lunch and local transport in the Rangeley region with Registered Maine Fishing Guide and former MMBTU Treasurer Brad Swanson

Two night stay at Grant's Kennebago Camps for two people in summer 2026.

2 nights & 2 full days of fishing at MMBTU Director Gene McKenna's camp on Moose Pond, Somerset County. Fully guided, all meals provided, bring your own gear for fishing Pierce Pond.

½ day guided fishing for Steelhead salmon in Western New York State with Cattaraugus Creek Outfitters.

Jewelry by Lisa Gent Handcrafted Jewelry.

A large Grilling box

of Cold Spring grass fed beef from friend of the chapter Gabe Clark. 25 pounds total with half steaks (mix of T-bones, porterhouse, ribeye, filet, etc.) and half with 1 lb. Packages of ground beef.

Jewelry by Fishbone Metal Works

Tickets for the dinner and program must be purchased in advance from the MMBTU website www.mmbtu.org. The cost is \$65 per person or sponsor a table for 8 people for \$525 and receive \$200 worth of general raffle tickets. General and special raffle tickets can be purchased at the event; discount and package deals are available online prior to the event. Dinner tickets also include Trout Unlimited 1 year membership - \$15

General raffle tickets (receive 2 for 1 before March 16) - \$20 each
 Bundle of 5 general raffle tickets (receive 2 for 1 raffle tickets before March 16 PLUS 2 tickets for a donated Orvis RECON 4 weight, 4 pc., 9 ft. fly rod with Orvis Hydros III reel, Scientific Anglers Mastery WF4F line and backing) - \$100 each. Purchase individual raffle tickets for the Orvis RECON 4 weight rod/Orvis Hydros III reel package (receive 2 for 1 before March 16) - \$20 each

Best Source
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MaineHealth Behavioral Health announces new Medical Director

PORTLAND, ME - MaineHealth Behavioral Health today announced the appointment of Benjamin C. Grasso, MD, as Regional Medical Director. A resident of Scarborough, Maine, Dr. Grasso brings more than three decades of clinical, academic, and leadership experience in psychiatry and behavioral health care to this role.

In his position, Dr. Grasso will oversee outpatient psychiatric services for York County, providing clinical leadership to support high-quality, patient-centered behavioral health services across the region. His experience spans inpatient and outpatient care, academic medicine, correctional health, and executive medical leadership.

Dr. Grasso most recently served as a staff psychiatrist at the Maine Correctional Center and has previously held leadership roles at Riverview Psychiatric Center, Mercy Hospital, and the Augusta Mental Health Institute, among others. Since 2013, he has also served as a consulting medical director for The Opportunity Alliance.

"We are thrilled to welcome Dr. Grasso to MaineHealth Behavioral Health," said Melissa Bowker-Kinley, MD, Senior Director of Medical



Affairs, Child and Adolescent Services. "Dr. Grasso's vast experience makes him uniquely qualified to lead outpatient psychiatry in the York County region. He is nationally recognized for his work in reducing medication errors in psychiatric treatment and has demonstrated a deep commitment to community psychiatry across diverse populations, including veterans, incarcerated individuals, and patients with severe mental illness. We look forward to the expertise and vision

he brings to our team." Dr. Grasso earned his Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, summa cum laude, from SUNY Binghamton, where he was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa. He received his Doctor of Medicine degree from Albany Medical College and completed his internship and residency in psychiatry at the University of Virginia School of Medicine. He later completed a fellowship in Neuropsychiatry at the National Institutes of Mental Health.

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Arts & Entertainment

Rocky's customers rally, raise \$113K through Round Up for Kids

BATH, ME - A few cents at the register turned into a powerful show of community support as Rocky's Ace Hardware customers once again stepped up for children's health. This year's Round Up for Kids campaign raised \$113,930 across Rocky's locations, directing critical funding to Children's Miracle Network Hospitals serving the communities where customers live and shop.

The fundraiser ran during two high-traffic periods, one in the spring and another during the late fall and holiday season, giving customers multiple opportunities to round their purchase totals up to the

nearest dollar. Those small contributions added up quickly, with Barbara Bush Children's Hospital receiving more than \$4,128 from the Rocky's store in Bath.

"Round Up for Kids shows what happens when local communities come together around something bigger than a single transaction," said Rocco Falcone, president of Rocky's Ace Hardware. "Our customers understand that these hospitals are there for families on their hardest days, and they're proud to support care that can change a child's future."

One hundred percent of the funds raised at the Bath location were directed

to Barbara Bush Children's Hospital to support pediatric care, medical innovation and family-centered services.

"This campaign continues to grow because people believe in it," Falcone said. "Looking ahead, we're excited to keep building on this momentum and finding new ways to support the hospitals that do so much for our communities."

Children's Miracle Network Hospitals has raised nearly \$10 billion since 1983, helping fund vital treatments, research and programs that improve the lives of children nationwide.

Maine Arts Commission awards grants



AUGUSTA, ME - The Maine Arts Commission (MAC) has awarded FY2026 Organization Operations Grants to 61 nonprofit arts organizations statewide, funding the highest percentage of applicants in the program's history and reinforcing the Commission's role in sustaining Maine's cultural sector.

The Organization Operations Grant provides unrestricted operating support to eligible nonprofit arts organizations with annual budgets above \$25,000. These competitive grants are part of MAC's ongoing work to serve and connect, fund, and advance Maine's creative sector. This year, MAC received 93 eligible applications from across the state. Following a competitive peer-review process, approximately two-thirds of applicants were selected for funding, with organizations funded in all 14 counties that submitted applications.

"These grants support

MAINE Arts COMMISSION

10 of 15 applicants funded (\$52,500)

Over \$1 million: 16 of 24 applicants funded (\$80,000)

A full list of funded organizations is available on the Maine Arts Commission website.

"Our work at the Commission is to serve, connect, and invest in Maine's creative sector," said Amy Hausmann, Executive Director of the Maine Arts Commission. "These grants help organizations remain grounded in their communities and contribute to a strong, connected cultural ecosystem statewide."

Applications were reviewed by independent peer panels composed of arts professionals from a range of disciplines and backgrounds. Panelists completed orientation and non-bias training and evaluated applications independently through the Maine Cultural Access Portal, ensuring a fair and transparent review process.

the essential, behind-the-scenes work that allows arts organizations to stay strong and responsive to their communities," said Bob Keyes, Chair of the Maine Arts Commission. "By investing in organizational stability, we help ensure that arts and culture continue to thrive across the state."

To promote equity and support organizations at different stages of growth, MAC distributed awards across four budget categories:

Under \$100,000 in annual budget: 9 of 14 applicants funded (\$45,000)

\$100,000-\$500,000: 26 of 40 applicants funded (\$131,250)

\$500,000-\$1 million:

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CRC of WM's Food for Thought Soup for YOU!

By Ann Morrell, RN, Cancer Resources

Soup doesn't get the attention it should. Especially at this time of year, who doesn't love a grilled cheese and bowl of tomato soup? Classic comfort food, right? But soup offers so much more. Whether bone broth (the newest craze) or creamy broccoli cheese, soup has many options. Gumbo, stew, chowder, or bisque to name a few. Now, some will debate whether a stew is a soup and what defines a soup vs stew, and I just heard the term "stoup" which is a new one; but I can see the reason for it. When does a soup become a stew? And where does chili land in this debate? Is it the amount of meat to vegetable, is it thickness, cooking time, spoon vs fork to eat; seems like a good debate to have on a stormy day over a bowl of thin stew with lots of meat.

Soup is usually made with broth based from bone, vegetable or meat. These broths often contain essential vitamins, minerals and collagen. When combined with super foods such as kale, spinach, shi-take mushrooms, beans or root vegetables, the benefits become undeniable. It seems every culture has soup in its diet. In fact, I remember my first realization that classic Jewish Chicken Soup started with a whole chicken in a pot of water with classic veggies and a few herbs which cooks down to a flavorful stock. It is said that this soup has superior healing properties.

Maybe the benefits are from sitting over a steaming cup of said soup or perhaps the nutrients come from the stock itself. Many a Jewish grandma believe it is the love that goes into it. I say, it's all three.

Soup helps with hydration and has electrolytes essential for bodily functions. There is a special comfort that comes from sipping a mug of soup on a frigid day or even as a light meal on a warm day. Soup is a great way to get a concentrated amount of nutrition in an easily digestible form. It can be easy to prepare, frozen for another day and is often cost effective. A simple soup and salad or sandwich can be an easy way to get needed nutrition and comfort. For weight management, soup can be filling but low in fat and calories or rich in healthy fats and calcium if cream based. Everyone has different needs and happily, there is a soup for everyone.

Benefits from immune support with key ingredients such as protein, vitamin C and zinc are even more important for those living with cancer. When the thought of food turns your stomach, a simple broth can be manageable. Cooking might be a challenge as well, which is why The Cancer Resource Center of Western Maine has a free soup program available to patients in treatment. The center provides homemade frozen soup in individual containers that are easy to thaw and several kinds of soup

are available. Don't settle for canned soup, please call or stop in during our open hours on Thursdays to pick some up. You could pop in for Chair Yoga with Kat from 1-2pm and grab some soup for later. Also, new this year, a Women's Cancer Support Group gathers on the first and third Wednesday of each month. Please come meet other women to gather or give support during the challenges of navigating cancer treatment. You might trade a great recipe along the way!

Screening and prevention are cornerstones of cancer control. Cancer screening tests increase the chance of finding cancer early when treatment is likely to work best. Prevention includes removing toxins, improving health and finding ways to lower the risk of developing cancer. Finding ways to lower the risk of cancer is easier when you know the facts.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT is a monthly initiative of The Cancer Resource Center of Western Maine to share information with the public about the importance of prevention. Each month we will focus on local resources, education about cancer causing agents, and where to find more information.

About the Author
Ann Morrell is a practicing Registered Nurse and Health Content Writer. Her varied 12+ years of nursing experience ensure that her content provides technical information with practical insights.

\$3.45M awarded to the Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center



MAINE - The Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center (NE-DBIC) has been awarded \$3.45 million in funding from the USDA. As one of four Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives (DBI) in the country, the NE-DBIC serves dairy farmers and processors across 11 states, including: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

This is the seventh round of funding since the DBI was established under the 2018 Farm Bill. Funds directly support dairy farmers and processors with modernization, innovation, and increasing efficiency and sustainability across the dairy sector.

From improving efficiency and milk production to increasing jobs and expanding markets, NE-DBIC grants have immediate and long-term positive impacts for individual businesses and the entire

supply chain.

This additional \$3.45 million will extend NE-DBIC's ability to provide grant funds to dairy farmers and processors for innovation and modernization projects. With this latest disbursement, NE-DBIC has received a total of \$52.7 million for projects extending through 2028.

Anson Tebbetts, Secretary of the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets said, "Dairy delivers for Vermont and the region, but affordability remains a real challenge for farmers. These investments will help reduce costs on the farm while continuing to deliver high-quality dairy products for consumers. We are grateful for our strong partnership with USDA and for the ongoing support of Congress as we work together to strengthen the dairy sector."

"This funding strengthens dairy businesses across the Northeast by supporting innovation, modernization, and long-term resilience," said Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Commissioner Amanda Beal. "NE-DBIC investments help farmers and processors stay competitive while supporting jobs and our local and regional

food systems."

New York State Agriculture Commissioner Richard A. Ball said, "These grants are great news for New York's dairy farms and will allow them to make the critical facility upgrades needed to keep up with a changing marketplace. I am happy to see this level of dedicated support by the NE-DBIC to our dairy farms and processors. New York's dairy industry is the top sector of our agricultural economy, and I am grateful to our partners here in the Northeast for their commitment to ensuring our farms remain strong and viable in the future."

In March, NE-DBIC is hosting the Northeast Dairy Innovation Summit in Albany, NY. The Summit will highlight the impacts and successes of funding, and bring together farmers, processors, and stakeholders across the region.

The NE-DBIC's investment and project strategy promotes innovation and resiliency for regional production of dairy products across an 11-state Northeast region. Established in the 2018 Farm Bill, NE-DBIC is hosted by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, and is funded through the USDA-AMS.

Samaritan's Purse celebrates 12.2 million Operation Christmas gifts

MAINE - Samaritan's Purse is celebrating a successful season after collecting 12.2 million Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts in 2025, sharing the love of Jesus with children in need around the world.

The milestone reflects the generosity of millions of shoebox packers helping to fill shoebox gifts with toys, school supplies and personal care items. Across the U.S., the project collected 10.9 million shoebox gifts in 2025. Combined with those collected from partnering countries, the ministry is now sending over 12.2 million shoebox gifts to children worldwide, including those whose lives were turned upside down by Hurricane Melissa, a category 5 storm that recently struck Jamaica.



"Each shoebox gift is an opportunity to remind boys and girls around the world that God loves them," said Franklin Graham, president of Samaritan's Purse. "We are so thankful for the generosity of every person who packed a shoebox. These gifts are bringing joy and the hope of the Gospel to children in need."

For many children, a shoebox gift is the first gift they have ever received. Each one

is a tangible expression of God's love, offering hope to children facing war, poverty, disease and disaster. Since 1993, Operation Christmas Child has collected and delivered more than 244 million gift-filled shoeboxes to children in more than 170 countries and territories.

While local drop-off locations are closed until National Collection Week, Nov. 16-23, 2026, anyone can participate

year-round by packing a shoebox gift online at samaritanpurse.org/builddonline. These shoebox gifts built online go to the hardest-to-reach areas in the world—whether deep jungles, city slums, or steep mountainsides.

Information about ways to get involved year-round can also be found at samaritanpurse.org/occ.

Operation Christmas Child, a project of Samaritan's Purse, seeks to demonstrate God's love in a tangible way to children in need around the world and, together with the local church worldwide, to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. Since 1993, Operation Christmas Child has collected and delivered more than 244 million gift-filled shoeboxes to children in more than 170 countries and territories.

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Almost Maine

Continued from page 1

to enrich the individual stories and make the overall point of the story more clear. She said that she really appreciates that the vignettes are touching yet realistic. They do not all have perfectly happy endings but they do highlight the sense of community and resilience that define life in Maine. The play touches on the community interdependency that Mainers, especially in a rural northern town, know well. While there are only two characters on stage at a time, we learn, through their conversations, how their lives interconnect, how they feel about each other and how they work together to maintain harmony in the town of Almost.

An innovative aspect of this production is that the cast members switch roles during the second weekend, with each actor performing two different parts, creating a distinct experience for each audience. Switching characters each weekend allows the cast to experience the story from alternate points of view and to showcase their versatility on stage.

Whether you are a native Mainer or a newcomer, this production promises a poignant and relatable evening of theater. By blending a soulful script with a cast that portrays the story from multiple perspectives, Community Little Theater invites the audience to find beauty in life's "almost" moments.

The cast of Almost Maine includes Katy Albert

as Marvalyn, Ginette, Waitress/Villian, Suzette; Heather Marichal as Ginette, Waitress/Villian, Suzette, Sandrine; Kevin Bolduc as Jimmy; Elise Christie as Marci, Glory; Gregory Judd as Pete, Daniel; Lynn McLain as Hope, Rhonda; Sophie Messina as Sandrine, Hope; David Moyses as East, Phil; Lacey Moyses as Glory, Marci; Jason Pelletier as Lendall, Chad, Jason; Hillary Perry as Gayle; Brian Pfohl as Phil, Pete; Daniel

CLT will present Almost Maine February 20th, 21st, 26th, 27th & 28th at 7:30 p.m., and February 22nd and March 1 at 2:00 p.m. Call 783-0958 or visit www.LACLT.com for tickets and information.

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Special section: February is American Heart Month

3 ways to take charge of your health this American Heart Month

Contributed by the American Heart Association

More than 350,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests occur in the United States each year[1]. This February, during American Heart Month, the American Heart Association is calling on everyday citizens to be agents of change by stepping in as the first responder until professional help arrives.

Nine out of every 10 people who experience cardiac arrest outside of a hospital die, in part because they do not receive immediate CPR more than half of the time[2]. The American Heart Association, devoted to changing the future to a world of healthier lives for all, envisions communities where people don't wait for help – they become it.

The Association's Nation of Lifesavers initiative offers suggestions on how to take charge of your personal health and inspire a Nation of Lifesavers this American Heart Month:

Learn CPR and join the Nation of Lifesavers™. In Miami, individuals and families can take an online or in-person CPR course, watch a 90-second video to learn how to save an infant or child using CPR with breaths. To learn more about CPR, including new CPR guidelines published in Circulation this fall, visit heart.org/nation.

Make a plan. During a cardiac emergency, a well-developed plan could make all the difference. Don't wait for help, become it. Remember, you



American Heart Association

are the first responder until professional help arrives. A cardiac emergency response plan (CERP) establishes specific steps to reduce death from cardiac arrest in any setting – be it a school, community organization, workplace or sports facility. Learn more about CERPs and find free resources at heart.org/ceerp.

Get Local. Join the Miami-Dade Heart Walk. Strong communities are built by preparedness. So,

check in. Lace up. Whether it's joining a Heart Walk team, taking a CPR class or making sure your office, school or church has a plan, now is the time to take charge of your own health and the health of your community.

Cardiac arrest can affect anyone, anywhere – at the gym, in the grocery store, or during a child's soccer game. However, bystanders only intervene less than half of the time,

often due to uncertainty or lack of training. Yet CPR, especially if performed immediately, can double or triple a person's chance of surviving sudden cardiac arrest. [3]

"In an emergency, bystanders don't need medical training to save a life. All you need is knowledge, courage and the willingness to act," said Marisol Vera, executive director American Heart Association, Miami. "I've learned through the American Heart Association that cardiac arrest can happen to anyone. But it's also true that anyone can step up and save a life, whether it's a stranger or someone they love, by learning CPR and taking action in an emergency."

The goal of the Association's Nation of Lifesavers initiative is to turn by-

standers into lifesavers, so that in the face of a cardiac emergency anyone, anywhere is prepared and empowered to become a vital link in the chain of survival and provide CPR.

The Association leads global efforts in public awareness, education and policy change, while also serving as the scientific authority that develops the official CPR and emergency cardiovascular care guidelines used by other CPR and first aid training providers in the U.S. and in over 90 countries worldwide.

To join the Nation of Lifesavers and continue to raise awareness during American Heart Month, visit heart.org/nation. Nation of Lifesavers is nationally sponsored by Walgreens.

Heart Month: Learn to help until help arrives

Contributed by the Red Cross

Every second counts when someone is having a cardiac emergency. During National Heart Month, the American Red Cross is urging everyone to learn CPR and how to use an AED.

Last year, a customer collapsed in a convenience store parking lot in Bellingham, Massachusetts. Kevin Barcelos, the assistant store manager, jumped into action. He immediately called 911 and retrieved the AED. Kevin placed the man on his back, checked him over and placed the AED pads on him. No shock was advised from the device, so Kevin began CPR. He continued until a police officer and EMS arrived and transported the man to the hospital. For stepping up and using the skills he learned in his Red Cross training, Kevin earned the Red Cross Certificate of Merit.

HEART ATTACKS happen when the blood supply to part of the heart muscle is blocked. The cells in the affected area become damaged and can die, causing the heart to



Kevin Barcelos (center) surrounded by members of the Red Cross Connecticut and Rhode Island Region.

not pump normally, and if untreated, stop pumping blood.

SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST occurs when the heart suddenly stops beating because of abnormal electrical activity. Knowing what to do is especially important because 70% of all cardiac arrests happen in the home, so the life you may save could be a family member or a friend.

CPR is necessary if someone collapses and is not breathing or only gasping. They'll be unresponsive and won't have a pulse. CPR, performing cycles of chest compressions and rescue breaths, is the best option to use for in-

fant, children and drowning victims. Hands-only CPR is giving chest compressions without any mouth-to-mouth contact.

AED is short for automated external defibrillator. It's a device that analyzes the heart's rhythm and, if necessary, advises the rescuer to deliver an electrical shock. That shock helps the heart re-establish an effective rhythm. AEDs are easy to use. You turn on the device and follow the voice prompts. An AED will never shock someone who doesn't need it. The Red Cross can help you or your organization purchase an AED that meets your needs and fits your budget.

TRAINING can give

you the knowledge and skills to act in an emergency. In-person and online courses are available. Instructors provide individual feedback during in-person training sessions and use "peer-to-peer learning." Everyone who is in a

class is divided into teams and takes turns playing the role of coach, observer and lifesaver. It's a proven way to actively learn and retain what you've learned.

Download the free Red Cross First Aid app and activate the Red Cross

First Aid skill for instant access to information on handling the most common first aid emergencies including how to perform CPR and use an AED.

Knowing what to do in the moments that matter can save someone's life.

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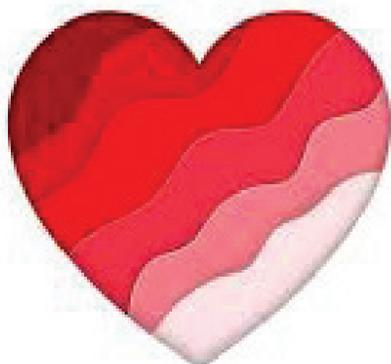


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FEBRUARY IS
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The formation of the Maine Community Radio League

MAINE - In 2024, WRFR-LP Rockland programmer and board member Rachel Albury ran into WERU East Orland station manager Matt Murphy at the Common Ground Fair. Rachel and Matt chatted about the challenges of running a community radio station and how important community-run media is.

WRFR is a volunteer-run, low-power station with a 5-mile broadcast radius from Gay Street in Rockland. On the other hand, WERU has both paid staff and volunteers and a broadcast radius that extends to Midcoast, Downeast and Central Maine from its studio in East Orland and transmitter on Blue Hill Mountain. Both stations are non-commercial stations that produce content unique to their communities.

Hyper-local, community-produced media is a precious resource. In the past few years Maine has seen many historical, local papers close up shop which means less coverage of news and events in Maine communities. Community stations can help fill this gap. WRFR, for example, launched a new show called Good Morning Rockland to highlight organizations and events in the Rockland community. WBFY-LP in Belfast broadcasts the meetings of the Belfast City Council live. WERU has locally-focused programs like Around Town, Talk of the Towns, and What's the Word on Main Street.

For this reason, Rachel and Matt decided to bring together staff and volunteers of Maine's community radio stations to share best practices and resources.

Matt called on Vic Tredwell, manager and co-founder of WBFY-LP in Belfast, to help form the Maine Community Radio League. Vic invited stations WRGY-LP Rangeley, WSHD-LP Eastport, WRCP-LP Readfield, WHPW-LP Harpswell, WXNZ-LP Skowhegan, as well as Maine's college stations to join the League. Online meetings began in March of 2025 and continue monthly.

In the summer of 2025, the Community Radio League had its first in-person gatherings at WRFR in Rockland and then WBFY in Belfast. Folks from as far as Rangeley, Harpswell, and Eastport drove to Midcoast Maine to meet fellow community radio broadcasters and chat on-air about their unique radio stations. Another round of such gatherings are planned for May

and September of 2026.

Community radio broadcasts from unique spaces: WRFR is a converted garage on a residential street, WBFY is in a basement of a former public school (now Waterfall Arts), while WRGY broadcasts out of a theater's box-office in Rangeley. These stations provide a voice for their communities; whether it is interviewing city council members, showcasing local musicians, or sharing the times and locations of warming shelters on the coldest nights.

During the first online meeting it was discussed how community



WBFY-LP and WRFR-LP volunteer Kyle Swan at his home recording studio.



WBFY-LP's on-air studio. Photo by Rachel Albury



Maine Community Radio League's gathering at WBFY-LP in Belfast. Photo by Rachel Albury

radio stations may struggle to find enough programming to fill a 24-7 schedule as they build their team of volunteer programmers. To help out, Vic created a server where programmers and program directors can share and download recordings of radio programs. There are around 15 different programs on the server that include radio theater, antique recordings, local concerts, Native American oral traditions, and LGBTQ+ topics. Not only does the bank of programs help stations add unique Maine-produced shows to their schedules, but it expands the listenership of these programs that may have previously only aired in a short radius from their low-power stations of

origin. By the way, the "-LP" designation in the call letters of most community stations stands for Low Power, meaning that they are licensed for no more than 100 watts of transmission power. "Broadcasting with the power of a light bulb, this is ..."

The Maine Community Radio League that began informally is quickly becoming a strong network of local media, helping more communities in Maine go live, on the air.

If you are part of a Maine community radio station, or want to start one, you are invited to join the League. Email Vic Tredwell at wbfyradio@gmail.com to learn more.

Maine Arts Commission launches Creative Career Labs



AUGUSTA, ME - This winter and spring, the Maine Arts Commission, in partnership with Lights Out Gallery of Norway, will launch Creative Career Lab, a new statewide series designed to help artists, makers, and creative entrepreneurs build sustainable, thriving creative careers.

Creative Career Lab is a series of eight regional, in-person gatherings across Maine, plus one virtual session, offering artists free, practical tools to strengthen the business side of their creative work. The sessions are tailored for anyone pursuing a career in the arts or developing a successful creative side gig, regardless of discipline or experience level.

Participants will gain access to free guidance in marketing, financial management, project planning, proposal writing, and more, with resources designed specifically by artists for artists.

"We're excited to meet artists in their own communities and get these career-building tools directly into their hands," said Martha Piscuskas, Program Director at the Maine Arts Commission. "Once artists have access to these free, web-based tools, they can continue learning and developing at their own pace, long after the session ends."

Each Creative Career Lab will be co-hosted with local arts organizations and bring together artists, regional partners, and professional development providers to foster peer learning, connection, and resource-sharing. Sessions include 90 minutes of hands-on activities, followed by 30 minutes of informal networking.

All sessions are free of charge, held in accessible locations, and open to artists and creative entrepreneurs at every stage of their career. Space is limited, and registration is required.

Creative Career Lab participants will have opportunities to:

- Strengthen connections with regional and statewide artist support networks

- Build professional skills in a welcoming, informal setting

- Create or update a CreativeGround artist directory profile to increase visibility

- Learn about Assets for Artists, including free webinars and funding resources

- Explore the Artists Thrive framework for sustainable creative careers

- Sign up for a new free MITx web offering designed for arts entrepreneurs

- Connect with Maine Arts Commission tools, grants, and services

- Learn about arts advocacy efforts through the Cultural Alliance of Maine

- Lights Out Gallery, known statewide for its pop-up exhibitions and nearly 100 artist interview videos, brings its deep community connections and artist-centered approach to the partnership.

- Artists across Maine are doing incredible work, often siloed and left to navigate the business side of their practice alone," said Daniel Sipe, Executive Director of Lights Out Gallery. "Working with the Maine Arts Commission on the Creative Career Lab is about meeting artists where they are, sharing practical tool, and

building the kind of peer connections that help create careers last."

Creative Career Lab Schedule

Farmington | Monday, February 23, 2026

5:00-7:00 PM Lincoln Auditorium, 270 Main Street

Bangor | Tuesday, February 24, 2026

5:00-7:00 PM Bangor Public Library, 145 Harlow Street

Presque Isle | Wednesday, February 25, 2026

5:00-7:00 PM Presque Isle Public Library, 39 Second Street

Lewiston | Tuesday, March 3, 2026

5:00-7:00 PM L/A Arts, 168 Lisbon Street

Augusta | Thursday, March 5, 2026

5:00-7:00 PM Lithgow Public Library, 45 Winthrop Street

Damariscotta Monday, March 9, 2026

5:00-7:00 PM Skidompha Public Library, 184 Main Street

Portland Tuesday, March 10, 2026

5:00-7:00 PM Portland Public Library, 5 Monument Square

Biddeford | Wednesday, March 11, 2026

5:00-7:00 PM McArthur Library, 270 Main Street

Virtual Session | Thursday, March 19, 2026

5:00-7:00 PM Via Zoom

Registration:

Artists are encouraged to register early <https://mainearts.maine.gov/Pages/Education/Creative-Career-Lab>

Creative Career Lab augments the Maine Arts Commission's ongoing commitment to supporting individual artists across all disciplines statewide.

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

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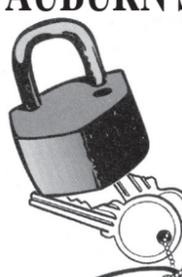
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Saturdays

AUBURN -- Stock up on BOOKS at great prices — 50¢ to \$3! Shop Saturday mornings at the APL Bookstore 9:00-12:30 for gently used books, ever-changing inventory, wide selection of children's, fiction and non-fiction books, plus DVDs and puzzles. Auburn Public Library, lower level, 46 Spring Street, Auburn.

Feb 19

LEWISTON -- Lewiston Public Library's Genre Roulette Book Club samples genres by focusing on one genre for three months at a time: join for one season or come to them all! This winter, the book club will be focusing on Romance across three sub-genres. We will meet monthly in the Couture Room from 5:30 to 6:30pm on the following Thursdays: February 19th, and March 19th.

February will focus on contemporary romance. The group will meet on February 19th to discuss Better Than Fiction by Alexa Martin. Book-hater turned book-seller Drew Young meets author Jasper Williams at an event at her store, and they soon find themselves living a romance that is better than fiction.

This book club is recommended for ages 18+. If you need help locating a copy of any of these titles, please contact our Lending Services Department at 513-3134 or visit the lending desk on the library's first floor.

Feb 20-27

BRUNSWICK -- Brunswick's month-long celebration of poetry, Longfellow Days, begins on February 1st. Here are ways to join in honoring the 2026 living legacy of Longfellow, Maine's world renowned poet: Fri, Feb 20, Christmas Bells Lecture (Merrymaking Room, Thornton Oaks); Sun, Feb 22, Sunday Readings, Part Four (Lancaster Lounge, Moulton Union); Fri, Feb

Calendar

Send your submissions to the Editor. More online.

27, Open Mic & Longfellow Birthday Celebration (UU Church)

For the schedule of Longfellow Days with complete details of all events, go to <https://www.uubrunswick.org/programs/longfellow-days-2026/>

Feb 21

PORTLAND -- GABBY'S DOLLHOUSE LIVE! Merrill Auditorium, Portland.

Feb 21

LEWISTON -- The regular third-Friday contradance is back this coming Friday February 21 at Trinity Commons, beginning at 7:30. Hannah Chamberlain will be the caller, with the Twitchell Hill Fiddleheads providing music. A workshop for beginning dancers will begin at 7.

Admission is a sliding scale for adults, suggested 15.-25., 5. for teens and children 12 and under free.

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.

Feb 27

ROCKLAND -- OUT Maine and The Right Track Band are teaming up again for the "GAYEST event in midcoast Maine"—the Rainbow Gala & Dance Party! The gala is open to anyone 21 years of age and older, and is described as a "queer prom for grownups." The theme is OUT-er space, and the dress code is "what did you really want to wear to prom?"—if your prom was on a spaceship.

All ticket sales and

community donations will directly fund OUT Maine's annual youth retreat Rainbow Ball Weekend. At this a weekend-long event, queer and trans teens participate in educational workshops, do activities outdoors, and have their own safe prom.

Feb 27

LEWISTON -- 11AM-12PM families with children ages 14 and younger will be able to decorate a 'Handmade with Love' apron keepsake using acrylic paint pens and acrylic paint for handprints at Lewiston Public Library.

Participants will be able to choose between an adult sized apron and a child sized apron to decorate. All materials will be provided. Siblings are also welcome to attend and participate. There will be one apron per participant.

Mar 7, 8

LEWISTON -- The Maine Music Society Choral, directed by Dr. Richard Nickerson, is thrilled to announce its upcoming March concert, Echoes of the Earth, to be held on Saturday, March 7, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. and Sunday, March 8, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. at the Franco Center in Lewiston.

Mar 8

AUGUSTA -- Had enough of winter? Join the Augusta Symphony Orchestra for a Spring concert on Sunday, March 8, at 3:00 pm at Cony High School's Viles Auditorium.

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

CLASSIFIED ADS \$25 PER WEEK

MCP

Continued from page 1

who hates every bone in George's body.

The cast of "Moon Over Buffalo" includes: Tim MacLeod and Josh Oakes of Auburn; Nancy Kenneally of Lewiston; Ginger Smith of Winthrop; Isaac Boyd of Chelsea; Danny Gay and Birdie Gay of North Monmouth; and Marisa MacDonald of New Gloucester.

Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$17 for students and seniors. For groups of 10 or more, please contact the box office for group ticket pricing. Showtimes are 7:30 pm on March 13th, 14th and 20th, and 2pm on March 15th, 21st

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and 22nd. On March 21st, the production of the show will additionally provide ASL interpretation of the performance. For more information, or to reserve tickets for this show, please visit www.monmouthcommunityplayers.org,

email our box office at mcpboxoffice@gmail.com or call 207-370-9566.

Ken Ludwig's "Moon Over Buffalo" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc.

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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.

How to Donate?

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Drop-Off Locations:

8 Turning Leaf Drive, Windham, ME

781 Edes Falls Rd, Harrison, ME

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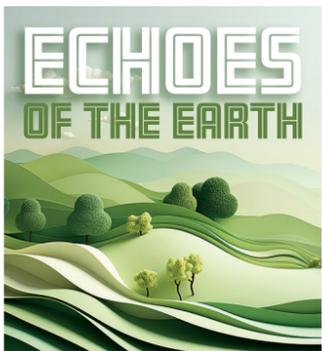


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