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Holiday Spirit Fills Downtown at Lioness Christmas Parade



Jayna Smith jayna@calais.news

Last Friday evening, December 5, the Calais Lioness Club hosted its 28th annual Christmas Parade. Despite frigid single-digit temperatures, hundreds of hardy spectators bundled up and lined Main Street to enjoy a festive and brightly lit night.

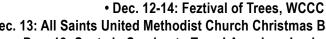
This year's parade featured the largest number of entries in recent years. Leading the procession was Mrs. Claus, who warmly greeted excited children along the route, accompanied by the Lioness elves.

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Volunteers of the Irene Chadbourne Ecumenical Food Pantry, chosen as Grand Marshals by the Lioness Club, ride in a new vehicle provided by Ian Pratt. (Photo by Jayna Smith)

Area Christmas Activities



Dec. 13: All Saints United Methodist Church Christmas Bazaar, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Dec. 18: Santa is Coming to Town! American Legion Auxiliary #59,

Pembroke, 6 to 7 p.m. • Dec. 19: Princeton Parks & Rec. Home Decorating Contest judging • Dec. 21: Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, Congregational Church, Dennysville, 4 p.m.

County Budget Committee Passes \$11.8 Million Spending Package for 2026

Paul Sylvain

The Washington County **Budget Advisory Committee** slogged through an exhausting, sometimes repetitive four-hour meeting on Dec. 4, but in its final minutes managed to approve a 2026 county budget totaling \$11,801,820.

The BAC was sharply split, with Dan Daly, Sonny Beal, Harry Fish, Wayne Jones and Tiffany Strout supporting the

motion on the budget and David Colson, Crystal Galena, Chris Loughlin, Ben Edwards and Lewis Pinkham opposing it. The tie forced BAC Chairman Eastport City Manager Brian Schuth to cast the tiebreaking sixth vote in favor of the \$11.8 million budget.

One observer was overheard comparing the four-hour meeting to a rubber raft being rowed with one oar.

County Manager Renee Gray

said on Monday the amount approved by the BAC was the same budget the committee asked the Finance Department to prepare after its previous meeting in November. It includes an additional \$50,000 in Building maintenance and a second, additional \$50,000 for bookkeeping and audit support, Gray said.

She added that while the budget does include some

(continued on page 13)

Commissioner Howard Calls on Public to Weigh In on County Budget

Jayna Smith jayna@calais.news

Washington County Commissioner Billy Howard wants residents to understand both the size of the proposed 2026 county budget and who actually has authority over its final form. His message comes as the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) approved an \$11.8 million spending plan on Dec.

4 after a contentious four-hour meeting.

Howard shared with this publication that the resulting tax commitment is \$1.8 million higher than last year, and that on top of that increase, towns will also face added costs from the county's tax anticipation note (TAN).

"I want people to know and know who their budget committee people are," Howard

said. "If they're happy with [the proposal], they don't have to call. If they're not happy, they know who to call for their area."

Howard also shared that county commissioners do not have final authority over the budget. He said the public often believes commissioners set the final numbers, but the process does not work that way. Com-

(continued on page 3)





Santa and Mrs. Claus had their hands full with twins Lucy and Jack and their cousin Sebastian during the annual Calais Fire Christmas Party last Saturday. (Submitted photo)

Commissioners Move Forward with Plans to Adjust County **Fiscal Year**

Move to Appointed Finance Director

Paul Sylvain

Advertised as a Monday morning "workshop," Washington County Commissioners Courtney Hammond, Billy Howard, and Chairman David Burns rolled up their sleeves

and got down to business at the county courthouse on Dec. 1, opening the public portion of the session by voting to nominate Wavne Jones to the Land Use Planning Commission (LUPC). Jones's appointment. (continued on page 15)



School News 👅

Downeast Credit Union & Insurance Launches Downeast Dunkers



Downeast Credit Union team members Tasheena and Samantha present a \$2,000 check to the Woodland High School boys' basketball team, kicking off the Downeast Dunkers program. Woodland will use the funds to purchase warm-up jerseys and support other team expenses, while Calais High School plans to direct its contribution to its Blue Devil Gymnasium Fundraiser. (DECU photo)

Downeast Credit Union & Insurance is excited to announce the launch of its 2025/2026 Downeast Dunkers program, all in support of local schools. This year, the program returns with an expanded goal, combining game-day contests with a guaranteed donation structure and a special perk for loyal Downeast members.

The Downeast Dunkers program is the popular half-time ball toss contest, where fans compete for a cash prize, and all proceeds from ball sales benefit the school athletics fund. Game day excitement also includes the t-shirt tosses between quarters to reward the loudest fans.

Students can also make an impact with the Free Throw Pledge. For every successful free throw made by the varsity basketball teams across all games — home, away, and

tournaments — Downeast Credit Union & Insurance will contribute \$2 directly to the school's athletic department.

Last season, the program contributed over \$23,000 to participating schools, a total that the credit union aims to exceed this year. While fundraising efforts take place at basketball games, the funds donated by Downeast are flexible and can be used by the schools for any school- or boosters-related need they have.

Kicking off the season, Downeast has already provided a \$2,000 donation to each of the six participating area high schools—Calais, Machias, Mt. View, Richmond, Washington Academy, and Woodland—to purchase winter warm-up jerseys.

To thank its members for their support and encourage high attendance at local games, Downeast Credit Union is proudly introducing the Downeast Dunkers Loyalty Admissions Program.

Credit union members who present a Downeast Loyalty Card to the admissions table will receive free admission for themselves and one guest to select basketball games. To obtain a Loyalty Card, Downeast members must have a DECU checking account with \$1,000+ in direct deposits each month and use their debit card at least 10 times per month; eligible members can call 800-427-1223 or stop by their local Downeast branch to request their Loyalty Card.

For the complete game schedule and details on the Loyalty Admissions Program, please visit the official Downeast Dunkers webpage: www.downeastcu.com/dunkers

Washington County Retired Teachers Association Award Classroom Funds

The Washington County Retired Teachers awarded \$100 checks to five elementary schools after their last meeting of 2025 in October. The funds will be given to area elementary schools, five per month.

The schools receiving funds this year are Alexander Elementary School, Baileyville Elementary School, Beals Elementary School, and Calais Elementary School.

Gifts will resume being disbursed at the next meeting in April 2026. The group is open to all retired school personnel and is dedicated to supporting educators and area schools.



Stephanie Strongin delivers a check to Sue Carter, Principal of Calais Elementary School, from the Washington County Retired Teachers Association.





Stephanie Strongin delivers checks to Woodland Elementary School Principal Alyssa Stephens and Alexander Elementary School Principal Trevor Flood from the Washington County Retired Teachers Association.

Calais Middle/High School First Quarter Honor Roll

Seniors 12th Grade - *HIGH HONORS*: Katie Griffin, Maggie O'Rourke, Dana Peasley. HON-ORS: Peyton Beal, Lena Chambers, Sophia Civiello, Jayden Fitzsimmons, Bryson Gardner, Cameron Harmon, Hayden Lewis, Sa Li, RyAnne Mitchell, Lucas Morrell, Peter Morrell, Chayeden Newell, Noah Pike, Hannah Shannon, Caleb Townsend.

Juniors 11th Grade - *HIGH HONORS*: Jason McGuire. *HONORS*: Parker Bailey, Michael Barnard, Isabella Bishop, Sadye Cottrell, Molleigh Cox, Dylan Knight, Madison Lyon, Odessa Marino, Khloe Milburn, Cassidy Morrison, Mackenzie Roberts, Kaci Small, Garrett Storey, Alexis Sulkowski, Liam Travis, Olivia Turner, Bradley Walton, Violet Welsh, Sarah Wentworth, Noah White

Sophomores 10th Grade - *HIGHEST HONORS*: Maximilian Kessler. *HONORS*: Kaidence Barnard-Newell, Parker Cole, Rhys Coleman-Dilio, Dillon Craft, Brayden Ellsmore, Anneliese Eyerman, Henry Fitzgerald, Jack Lanier, Aurora LeVasseur, Ella Lewey, Sadie McPhee, Nevaeh Moores, Evan Morrell, Turner Redding, Quinn Rollins, Helen Staples, Maliah Webb, Jerry Wood.

Freshmen 9th Grade - *HIGHEST HONORS*: Ami Griffin. *HIGH HONORS*: Nevaeh Holmes. *HONORS*: Brooke Corbett, Jordyn Craig, Madeline DelMonaco, Reese Ellsmore, Alizay Mitchell, Brayan Shirley.

Eighth Grade - *HIGHEST HONORS*: Hailey Richard, Haidyn Seavey. *HIGH HONORS*: Jeremiah Barnard-Newell, Preston Day, Abby Hallowell, Sophia Rogers. *HONORS*: Ellery Dow, Luke Gardner, Delylah Grass, Abigail Moses, Gabriel Tavarez, Ava Townsend, Parker Walton, Davy Warren.

Seventh Grade - *HIGHEST HONORS*: Winton Graeber, Mayson Pulk, Sophia Stepan. *HIGH HONORS*: Madison Gardner, Cameron Macdonald, Andi-Jo Moores. *HONORS*: Tobin Bailey, Baileigh Collins, Renezmae Crossman, Josie Gardner, Connor Grass, Cailen Hanson, Reed Leachman, Harper McLean, Damon Moholland, Daniel Newell, Danziel Rodriguez, Leeam Roerich, Elizabeth Romero.

Christian Emery named to the Dean's List at Palmer College of Chiropractic

Christian Emery of Calais, ME, has been named to the 2025 summer trimester Dean's List at Palmer College of Chiropractic's Main Campus in Davenport, Iowa.

Pratt Annual Donation-Match Campaign Continues



Last week, the medical staff at Calais Community Hospital presented a \$550 donation to Ian and Erika Pratt for the Pratt dealership's donation-match campaign for Washington County food pantries. Through December 24, checks can be dropped off directly at the dealership for it to be matched up to \$10,000. (Pratt photo)

Wesley Tree Festival



The Wesley Tree Festival, named after a four-year-old East Machias boy who lost his life in a tragic ATV accident in 2013, continues to grow and grow in popularity each year. The festival, organized by the Wesley Foundation, uses funding to provide youth enrichment activities across Down East Maine, and has been raising upwards of \$100,000 for the past several years. No totals were available on this year's tally as of press time, but observers said pictures like the one above were commonplace throughout the weekend. (Photo by Will Tuell)

CMHI Property Management, Inc.

Accepting applications for apartments

Experience the best of Baileyville, Maine at Summit Street Apartments

We are now accepting applications to rent on our newly constructed and spacious apartments.

CURRENTLY AVAILABLE: 1 BEDROOM & 2 BEDROOM

Rent includes all utilities, wi-fi, heat, snow and garbage removal.



Stop in at the Calais Methodist Home Offfice in Calais on 116 Palmer Street for an application, call 454-7196 or email chelsie@cmhihome.org

Howard

(continued from page 1)

missioners present a draft to the BAC, which reviews and amends it. Once returned to commissioners, they can vote yes or no and send it back to the committee. After that final return, the budget becomes the BAC's decision.

With the BAC already divided 5–5 on Dec. 4 and forced to rely on Chair Brian Schuth's tie-breaking vote to pass the \$11.8 million figure, Howard

said it is more important than ever for residents to understand who represents them on the committee.

The commissioners will meet on Dec. 11 to decide whether to accept the BAC's budget or send it back with recommended changes. If that happens, the BAC would need eight votes to override the commissioners—an uncertain prospect given the deep divide at last week's meeting.

Howard said his goal is simply to ensure residents know

where to bring their questions or concerns before the budget becomes final on Jan. 1.

"I just want the public to know who they can contact if they're not happy with the proposed budget increase," he said. Residents who want to express support or concern may contact their area's BAC representative.

Residents can find their Budget Advisory Committee representative at https://washingtoncountymaine.com/policies/bac-contacts or see page 13.



COOKBOOK 50

Vining with Viane



A friend shared this recipe with me. I have made similar meatballs before using stuffing mix, and they are wonderful. You could probably use some leftover turkey in place of fresh ground turkey because the sausage will hold them together. Just grind your cooked turkey well and add some extra broth to the turkey mixture.

TURKEY & STUFFING MEATBALLS

½ c. yellow onion
1 rib celery, chopped fine
¾ c. chicken or turkey broth
¼ c. water
4 T. butter, divided
1 (6oz) box turkey Stove Top Stuffing mix
1 lb. ground turkey
½ lb. ground sausage
1 egg / Salt & Pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 400°F. Add 2 T. Butter to fry pan and saute onions and celery to soften, about 4 minutes. Add remaining 2 T. butter, the broth, and water, and bring to boil. Add stuffing mix and stir well. Remove from the heat and remove the stuffing mixture to a large bowl to cool for 2 minutes. Once the celery/onion mixture is cooled slightly, add the ground turkey, sausage, egg, and salt and pepper to the bowl. Mix until well combined. Roll or scoop into 1" balls and place on a greased baking pan. Bake for 15 minutes. If you want them more browned, you can put them under the broiler for a couple of minutes.

NOTE: Serve over mashed potatoes, with gravy, green beans, and cranberry sauce on the side for a nice dinner idea. You can also make a hot sub with these turkey balls, by removing some bread from inside a torpedo roll and placing three meatballs in the roll, top with a little warm gravy and a sprinkle of mozzarella or your favorite shredded cheese, and bake at 400°F until cheese melts and your roll gets slightly crusty, about 5-10 minutes. Top with cranberry sauce to serve.

Illegal Iraqi National Accused of Lying on Gun Background Check Arrested in Ellsworth

An Iraqi national living unlawfully in the United States was arrested in Ellsworth after federal agents say he attempted to buy firearms, including a 9-mm pistol and an AK-47, using falsified information on required background-check paperwork.

U.S. Border Patrol's Houlton Sector said the man was taken into custody on October 20 in the parking lot of a Home Depot store, following an investigation that began in Holden before he traveled to Ellsworth. Agents say the man had overstayed his visa and was prohibited from possessing or purchasing firearms.

It remains unclear for what purpose the Iraqi was seeking the weapons, though it is common in Iraq for a head of household to own both a sidearm and an automatic rifle for home protection.

Federal law requires all gun buyers to complete a background-check form verifying identity, legal presence, and eligibility. Authorities say discrepancies in the suspect's paperwork triggered the enforcement action. Providing false information on federal firearm forms is itself a crime, and non-citizens who are not lawfully present in the country cannot legally acquire guns.

The arrest comes during what Border Patrol officials describe as a record-setting year for immigration enforcement in Maine. As of October 1, the Houlton Sector recorded 725 apprehensions of individuals unlawfully present in the U.S., surpassing a previous record set in 2001.

Federal officials have not released additional information on potential charges or next steps in the case.

This story was originally published by The Maine Wire on Dec. 5, 2025. Written by Jon Fetherston.



www.calais.news



CALAIS POLICE DEPARTMENT

312 North Street, Calais Business Line: 207-454-2752

Non-Emergencies/Dispatch: 1-800-432-7303



BAILEYVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

63 Broadway, Baileyville Business Line: 207-427-6203

Non-Emergencies/Dispatch: 207-427-6992

Governor Wills Radio Address

The Federal Government Must Address the Health Care Crisis

Let's take a step back through our nation's history for a mo-

In the 1930s, it was the federal government that created the Social Security system, a lifeline for millions of people that was created after the Great Depression. It was in the 1950s that President Dwight D. Eisenhower, a Republican, created the Interstate Highway System, also a lifeline, a network of safe roads connecting Americans from coast to coast. It was the federal government that created the Civil Rights Act and sent a man to the moon

Look, when the federal government finally recognizes the depth of a problem that requires a national solution, it can make historic changes that improve the lives of every American. Yet today, while millions of Americans are unable to afford basic life-saving health care, a universal need that requires federal action, the federal government does nothing. When it comes to one of the most fundamental needs of American families, the federal government is just standing down. In fact, in many respects, they're making health care less affordable, more costly.

Well, here in Maine, we've been working hard to expand health coverage for small businesses, for self-employed people, for families across Maine, and we've tried to make that coverage more affordable. On my first day in office, for instance, I expanded MaineCare in accordance with the will of the people. At one point, more than 100,000 people had health care through MaineCare expansion, which includes preventive care like cancer screenings.

We also expanded health care for children and mental health services across the state. And we enacted the Made for Maine Health Coverage Act, which established the state-based insurance marketplace, CoverME. gov, and which made many preventative care visits either free or at least less coulty.

free or at least less costly. We were doing pretty well, but if the federal government allows enhanced health care tax credits to expire at the end of this month, health coverage for more than 60,000 people in Maine will be unaffordable. I wrote to Maine's Congressional Delegation back in September, urging them to extend those tax credits. Now it's Open Enrollment time in Maine — when people eligible for health insurance can sign up for health insurance for next year under the ACA — and many people are already seeing their health insurance rates skyrocket.

One man from Cumberland said if his premiums increase, as he expects, health insurance will be the single largest expense for his family — more than his mortgage. A woman in Dover-Foxcroft said she owns her own mental health practice, and that a loss of insurance reimbursement would make it impossible to keep her doors open. Well, that would not only leave her without a livelihood but would also leave hundreds of her patients without access to care.

Well, there are so many ries all around Maine like this, and every one of them breaks my heart because it doesn't have to be this way. The bottom line is, without these health insurance tax credits, more people will be forced to go without health insurance because they can't afford it, and they'll delay care until they wind up in the emergency room or with medical debt that lasts a lifetime. Hospitals across Maine will have to bear more of the cost of uncompensated care or uninsured care because of many people going without insurance. Some of those health care providers may have to cut back services or even close, leaving many folks without access to care and leaving communities without some of their largest employers.

It was good bipartisan federal action in the 1960s that created Medicare. It was bipartisan federal action that brought us the Interstate Highway System, the unemployment system, and Social Security. The health care crisis in this country today begs for strong action on the part of the federal government. The time has come to address the health care crisis.

Doctor Jeffrey Barkin, former president of Maine Medical Association, wrote recently in a column: "Getting sick is not partisan. Losing health insurance is not partisan. Bankruptcy is not partisan. Illness does not check who you voted for," he said. "Or how you feel about Congress or whether your state is red or blue. When a child spikes a fever or a parent hears the word cancer, politics fall away. Only people remain."

The President and Congress must extend the enhanced tax credits before they expire to prevent health care costs from skyrocketing for people across our country and people here in Maine — people who have started their own businesses, gone out on their own with the support of those health care tax credits — and they can't do without them.

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Trecolom Studies

BY JONATHAN REISMAN Opinion

Rumors, Dreams, and Nightmares for 2026

A Barnburner Downeast Republican Senate Primary

Senator Marianne Moore is termed out, and her successor is not clear. House Minority Leader Billy Bob Faulkingham (R-Winter Harbor) intends to run for the seat, and a primary from a Washington County Republican is a distinct possibility. County Budget Committee Vice Chair Ben Edwards is a possibility who has been privately meeting with local Republicans to gauge interest. Winter Harbor is, of course, in Hancock, not Washington County, but Washington County's population is insufficient to be a stand-alone Senate district.

Rep. Faulkingham is well known in Augusta, but he'll need to do some eastward outreach throughout Washington County to prevail if a local Republican steps forward.

I don't think Washington County has had a Democratic Senator in at least 25 years.

Gold Plated U.S. Senate Race

The U.S. Senate contest between Susan Collins and either Graham Platner or Janet Mills promises to be a nasty, expensive affair. There already is a substantial amount of both pro and anti-Collins advertising on, and it's just going to get worse.

In the pro-Collins camp is the Pine Tree PAC, which has raised \$5.6 million, and Laurel Libby's Lead

Me, which is backed by millionaire Timothy Mellon. Their ads have emphasized Senator Collins' years of constituent service. Negative ads are being put on by a \$700,000 Majority Forward buy and the Democratic Senate Majority Fund. We can expect many more telling us that Senator Collins is indeed the wicked witch of Aroostook County.

Polling released this week suggests that Platner holds a 10-15 point lead on Janet Mills, despite his nazi tattoo and socialist policy views (or possibly because of them). Platner is young, charismatic, and interesting, all things Janet Mills is not. Our two-term Governor/former Attorney General/western Maine/Farmington princess is headed for a humiliating fall, and she has no one to blame but herself and Chuck Schumer.

2nd CD

Jared Golden's withdrawal may yet entice a few more Democrats into the race to join Matt Dunlap and carpetbagger Jordan Wood, but Troy Jackson is apparently not one of them; although State Senator Joe Baldacci may be. Republican candidate Paul LePage picked up a primary opponent when Army veteran James Clark entered the race over Thanksgiving.

Gubernatorial Race

Gubernatorial candidates continue to make their way

Downeast....next is Ben Midgely, coming Downeast Dec. 18.

Hannah Pingree continues to be the Democratic favorite. As the architect and brains behind Maine's Climate Action Plan, *Maine Won't Wait*, Pingree bears primary responsibility for policies that have raised the price of electricity to .30 (and soon .40)/kWh but have averted no climate change whatsoever. Hannah's made energy unaffordable while having no effect on climate change at all.

The Democratic turnout in next June's primaries will be driven by Graham Platner voters. Democrats voting for Platner over Mills in the Senate primary are unlikely to vote for Janet Mills' endorsed successor, Hannah Pingree, in the gubernatorial primary. If Platner wins the Senate primary, Pingree is unlikely to win the gubernatorial primary; Shenna Bellows is the likely beneficiary of a Platner insurgency. Running a socialist and a flaming partisan liberal should be the Truth in Advertising the Democratic Party badly needs to embrace.

Jon Reisman is an economist and policy analyst who retired from the University of Maine at Machias after 38 years. He resides on Cathance Lake in Cooper, where he is a Statler and Waldorf intern. Mr. Reisman's views are his own, and he welcomes comments as letters to the editor here or to him directly via email at jreisman@maine.edu.

Republican Radio Address

Addressing Maine's Housing Crisis with Less Government

Sen. Dick Bradstreet

Senate Republican Leader Trey Stewart recently interviewed Senator Dick Bradstreet, Senate Republican Lead on the Legislature's Housing and Economic Development Committee and Labor Committee.

Stewart: Senator, you are a veteran in the Legislature here, a veteran on some of these really critical issues, including housing, and that's what I want to talk about today. What's happening in housing? What are some Republican ideas and solutions to this problem that is widespread across Maine?

Bradstreet: Thank you for that. Yes, my background is in housing. I was a modular and manufactured housing retailer for almost 30 years here in Maine. I'm quite familiar with what goes on in the housing industry.

What we're looking at now is trying to control costs of what it takes to build a home for Maine people, not only single-family homes but in multi-family housing as well. We're looking at some of the regulatory burdens, some of the code requirements, some of the permitting processes — trying to make a clear delineation between who has authority over certain areas. Right now, it's kind of a hodgepodge.

Builders that I talk to — I'm still in contact with many people in my industry as well as traditional home builders (stick builders) — they keep telling me that it's very difficult to even price a home in Maine because of the changes

in the codes, let alone the cost of materials and the problems with getting labor.

Stewart: As a Republican, I'm always skeptical of when government is the solution to problems. I actually think, more often than not, government is the problem in a lot of ways. I think that is applicable here in housing. Let's talk about regulations, red tape, and the codes you mentioned a minute ago. This is probably where Republicans and Democrats differ most. We believe government is part of the problem and is adding to those costs, adding to those requirements, which are making it harder for people to get into new homes, and Democrats usually are the ones piling on the regulatory burdens. Let's talk about that for a minute.

Bradstreet: Currently right now, in the industrialized housing sector we have a manufactured housing board that regulates that industry — the manufactured and modular industry. Licenses are required in that industry as opposed to in the traditional stick building industry where they're not required.

We're looking at relieving some of those licensing requirements. It's a pretty steep hill to climb for a lot of people who are familiar with construction but maybe not as familiar with that particular type of construction. We think we can expedite the process that they need to go through so they can start utilizing that [expertise] to build homes in the State of Maine.

Stewart: Regulations really

seem to be one of the things that are driving costs the most for new builds. Tell me a little bit about what that looks like.

Bradstreet: I recently went to a project in Westbrook where they were building a multifamily and the home was a modular construction and had been inspected in the plant. The city code enforcement wanted to disassemble part of it to look at some of the components, driving up costs, time and not to mention the frustration it caused the developer and the builder.

In addition to the code requirements, some of the energy requirements we've adopted in the last few years have really not been looked at from a cost-benefit basis. You can't save money on a home that hasn't been built. You can't build a home if it's not affordable to build; and if the codes and requirements make a home too unaffordable, it will never be built.

Stewart: In a nutshell, the biggest priorities for Republicans are critical investments in our workforce, getting rid of red tape we don't need that's only making it more expensive to build housing, and working with the private sector instead of opposing them, like with what we're seeing happen in New York and other places that are run by Democrats.

Bradstreet: Yeah, that's basically it. In short, we need to keep the government out of the way as much as we can. Let the people who are qualified and trained and have done this before — allow them to do it without all the obstacles that

government puts in place.

Obstacles cost time, time costs money, and money lost in a building project is only going to drive up costs. We can make things more affordable here in Maine if we're allowed to do it. Let us do it.

Stewart: Senator Bradstreet, it's great to see you, as always. Thank you so much for sharing your thoughts on the Republican vision for what housing looks like in the State of Maine, Republican solutions to that problem, and what our future could hold under Republican leadership.

Bradstreet: I appreciate the opportunity to be here. We could get a lot of things done for the State of Maine if we're given the opportunity to do so. That's what we need.

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"When once a Republic is corrupted, there is no possibility of remedying any of the growing evils but by removing the corruption and restoring its lost principles; every other correction is either useless or a new evil."

-Thomas Jefferson



Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols in Dennysville

The annual Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols will be held at the Congregational Church in Dennysville on Sunday, December 21, at 4 p.m. Carols both old and new will be led by the Dennysville Festival Choir under the direction of Dr. Colin Windhorst, illuminating nine traditional lessons from the Old and New Testament Scriptures telling the story of Christmas. read by members of the church and community. The choir and congregation will be accompanied on a newly installed Allen organ by Susan Andraeas.

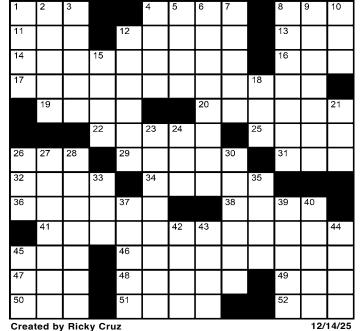
Boris Ord's "Adam Lay y bounden" lays the foundation for the service with an ancient medieval text about Adam's lost innocence, followed by a lively arrangement of the Sussex Carol by Philip Ledger. The prophetic prelude begins with the popular Dutch carol "King Jesus hath a Garden" by Charles Wood, Carl Rutti's haunting but vigorous arrangement of "I wonder as I wander," and an eerie evocation of "The night he was born" by Bob Chilcott. The promise of a Savior is heard in Franz Biebl's "Ave Maria," the longing for peace in Malcom Williamson's "This Christmas Night," and Gabriel's announcement to Mary in "Nova, Nova."

The birth of Jesus is celebrated in "Hodie, Hodie!" by Jan P. Sweelinck, and the spiritual "Rise up, Shepherd," arranged by Cynthia Nash Wolfe of Perry. "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Ives and Harold Darke's "In the bleak mid-winter" remember the arrival of the Magi from the east. John Rutter's "What Sweeter Music" captures the quintessential sweetness of the nativity, concluding with John Gardner's rousing "Tomorrow shall be my dancing day.

The congregation is invited to sing many familiar carols with the choir, making the house of worship ring with praises in this traditional and festive celebration of Christmas.

THE TV CROSSWORD

by Ricky Cruz



- 1 Kunal Nayyar's "Big Bang Theory"
- role 4 "The Cuphead Show!" villain King ___ and flow
- Palindromic conjunction
 Severance corporation
- 13 Producing duo 14 Tony Nelson on "I Dream of
- Jeannie", e.g.
- Big name in 17 With "The", holiday movie with
- Tom Hanks
- 19 "Star Trek: Deep Space
- 20 Natasha of "Poker Face" 22 Holmes of "Dawson's Creek"
- 25 Rotating fixture on "The Voice" 26 "Doesn't matter", over text
- 29 Top tens, e.g. 31 Some genetic data
- 32 Leavened flatbread 34 Pondered (on)
- 36 "A Man on the 38 Prefix with dynamic
- 41 He used a sapling for a Christmas tree

Solution to Last Week's Puzzle

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9	©2025 Tribune Content Agency, LLC 12/14/2										4/25		

45 Manufacturer of pens and lighters 46 Cal Dodd's "X-Men '97" role

47 Ortiz of "Devious Maids"

48 Washed (down)

50 TV color standard "The Simpsons" talk show host

52 Graduating students (abbr.)

DOWN

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- zing crime 3 Yin Yang actor in "The
- Expendables" 4 "___: Prophecy"
 5 High-res theater option
- 6 Pairs of rhyming lines
- 7 Way in 8 "Lou Grant" star
- 9 Pierce of "MobLand"
- 10 "The Fresh Prince of 12 Beauty brand with an apostrophe
- and an accent 15 Put on 29-Across, maybe
- 18 Beauty brand sharing its name with a goddess
- "When are you getting here?"
- 23 "Russian Doll" plot point 24 The NCAA's Cyclones
- 26 Kamoze of reggae _ with the Stars"
- 28 Game show set in a moving
- vehicle
- 30 Ocean floor 33 Peeples of "Fame'
- 35 Writer Earl ___ Biggers 37 Sci-fi series featuring the
- TARDIS, shortly 39 Irritates
- 40 Jon, to Garfield
- 42 "Casablanca" role Lund 43 Stuntman Knievel
- Rescue'

45 "

What's Up, Calais?

The annual Feztival of Trees returns this weekend at Washington County Community College, running Friday through Sunday. Hosted by the Schoodic and Washington County Shrine Clubs, this beloved holiday tradition supports children receiving care through Shriners Hospitals and clinics in New England, Boston, and Montreal, along with several local charities. Admission is just one dollar, giving visitors access to view nearly a hundred beautifully decorated trees loaded with gifts. Tickets will be available for purchase for a chance to win the trees and all their trimmings.

The Calais Free Library is also bustling with holiday activities throughout the month. On Thursday, December 11, at 3 p.m., local author Winnie Johnson will read her newly published children's book, with crafts for kids to follow. Adults can enjoy a festive evening of creativity during Adult Craft Night on Friday, December 12, from 6 to 8 p.m. The fun continues for the younger crowd at the children's craft event on Friday, December 19, from 1 to 4 p.m. For more information, contact the Calais Free Library at 207-454-2758.

Jayna Smith - jayna@calais.news

The festival church bazaar on Saturday, December 13, will surely get you into the holiday spirit. It will be held at All Saints United Methodist Church, 849 Main Street, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Shoppers can browse a variety of handmade goods, treats, and unique seasonal finds, and non-profit organizations are invited to join the fun by contacting Pastor Sharon Grant at 207-454-3926.

A Winter Solstice-themed nature walk is planned at Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge on Saturday, December 20, from 9 to 11:30 a.m. Led by Maine Master Naturalists, the outing will focus on identifying animal tracks, signs of hibernation, and winter bird species, with binoculars available. Participants should dress warmly and bring snowshoes or skis if conditions allow; the walk will be canceled in the event of rain or a snowstorm. For more information, contact Bill at 207-904-7023

Send me your news, your shout-outs for good deeds done, or your well wishes to give, and I'll be sure to share them here. Until next week, I hope you stay well, stay safe, and be happy.

Winter Solstice Nature Walks Scheduled at Moosehorn and Edmunds Units

Two Winter Solstice-themed nature walks are planned this season at Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge. The first walk will take place Saturday, Dec. 20, from 9 to 11:30 a.m., beginning at the upper parking lot next to the bathrooms at the Moosehorn main unit.

Maine Master Naturalists will lead participants on a pre-Winter Solstice outing, helping identify animal tracks in the snow, signs of hibernation, and winter bird species. Binoculars will be available. Participants are encouraged to dress warmly and bring snowshoes or skis if conditions allow. The walk will be canceled in the event of rain or a snowstorm.

For more information, contact Bill at 207-904-7023 or visit the Friends of Moosehorn or Moosehorn NWR Facebook pages. This walk is sponsored by the Friends of Moosehorn and Fundy Audubon.

A second Winter Solstice walk is scheduled for Sunday, December 21, from 9 to 11:30 a.m., meeting at the South Road entrance of the Edmunds Unit. Peg Welles, a guide with Friends of Moosehorn, will lead the trek, focusing on winter tracks, hibernating wildlife, and bird activity on the first official day of winter. Participants should dress warmly and bring snowshoes or skis if needed, along with binoculars. The event will be canceled in the case of rain or a snowstorm.

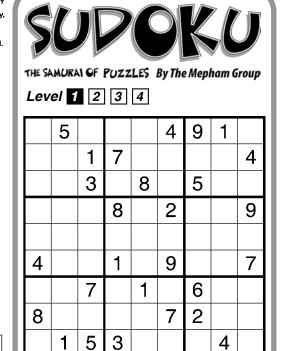
For more information, contact the Refuge at 207-454-7161 or check the Friends of Moosehorn or Moosehorn Refuge Facebook pages. This walk is sponsored by the Friends of Moosehorn.



By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

INSTRUCTIONS: Find as many words as you can by linking letters up, down, side-to-side and diagonally, writing words on a blank sheet of paper. You may only use each letter box once within a single word. Play with a friend and compare word finds, crossing out common words.

BOGGLE" POINT SCALE 3 letters = 1 point 4 letters = 2 points 5 letters = 3 points 6 letters = 4 points 7 letters = 6 points 8 letters = 10 points 9+ letters = 15 points	Boggle BrainBusters Bonus We put special brain-busting words into the grid of letters. Can you find them? Find AT LEAST SIX WORDS STARTING AND ENDING WITH "A" in the grid of letters.
YOUR BOGGLE ² RATING 151+ = Champ 101-150 = Expert 61-100 = Pro 31- 60 = Gamer	
21 - 30 = Rookie 11 - 20 = Amateur 0 - 10 = Try again	Lastweek's NET • PLAYER • SHOT
BOGGLE is a trademark of Hasbro, Inc. © 2021 Hasbro, Inc. Distributed by Tribune Com	answers: MATCH • COURT • ACE



9	4	7	3	5	6	1	8	2
2	1	3	9	4	8	7	5	6
6	8	5	1	2	7	4	3	9
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3	9	6	4	8	2	5	1	7
8	7	2	5	1	9	6	4	3
1	3	8	2	7	4	9	6	5
7	6	4	8	9	5	3	2	1
5	2	9	6	3	1	8	7	4

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-bv-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku visit sudoku.org.uk

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FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Irene Chadbourne Ecumenical Food Pantry, 513 Main St., Calais: Mondays: 3 - 5 p.m.; Thursdays: 10 - noon; Fridays: 1 - 3 p.m.

First Thursday of the month: Free luncheon for seniors 65 and older, Church of the Open Bible, 1222 Airline Road, Alexander, noon.

ARTS & EXHIBITS

Mondays

Monday Night Music Circle, Cobscook Institute, 6 to 8:30 p.m. Bring an instrument or your voice, or just come to listen. Join online or in person. FMI, 207-733-2233.

Tuesdays

Knitting group, Pembroke Library, 10:30 a.m. Bring a lunch and a project to work

Wednesdays

First Wednesday of the month: Chat n' Sew, Woodland Baptist Church, Baileyville, 11 a.m. to about noon. Business meeting 1-3 p.m. FMI, stcroixquilters.com.

Wednesday Morning Knitters at the Calais Free Library, 10-noon, 2nd & 4th Wednesdays of each month. All skill levels welcome. FMI: 207 454-2758.

Third Wednesday of the month: Chat n' Sew/Workshop, Woodland Baptist Church, Baileyville, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. FMI, stcroixquilters.com.

Wednesdays, 2:30 p.m., Artful Conversations (online), a weekly Zoom chat about art and artists. Register to join at www.eastportgallery.com/ artful-conversations.

Thursdays

Chancel Choir rehearsals, choir room of parish hall in Dennysville, 3:15 p.m. Dennysville Choir will assemble at 4 p.m. in the main room of the parish hall. FMI, 796 3905.

Thursdays, 3:30-4:30 p.m., World and Contemporary Dance Group, Eastport Arts Center. All welcome; \$5/person donation appreciated.

Thursdays, 5-6 p.m., Just Dance, freestyle dance group, Eastport Arts Center. All welcome; \$5/person donation appreciated.

Saturdays

Every third Saturday of the month, Nature Walk, Moosehorn NWR, Baring, 9-11:30 a.m. FMI, 207-904-7023.

Sundays

Sundays, 1-2 p.m., Tai Chi with Valerie Michael, for older teens and adults, Eastport Arts Center. \$5 to \$15 donation per class, no one will be turned away for lack of funds.

Supeqi Ehpicik Drum group

meets at the Woluhke Center, Pleasant Point, 2 to 4 p.m.

BINGO

Sundays

Lubec American Legion Post 65, 500 County Rd., Lubec, 2 p.m., doors open at 1 p.m. Refreshments available. Must be 18 to attend.

Mondays

Knights of Columbus, Council 149, 3 Park St., Calais. 6 p.m., doors open at 4 p.m.

American Legion Post 59, 92 Front St., Pembroke, through December, 6 p.m., doors open at 5 p.m.

Tuesdays

American Legion Post W.T. Wren Unit 23, 98 Main St., Baileyville, 6 p.m., doors open at 4 p.m. Concessions available.

Sundays

Spednic Club, 6 3rd Ave., Baileyville. 4 p.m., doors open at 2 p.m. Refreshments available.

KIDS' EVENTS

Tuesdays

Calais Area Playgroup, Main Street Memorial Park, Calais, 10 a.m. FMI, call or text 207-263 5270.

Thursdays

Calais Free Library Homeschool Thursdays from noon to 2 p.m., elementary age and up, FMI: 207 454-2758.

Fridays

Wiggles and Giggles for kids up to age 5, Calais Free Library, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Story, songs, craft, and playtime. FMI, 207-454-2758.

Saturdays

First Saturday of the month, Lego Saturday, Calais Free Library, 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Legos are supplied. Ages 5 and up. FMI, 207-454-2758.

Third Saturday of the month, 4-H club, Calais Free Library, 10:30 a.m. to noon. All ages welcome. FMI, 207-454-

Sundays

Music and Movement, Woodland Elem. School, 1-2 p.m. for ages 2-4.

Please join us in song to help celebrate the birth of our King! Rehearsals at Bible Island. Sunday mornings at Dennysville-Edmunds Congregational Church, 10 to 11 a.m. Presentation date is Dec. 21 at 11 a.m. All ages welcome!

SUPPORT GROUPS

Sundays

AA Meeting: Downeast Group, Downeast Recovery Support Center, 11 Free St., Machias, 7 p.m.

AA Meeting: Head of the Tide Group, Grace Christian Church, 10 Leighton Point Road, Pembroke, 7:30 p.m.

Mondays

E-mail calendar items to events@calais.news by 8 a.m. Tuesday to be included in that week's edition. Yard sales/benefits need to be paid ads, as do town and other such notices.

Sunrise Opportunities Prevention Council's Parenting in Recovery Support Group, 11:30 a.m. via Zoom. Learn how substance abuse impacts parenting and focus on repairing and restoring your relationships. FMI, 207-263-5270.

AA Meeting: Alcoholics Only Group, Personal Residence, 90 Boardman St., Calais, 7 p.m.

AA Meeting: Milbridge Group, Congregational Church, 10 Bridge St., Milbridge, 7 p.m.

AA/NA meetings, Woluhke Center, Pleasant Point, 6 p.m.

Tuesdays

TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) 228 Baileyville, Baileyville Municipal Building, 9 a.m. All are welcome.

Addiction Recovery Meeting, St. Croix Valley Calvary Chapel, 658 Main St., Calais, 6 p.m. FMI, Jason Olsson, 857-452-8258.

Parenting in Recovery Support Group, Downeast Recovery Support Center, 311 Main St., Calais, 12-1 p.m. FMI, 207-255-8273.

AA Meeting: Crossroads Big Book Meeting, Grace Chapel, 10 Leighton Point Road, Pembroke, 7 p.m. AA Meeting: Indian Town-

ship Meeting, Indian Township Meal Site, 8 Kennebasis Road, Indian Township, 7 p.m.

Wednesdays

Parenting in Recovery Support Group, Downeast Recovery Support Center, 11 Free St., Machias. 12-1 p.m. FMI, 207-255-8273.

AA Meeting: Pleasant River Group, Faith United Methodist Church, 444 US Rt. 1, Columbia, 7 p.m.

AA Meeting: Brown Bag Meeting, Calais United Methodist Church, 849 Main St., Calais, noon.

Thursdays

AA Meeting: Machias Valley Group, St. Aidan's Church, 72 Dublin St., Machias, 7

AA Meeting: Bridge of Friendship Group, St. Croix Historical Society, 527 Main St., Calais, 7 p.m.

Thursdays, Group called Kikihtasultine (let's heal together), 6 to 7 p.m., Woluhke Center, Pleasant Po

Fridays

AA Meeting: Eastport Step Meeting, Senior Center, 9 Boynton St., Eastport, 5:30

AA Meeting: Keep it Simple Group, Passamaquoddy Health Center, 401 Peter Dana Point Road, Princeton, 7 p.m.

AA Meeting: Downeast Group, Downeast Recovery Support Center, 11 Free St., Machias, 7 p.m.

Saturdays

AA Meeting: Buy Time Women's Group, Downeast Recovery Support Center, 11 Free St., Machias, 10 a.m.

AA Meeting: Women's Meeting, St. Aidan's Church, 72 Dublin St., Machias, 10

AA Meeting: Moosebec Group, St. Aidan's Episcopal Mission, 36 Dublin St., Machias, 7 p.m.

MEETINGS

Mondays

Third Monday of the month, American Legion Post 23, Main St., Baileyville, 6 p.m. All veterans welcome. FMI, Commander Kenny Young, 207-427-9058.

Wednesdays

Free coffee and doughnuts, Pembroke American Legion, 8-10 a.m. Public is welcome.

Second Wednesday of the month, American Legion Cobscook Post 59, along with Sons of the Legion and Auxiliary, 6 p.m. Potluck begins at 5 p.m.

Third Wednesday of the month from April - Dec.: St. Croix International Garden Club meets and welcomes new members of any gardening skill to tour gardens and learn skills from others. FMI: 454-3696.

Thursdays

First Thursday of the month, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Boyd Smith Mitchell Memorial Post 9779, Calais Veterans Center, 255 Main St., Calais, 6 p.m.

Third Thursday of the month, Calais American Legion meeting, Calais Veterans Center, 255 Main St., Calais, 6 p.m. All veterans welcome. FMI, Commander Dennis Brown, 207-214-4410.

Saturdays

Men's Ecumenical Breakfast and Bible Study Fellowship, Woodland Christian Fellowship (formerly Woodland Baptist Church), 8:30 a.m.

OTHER EVENTS

Free Tech Support with recTuesdays and Thursdays, Social Security Administration Satellite Service, Calais Free Library, 10 a.m. to noon. No appointment required, just walk in. FMI, 207-454-2758.

Saturdays, New to You, the Christ Church in Eastport thrift store, open 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

December 11: Local children's author Winnie Johnson reading at Calais Free Library, 3 p.m. Crafts to follow.

December 12-14: Feztival of Trees, Washington County Community College.

December 12: Adult Craft Night, Calais Free Library, 6 to 8 p.m.

December 13: W.T. Wren Auxiliary bake sale, 98 Main St., Baileyville, 9 to 11 a.m.

December 11 & 12: Christmas Tree Festival, Sipayik Tribal office gym (previously the BRS school). 12/11, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., 12/12, 10 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Proceeds benefit class of 2026 8th grade class trip.

December 13: Indian Township 8th grade Festival of Trees, Indian Township Rec., 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Cookie and hot chocolate sales all day. Santa visits at 5 p.m., drawing off tickets at 6:15 p.m.

December 13: Wreath Laying Ceremony, Alexander Veterans Monument, noon.

December 19: Kids' Christmas Crafts, Calais Free Library, 1 to 4 p.m.

December 13: All Saints United Methodist Church Christmas Bazaar, Main St., Calais, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Local Author, Crafts, and **Holiday Fun Planned at Calais Free Library**

Jayna Smith jayna@calais.news

The Calais Free Library will welcome local author Winnie Johnson for a special children's program this month. Johnson, who recently published her first book, Mr. Rich's Christmas Tree Secrets, will visit the library on Thursday, December 11, at 3 p.m. to share her story with young readers.

Johnson's book is a heartwarming tale that brings to life the magic — and the hard work — of a Christmas tree farm. Written with second graders in mind, typically ages seven to eight, the story reflects the author's lifelong love of nature and her hope of inspiring children to appreciate the world around them.

Following the reading, children will be invited to participate in festive holiday crafts.

The library will continue the seasonal fun for children on Friday, December 19, with an additional Christmas craft event from 1 to 4 p.m. All children are welcome to attend.

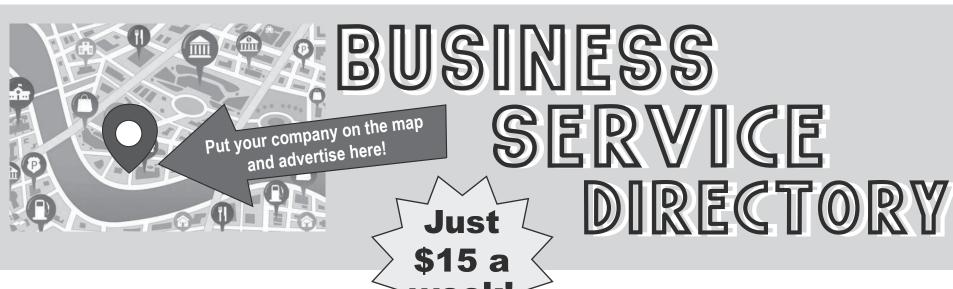
For adults, the Calais Free Library will host its annual Christmas Craft Night on Friday, December 12, from 6 to 8 p.m. The event will feature a lineup of local presenters, including Jamie Delmonaco, Liz Carter, Heidi Fitch and Sandra Ramsey, Rebecca Bridges, Anita Johnson, and Wendy Johnson Candelmo.

Attendees will also enjoy freshly baked gingerbread cookies ready for decorating.

Participants are encouraged to join the fun and take home a selection of beautifully made crafts. The evening promises creativity, community, and plenty of holiday cheer.

For more information, call the Calais Free Library at 207-454-

Need your event listed in our calendar? E-mail us, events@calais.news











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Wentworth Leads Calais in Home Opener



Calais junior Sarah Wentworth shoots the basketball during the Lady Blue Devils' home opener on Monday, Dec. 8. Wentworth led the team with 10 points, but Calais fell to the Mattanawcook Lynx of Lincoln, 62-30, dropping the Blue Devils to 0-2 on the season after a 42-26 loss to George Stevens Academy in their opener. (Photo by Jayna Smith)



Sophomore Sadie McPhee jumps for possession at the tip-off. (Photo by Jayna Smith)

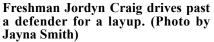




Junior Kaci Small puts the ball up. (Photo by Jayna Smith)



Senior Peyton Beal races to secure the ball. (Photo by Jayna Smith)







Junior Olivia Turner fires a three-pointer. (Photo by Jayna Smith)





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Holiday Spirit Fills Downtow



These McLean siblings meet with Santa and Mrs. Claus following the parade. (Photo by Jayna



Tom Dicenzo braves the frigid temperatures in his 1963 MGB. (Photo by Jayna Smith)







Girl Scouts wave from their brightly decorated parade float. (Photo

Christmas Parade

(continued from page 1)

Following close behind were representatives of the Irene Chadbourne Ecumenical Food Pantry, honored as this year's Grand Marshal. They rode in a new Hummer EV super truck provided by the Pratt dealership.

Groups from all corners of the community took part in the celebration, including the Girl Scouts, local financial institutions, Calais Community Hospital, and numerous businesses and organizations. Children lining the sidewalks enjoyed candy aplenty, eagerly collected from many of the passing entries.

After the parade, festivities continued at Flat Iron Park, where Santa and Mrs. Claus listened to children's Christmas wishes. Mrs. Claus handed out her famous cookies, generously supplied by Calais IGA, while eighth graders from Calais Middle School served hot chocolate by donation to support their class trip.

Adding to the holiday cheer, many businesses throughout town stayed open late, offering special

sales and promotions that drew steady crowds.
The Calais Lioness Club organizes and hosts the parade each year as a way to thank the community for its continued support. It's a night that brings families together, lights up downtown, and showcases the kindness and connection that define Calais.







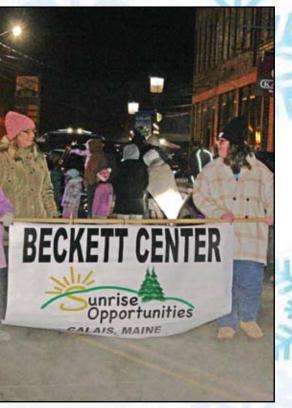
n at Lioness Christmas Parade



by Jayna Smith)



As always, Santa catches a ride at the end of the parade with Calais Fire-EMS. (Photo by Jayna Smith)



Center crew didn't let the cold stop them as they the parade and shared donuts with spectators. yna Smith)



Santa and his favorite elf take a post-parade break at Flat Iron Park. (Photo by Jayna Smith)





An impressive Red Knights float rolls down the parade route. (Photo by Jayna Smith)

Annual PrincetonTree Lighting

Sandra Smith

The Annual Princeton Tree Lighting was held this past Sunday at Legacy Square. It was cold but clear, so there was no problem seeing the Grinch (Curtis ran up the fire department's ladder truck to place the star on the top of the tree). Meanwhile, Santa (Steven Cilley) stayed on the ground and greeted everyone. Pastor Ernest Carle from the Sunrise Christian Church led everyone in singing Christmas Carols. Then everyone gathered at the fire station. Parks & Recreation members and volunteers had donated cookies, which they put into bags for a special treat. The fire department's crew made the cocoa. Parks & Rec. provided a choice of Christmas tree decorations and a drawing for two Lego Christmas sets.

The Princeton Public Library donated a selection of children's books and two baskets full of kids' treasures. The lucky and happy winners of the drawing for the Lego sets were Avery O'Loughlin and Taylor O'Loughlin. The winners of the drawing for the baskets were Kage Murray and Dom Sappier.

Finally, of course, the Grinch was there helping Santa Claus, who was sitting in his rocking chair, giving out candy canes and helping the kids pose for pictures. Once again, thanks to all the volunteers, who truly care about their town, and gather together to provide this very special event.





This little girl loved her candy cane given to her by Santa.



Donated cookies and books for everyone to enjoy.

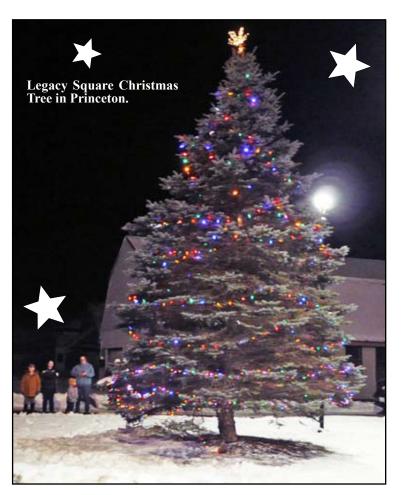
Grand Lake Stream Tree Lighting

Excerpt from Grand Lake Stream news: The December 7 "Lighting of the Christmas Trees Ceremony" at the schoolhouse went as Bill and Cathy planned. Bill gave the countdown, and at 3, each tree lit up in a different solid color. One tree didn't light up, but Jeromy and Danny took quick care of that. We all then went inside

for hot chocolate, cookies, and brownies. The basement was set up nicely, with the Strumming Wildcats at the far end and 30 soft folding chairs facing them. One cookie was the sandwich type, and it was blue, with squiggly blue frosting all around the middle. I had to try it. To my surprise, the frosting was holding in nice, fine raspberry jam. I had a couple of those. On the same tray was a coconut cookie dipped in chocolate and many more types of cookies that you never see. The Strumming Wildcats played many Christmas favorites. Some in the audience sang. It was a good time. Thanks, Bill and Cathy.



(Photo by Cheryl Betz Beahm)



Alexander Grange Christmas Party





The McGivery family makes their annual trek to the Alexander Grange Christmas Party. (Submitted photo)



Santa, Cassie Oakes, the Gingerbread Man and Linda Wallace posed for this photo during the Alexander Grange Christmas party. (Submitted photo)

Agound the County



Budget

(continued from page 1)

cuts, those cuts do not include those proposed last month by District 2 Commissioner and Chairman David Burns.

On Sunday, District 3 County Commissioner Courtney Hammond tried to put the budget in perspective.

"The 2024 budget was \$11,211,630," Hammond said, adding, "The amount raised by taxation that year was \$8,138,706, because they thought that they had the carry-forward money classified as revenue."

He explained that the 2025 budget, passed a year ago, rang in at \$11,701,655 and was a snap decision to the **Budget Advisory Committee** and former commissioners learning about the county's well documented shortfall. Hammond said the amount raised by taxation to meet the 2025 budget was \$9,925,871. "Due to curtailments and employee vacancies, the 2025 year-to-date expenditures are not too bad, except for the iail." the commissioner said.

Continuing, he noted that the 2026 budget, as approved by the BAC last Wednesday, cut about \$600,000 from the budget the BAC received from the commissioners this fall. Hammond said the total budget for next year, if accepted by the commissioners when they meet on Dec. 11, is about \$100,000 more than last year.

"I believe it leaves the three current vacancies in Sheriff's patrol empty, [as well as] one dispatcher position, maybe one in the jail due to a retirement, and a vacancy in Probate," Hammond said. "If I am reading things right, it will result in about an 18.5% increase in taxation, not counting what will remain of the 2025 [tax anticipation note] for the towns who do not pay it off early."

The commissioner said the TAN "ended up at \$6.8 million, not the \$7.6 million as authorized," or the \$11 million they sought to borrow through a failed bond initiative in November. He pointed out that many towns in his district, including Machias and Jonesport, "have already voted to pay early which will help tremendously." What remains unknown is what the interest on the TAN will total.

Contacted by email Sunday on a different matter, Burns said, "I will be making several motions at the next meeting [on Dec. 11]." Without elaborating further, Burns added, "I just hope our citizens understand how serious our situation is."

The proceedings at the BAC's Dec. 3 meeting weren't without some drama. At one point several seemingly random monetary numbers were thrown out as motions for the 2026 budget. All but the final motion on a total budget figure were rejected.

BAC Vice Chairman Ben Edwards opened the meeting by reading from a prepared statement. "What I want to say today is difficult, and it may not be popular, but it is necessary," Edwards said, somberly. ... "The past months have

been extraordinarily stressful

for all of us, and the work you have all done is meaningful, but we are at a point where we cannot avoid hard decisions any longer."

With that, Edwards first proposed what he called "two important investments" to improve the county's future financial oversight and operations. First, he proposed adding \$50,000 to the budget for "outside audit and book preparation support," saying, "We cannot rebuild trust without reliable, accurate, timely financial information."

That money would go to the administration and finance part of the budget "for external support with bookkeeping, audit preparation, and, if necessary, additional audit work," Edwards said. With it comes the expectation that at least two additional years of county audits be completed before the BAC meets next fall to approve the 2027 county budget.

He also is calling on the BAC to act as a finance committee, committed to conduct monthly reviews of county financial statements and hold quarterly, in-person review meetings with the county commissioners, department heads, and the treasurer or finance director. "I believe this is what fiscal leadership should look like," said Edwards, "and I believe this is how we begin restoring trust."

Next, Edwards proposed adding \$50,000 to the buildings and grounds maintenance budget, partly because of aging county facilities suffering from years of deferred maintenance, and for county

commissioners and department heads to begin exploring the eventual relocation of the Washington County Regional Communications Center (RCC), District Attorney's Office and Emergency Management Agency into the new Sheriff's Office Building.

County Commissioners, meeting in a work session a week earlier, have already directed the RCC to begin looking into those moves.

Both of those increases were eventually rolled into the \$11.8 million budget approved in the final minutes of the Dec. 3 meeting. But what Edwards proposed next met with a wall of resistance from Chief Deputy Mike Crabtree.

Two weeks earlier County Commission Chairman Burns proposed leaving three currently vacant patrol deputies, plus one corrections officer, and one RCC dispatcher vacancy unfilled through the end of 2026 and, further, laying off one additional position in each of those three departments.

While the plan angered Sheriff Barry Curtis at the time, he and Crabtree have since seemed resigned to working with the reductions in personnel suggested by Burns. But on Dec. 3, Edwards upped the ante significantly.

"I know reductions are painful," Edwards began. "This is not about punishing anyone. This is about demonstrating to the taxpayers, the state, and our financial partners that county leadership can make hard choices."

With that Edwards proposed leaving the three currently vacant deputy sheriff positions vacant in 2026, for a savings of about \$360,000, but further proposed axing funding for an additional three patrol deputies, for an additional \$360,000 savings. Said Edwards, "With reduced staffing, no new cruisers are needed for next year, and should be struck entirely from the budget."

Edwards proposed no further position cuts from the RCC and jail, but sought to cut one full-time position from both probate and from deeds.

"These cuts are not easy," said Edwards, "but they are necessary and are within the

authority of this committee, unlike many other solutions we hoped would emerge but did not."

District 1 Commissioner Billy Howard, responded matter-of-factly to Edwards' prepared statement, saying, "I've been to a number of these meetings and really nothing has been done. That's the best written observation of the budgeting process that I've heard yet. I just want to thank Ben for that."

BAC member and Jonesport Selectboard Chairman Harry Fish spoke next, saying, "Every time we talk about needing to cut the budget, there are many valid reasons why we shouldn't. But if we're going to make a decent attempt at lowering this budget, people are going to have to go. If we aren't going to raise that money, then we're going to have to eliminate positions."

Chief Deputy Crabtree, meanwhile, told the BAC, "Cutting an additional three deputies on top of the three we don't have is not even a serious discussion. I can't have a serious discussion about that. It's not reasonable. If those things happen, that is seriously going to change the services."

After warning the panel that the county's residents would not be happy with those kinds of cuts, Crabtree suggested, "If we thought we could live with our open positions, go through this year and see how we do, and see what happens with the governor, then we have another budget year to go. We're still exhausting possibilities. If it turns out, you have to make those drastic cuts then, it's a conversation for another day."

It isn't clear whether the commissioners will accept the budget as passed last week by the BAC, or kick it back on Dec. 11 with some recommended changes. If the latter is the case, the BAC will have to muster eight votes to overrule the commissioners. It's also not clear what motions Commissioner Burns has in mind, but time is running out before a budget is adopted and put into play for Jan. 1.

Budget Advisory Committee Contact List by District

District 1Billy Howard

Crystal Gallina Finance Director City of Calais financedirector@ calaismaine.org 207-454-2521 X1003

Mr. Chris Loughlin P.O. Box 370 Baileyville, ME 04694 townmanager@baileyville. org 207-214-5277

Mr. David Davis 58 South Shore Road Alexander, ME 04694 207-454-2496 **District 2**David C. Burns

Mr. Ben Edwards 20 "E" Street Machias, ME 04654 bedwards@machiasme.org 207-271-0122

Mr. Dan Daley Town of Lubec 6 Pleasant Street Lubec, ME 04652 Dan@Big3Consulting.com 801-879-2559

Mr. Brian Schuth Eastport City Manager 22 Washington Street Eastport, ME 04631 cityManager @eastport-me.gov 207-853-2300 **District 3**Courtney Hammond

Mr. Harry "Sonny" Beal, Jr. 418 Saco Road Columbia, ME 04623 realsonnybeal@gmail.com 207-483-4580

Mr. Harry Fish, Jr. 117 Kelley Point road Jonesport, ME 04649 harryfishjr@gmail.com 207-598-7473

Mr. Lewis Pinkham P. O. Box 66 Milbridge, ME 04658-0066 milbridgetown@yahoo.com 207-546-2422

Legislative Delegate Honorable Tiffany Strout

12 Anderson Lane, Harrington, ME 04643 Tiffany.Strout@legislature.maine.gov • 207-598-7043

Unorganized Territories Wayne Jones • 445 Dixie Road, Trescott Twp., ME 04652

List of Towns Agreeing to Pay Off County Tan Grows to 11

According to information provided by Washington County Manager Renee Gray on Dec. 8, Residents in the following towns have held meetings and voted "yes" to paying their town's portion of the 2025 tax anticipation note (TAN): Addison (\$325,321.65); Cherryfield (\$220,769.12); Columbia (\$95,574.72); Columbia Falls (\$98,331.68); Crawford (\$32,914.17); Harrington (\$269,970.31); Jonesboro (\$122,508.13); Jonesport (\$375,088.36); Machias (\$314,152.41); Talmadge (\$11,310.62); and Whitneyville (\$25,519.58)

Voting "no" or opting not to consider payment so far: Baileyville (\$572,741.41); Deblois (\$64,611.90); Milbridge (\$432,065.60); Pembroke (\$160,893.54); Perry (\$211,437.86); Princeton (no amount given).

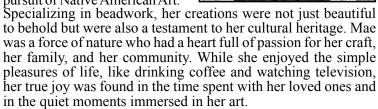
The remaining towns not listed either have future meeting dates scheduled, or are pending discussion.

Obituaries -

Mae J. Sockabasin

We are deeply saddened to announce the passing of Mae J. Sockabasin, a remarkable artist and a beloved mother, grandmother, sister, and aunt. Mae passed away on Tuesday, December 2, 2025, at the age of 65. Born on August 17, 1960, in Eastport, Maine, to Edward and Eunice Sockabasin, Mae was a woman of strong character, imbued with a deep love and respect for her Passamaquoddy heritage.

Mae was a beacon of creativity, dedicating her life to the pursuit of Native American Art.



Mae is survived by her two children, Rodney Sockabasin and his wife Magen, and Bernadette Sockabasin; her eight grandchildren, Monique, Sarah, Isis, Aria, Quinn, Kairo, Odin, and Basil; and her siblings, Roger Sockabasin, Dwayne Tomah and his wife Erica, Walter Sockabasin and his wife Jessica, Bonnie Collins, Alberta "Bowe" Lewey, Lillian Sockabasin, and Sebrena Tomah. She also leaves behind her Godson, Donald Brown, numerous nieces and nephews, and a community that will miss her deeply. She was predeceased by her parents, Edward and Eunice Sockabasin; her child, Jael; and siblings, Edward, Aubrey, and Annette.

A Celebration of Mae's life will be held at a later date. Arrangements are being made by Mays Funeral Home & Cremation Services. We invite all who knew Mae to share memories, stories, and photos at www.MaysFuneralHome.com to keep her spirit alive in our hearts and minds. Mae's life was a tapestry of love, art, and culture, and we encourage you to help us weave her story together in memorial.





Sunday Holy Eucharist - 10 a.m. • Facebook Live Streamed Sunday School for school-aged children at 10 a.m.

Masks are optional while inside the building. Handicap Accessible - No nursery provided - All are welcome!

St. Kateri Tekakwitha Roman Catholic Parish



Weekend Mass Schedule

SATURDAY

• St. Joseph Church - 51 Washington St., Eastport, 4 pm Pleasant Point - To be announced

SUNDAY

• Immaculate Conception Church - 31 Calais Ave., Calais, 8:30 am • St. James Church - 60 Summit St., Baileyville, 10:30 am

Confession Times

· Immaculate Conception Church, Calais Friday 430-5:20 pm • Sunday 7-7:45 am

St. Joseph's, Eastport: Saturday, 3-3:45 pm

• St. James, Baileyville: Sunday, 10-10:20

www.sktparish.org 31 Calais Ave., Calais, ME 04619 • (207) 454-0680

Devotional —

Who Makes Room For Christmas

Matthew 2:1-12

William Bristol

Who makes room for Christmas but misses it anyway? We get to love this holiday so much because it is all about good things. The Christmas tree, Christmas cards, gifts, family, shopping, Jack Frost, Frosty the Snowman, Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer, Gramma and Grandpa, the food, the desserts we never see except for at Christmas.

The saddening thought really is, for what have we really made room for, and how does it ever honor or remember what Christmas really is about? Is it evident to you that at the very first Christmas, there was no room for Jesus, and it has become the same way for so many. As Christmas is so busy, the reason for the season has become so very blurred. So many people today at Christmas think of Jesus as being no more real than Santa, Frosty, or Rudolph.

In order to experience the blessing of Jesus at Christmas, you need to make room for him in yourself and in your home. The truth is, if you need to make room for anything in your life, it should be Jesus, and to remember, if this little Christ Child had not been born, there would be no Christmas celebration at all.

So, who else missed Christmas, as so many people do? First on my list is the "Old Innkeeper." One of the villains in this story of the birth of Christ. Luke 2:7, "And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." There is no room in his inn because the innkeeper was too busy to become involved. He was making meals, serving drinks, and making his money. He was too busy and missed Christmas, missed the birth of Jesus Christ. If the innkeeper had understood who Jesus was, maybe he would have made different arrangements to make room for the Savior of the world.

We can make the same mistake as the innkeeper. We see reminders of Jesus all over the place during Christmas. But do we understand who Jesus really is? He is the savior of the world. Isaiah 7:14, "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son and shall call His name Immanuel." Immanuel — "God with Us." It's easy to miss Jesus because we don't expect God to arrive as a baby, born to a poor family in some obscure part of the earth. Yet, this is what happened. Certainly, this Innkeeper needed to learn how to deal with the distractions in life.

The next guy to lose out was Old King Herod. Herod actually brought much of the old glory, man's glory, back to Israel. But that is about all that can be said good of Herod.

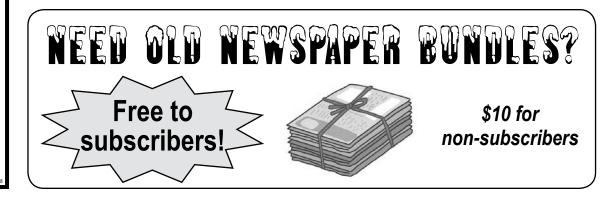
Herod was a cruel and selfish man, and why? He had a blind spot, and that blind spot was that only he could rule. Herod was not going to give in to any messiah, to Jesus, not today, not ever. And nothing within his power was too terrible enough to enforce that cruel selfishness, to keep himself King of Israel. Matthew 2:16, "Then when Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he became very enraged and sent men and killed all the boys who were in Bethlehem and all its vicinity who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had determined from the magi." He had all the boy children killed, and all Jerusalem feared because of Herod's selfish anger. Herod missed the point of Christmas because he was selfish. How many of us have missed that because of selfishness? Herod didn't have a clue as to what he had missed.

Then we have the priests and teachers of Jesus' day. And with these guys, it was a well-known fact that priests and scribes were never in agreement, but at Christ's birth, at this point and time in their future existence. For Herod's sake and for their own lives, they agreed together that this child Jesus was not the Messiah. They had missed the mark, the reason for celebration, and they were the ones who knew of all the prophecies pertaining to the "Messiah." These religious people were too busy doing things that were not of value to the God they pretended to believe in, so their guidance helped to cause the deaths of innocent children.

Don't let ignorance, selfishness, or traditions crowd out the purpose of Christ in your Christmas. I've found in Matthew 15:14 an effective way to describe the Innkeeper, Herod, and the priests and scribes. "Leave them alone; they are blind guides of blind people. And if a person who is blind guides another who is blind, both will fall into a pit."

They all missed Christmas; they missed its purpose and what it meant. They didn't listen, but they knew it; they had been told in the scriptures for centuries. Only one group knew Christmas; they took the time to recognize that Jesus was born. Consider the shepherds; they were the outcasts of the people. But they knew Christmas; they didn't ignore what they saw or heard. Luke 2:15, "When the angels had departed from them into heaven, the shepherds began saying to one another, 'Let's go straight to Bethlehem, then, and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." Yes, the shepherds, the stinking, smelly shepherds, but the angels came to them. The Innkeeper, Herod, the priests, and the scribes were not included in the angel's heavenly proclamation. The shepherds knew who this Christ Child was; they really didn't miss Christmas. Luke 2:10-11, "And so the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." "Do not be afraid," the time of fear of death for the world has almost come to an end with the birth of Christ. Jesus brings with Him heaven and eternity. Because the Christ Child came into the world to bear our sins to death on a cross. How can we ever forget what this birth really means to us at Christmas time? So, folks, how will you deal with Christmas this year? Where and how are you going to put Christ in your Christmas this year? Will you be the Innkeeper and be unconcerned, or maybe like Herod and be selfish with your time? Or will you be the one to start a new tradition and read Luke 2:1-20 on Christmas Eve with your family and then pray and thank God for the reason for celebrating Christmas?

Don't be the person who missed Christmas again. Give Christmas to Christ because He gave Himself for you. AMEN



Around the County



Machias Votes to Pay County TAN, Enact Solar, Wind Ordinances

Paul Sylvain

Around 75 Machias voters gathered at the Machias Memorial High School gymnasium on a below-freezing evening, Dec. 3, to act on a five-article special town meeting warrant moderated by Tora Johnson. When the dust settled 55 minutes later, voters had adopted separate ordinances governing commercial solar energy systems and wind energy facilities and authorized the selectboard to enter into long-term contracts, defined as extending three or more years.

However, the voters' interest was centered mainly on Article 4, which sought to authorize

the selectboard to borrow up to \$314,152.41 on a five-year note to pay the town's share of the county's outstanding 2025 tax anticipation note (TAN). While the article overwhelmingly passed with a show of hands, it wasn't without several questions, which were answered mostly by Selectboard Vice Chair Ben Edwards.

Edwards, who is also vice chairman of the county's Budget Advisory Committee (BAC), outlined the cause of the county's current fiscal crisis and did his best to explain that the town's portion of the current year's county TAN was separate from the work the BAC is doing to forge the

county's 2026 budget.

It also became clear that some residents were confusing the TAN payment with the recently defeated \$8 million bond referendum, which the county put before county voters in November in an effort to pay off the TAN. As one resident asked, "Why are we voting on this again?" As Edwards explained, the bond's defeat did not eliminate the county's responsibility to repay the TAN, which is due, with interest, in full on Dec. 31. It still must be paid, and each town must pay its share, either up front now or over time later.

Machias is among several towns holding or scheduling public hearings and special town meetings to act on their town's portion of the TAN before the end of the year. The good news for Machias taxpayers is that the Shiretown appears to have more than enough cash in reserves to cover the full amount of its \$314,152.41 TAN payment outright. But as Machias Finance Officer Nick MacDonald explained, auditors are expected to complete the town's 2024 and 2025 audit early next year.

Once the audits are complete, the town will know — for the first time in several years — exactly how much it has available in reserves. MacDonald said the goal is to borrow the TAN portion up front on a low, 4.2% interest, five-year loan, but repay it in full before the town's tax bills go out next September, once its audits are up-to-date.

Several Washington County towns, which are financially able, are following suit. Those towns without the cash reserves have the option to repay their portion of the TAN over ten years. But, as Edwards said, either way, they have to pay. Early payments by the town will benefit the county by reducing the TAN balance payoff due Dec. 31.

Regarding the new solar and wind ordinances, which were drafted this year by the town's planning board, much of the discussion centered on whether they aimed at residential or commercial operations. As Town Manager Sarah Craighead Dedmon reiterated from the public hearings on these ordinances two weeks earlier, the town cannot legally prohibit commercial wind and solar farms, but can regulate them to control where they go and how big they are. Rather than rely solely on state policy, town ordinances keep some measure of local control over them, Dedmon said.

All articles passed comfortably.

Commissioners

(continued from page 1)

would fill a void created by the resignation of former county commissioner Chris Gardner earlier this fall. The nomination next goes to the Legislature for consideration.

Washington County voters can expect to see possibly two referendum questions on their ballots in 2026, addressing the position of county treasurer. One question will seek voter approval to change the county treasurer from an elected position to one appointed by county commissioners. Another referendum question will ask to retitle the position as the county finance director.

Dominating much of the letter part of the work session was a discussion aimed at delivering on a promise by the commissioners to realign the county's fiscal year from a Jan.1 through Dec. 31 cycle to a July 1 through June 30 cycle. While the commissioners were hopeful of enacting the changeover much sooner, the board agreed with Machias Selectboard and County Budget Advisory Committee Vice Chair Ben Edwards that the county's towns needed at least two years to fiscally plan for the move.

It was decided that the change would take effect with the fiscal year 2028 budget, which will be drafted two years from now, in the fall of 2027. The county will have two options to consider. It can either prepare a single 18-month budget to cover the Jan. 1, 2028, through June 30, 2029, period in one giant lump, or opt for a six-month budget — going from Jan. 1 through June 30, 2028, and separately, draft a FY 2029 budget for the July 1, 2028, through June 30, 2029 period.

While the county is statutorily barred from issuing two tax bills to its towns in any single fiscal year, there is one exception. Counties may issue two bills if changing their fiscal year. The benefit for the county is that, once in place, it will need to borrow much less in the form of its annual TAN, since its fiscal year will be in sync with the county's towns, and should see tax revenues coming from the towns several months earlier than now.

Commissioners Discuss Burns' Budget Adjustment, Nix Proposal to Close Calais DA Office

Most of the remaining agenda centered on the discussion of several possible cost-cutting measures suggested last month by Burns. None of the items amounted to big bucks savings in themselves, but as Burns noted, "I know these are not big dollars, but they are dollars." He suggested that every dollar the county can save is a dollar less the county needs to pay off the 2025 Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) coming due on Dec. 31.

That said, there was little traction made on several proposals. First up was a discussion about closing the District Attorney's office in Calais. Robert Granger, who serves as DA for both Washington and Hancock counties, argued in favor of keeping the office open, even though the days and hours of operation are sporadic.

"It concerns me that we're going to lose the space," Granger stressed. Commissioner Howard, who represents Calais as part of his district, spoke up, saying the Calais Police Department "won't be happy having to drive [summonses an hour each way] to Machias."

Granger noted that all felony-related case files from Calais are currently maintained in the Machias DA's office and only misdemeanor files are kept at the Calais DA's office. He also said that when prosecutors travel to Calais from Machias, they generally work out of the courthouse there and not at the Calais DA's office. He added that prosecutors travel to Calais twice a week to collect court summonses from the Calais office

Staff coverage in Calais remains sporadic, and Granger admits that planning a schedule for Calais is made more difficult because of uncertainty about whether the office is open on any given day. Still, Burns said closing the office, even for just 2026, "Is a tough decision to make." Continuing, he said, "We're still trying to serve the public."

In the end, the commissioners agreed to keep the Calais DA's office open for now, but will be posting whether it is open or closed each day on the county's webpage.

A brief discussion followed about how many county vehicles were being brought home for personal use during off-duty hours. The issue centered mainly on vehicles assigned to the Sheriff's Office, jail administrator, and Regional Communications Center department head, all of which fall under Sheriff Barry Curtis's jurisdiction.

After some questioning, the commissioners determined there were only two possible vehicles involved, and that neither was being used for personal use, but instead, were necessary for emergency callouts. While no change in the current policy was made, Commissioner Hammond reminded the jail and RCC administrators, "Just be aware that we're all under a microscope right now."

The commissioners agreed to sell off a parcel of county-owned land at 73 Broadway in Machias, currently used as a garden to grow produce to feed inmates at the jail.

One of the longer points of discussion concerned the possibility of relocating the RCC and Emergency Management Administration into the new Sheriff's building on Court Street. It became quickly apparent that the expense for such a move would be staggering.

Moving just the 9-1-1 system over would cost an estimated \$50,000, commissioners were told. Relocating each of the

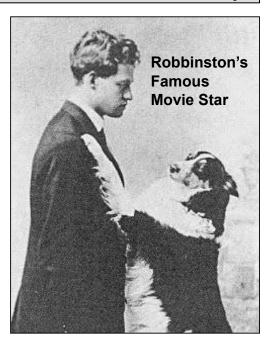
four dispatching work stations would cost another \$25,000 each, for a total of \$100,000 alone, plus the \$50,000 to \$100,000 estimated cost of moving all the radios over.

For now, RCC will remain at its current location, but the commissioners directed the county's grounds and maintenance department to begin preparing a plan to move the RCC and EMA functions into the new Sheriff's Office Building.

The commissioners will make their final decision on the 2026 budget later this month once they have reviewed a proposal narrowly passed by the budget advisory committee later in the week.

St. Croix Historical Society

Laurence Trimble and his black and white border collie, Jean, were well-known actors in the early days of silent films. To be honest, Jean was more of a star than her owner, and she is said to have been the most beloved animal in the United States in the early 1900s. Jean was the first canine to star in the moving pictures. She was beloved by silent movie fans as far away as Australia. Both Jean and Laurence



are locals: Laurence from Robbinston and Jean, an Eastport native who came to live with the Trimble family as a pup on Trimble Mountain in Robbinston.

Jean became known as "Jean the Wonder Dog" and was the most popular dog in the country. She began getting fan mail from children all over the country, often containing photos of their own pets. By 1911, even newspapers, such as the *Kalgoorie Miner* in Australia, were promoting Jean in her new film "Jean and the Calico Doll." Jean worked tirelessly at \$25 a week for Vitagraph, including a movie co-starring the then eight-year-old actress Helen Hayes. Her work for Vitagraph was interrupted in 1913 when, perhaps succumbing to temptation while taking a walk in Central Park, she became pregnant. Her pregnancy was big news, and she was granted maternity leave. When she delivered six pups, Motion Picture World reported, "Jean, the Vitagraph Dog, is the happy mother of six little ones. Mother and children are all doing nicely, thank you."

Jean and Laurence soon left for England, where Jean made movies for Turner Films for a couple of years. She became a favorite of children in England and on the continent, but war intervened, and the pair returned home. Returning home from England in 1916, Jean had reached the old age for a dog of 14, and in the summer of that year, Jean died.

Community News



Grand Lake Stream

Mike Remillard

It's Sunday, November 30. It's been spitting snow all day, even when it rained. We've got three days of a little snow coming this week. It's quiet in town. Maybe most people are resting from the deer hunting season. Not many ATVs or side-bysides are driving around. You would need a heater. I bet those who could have their wood stove or fireplace going tonight.

We are due for 6 to 9 inches of snow today, Tuesday. Wind gusts of 35 MPH are forecast. There will be power failures. Rain is also predicted. So far, it has taken me almost one hour to attach the two-minute plow. I'll get help from someone at the store. Stay tuned for a nighttime report on all of today's winter excitement.

I saw Les shoveling snow from the storefront, so I stopped and asked for help to attach the twominute plow. Les, Danny, and/or

Kayden have helped me every year for the last ten years. I drove Les to the garage, and right away he started getting phone calls. Luckily, Danny was one call. He was driving through town and came right over. Just like Fisher Plow advertises, Danny and Les attached the plow in less than two minutes. I fold them to mark their calendar to help Mike attach the plow the same day next winter. Turns out that I did not put the plow away correctly last season. The what I'll call the yolk, at the top end of the piston, was not pushed down all the way. Once I electrically connected the plow, fired up the engine, and with the plow controls, lowered the plow while someone pushed down on the yolk, they attached the plow in less than...probably

a minute. Remember, keep pins greased up, and electric grease inside all electric connections. Danny pointed out that I have a new hydraulic hose rubbing against the plow frame. I must put plastic wrap hose protection in that area. Saved again by Danny and Les.

We did get 6 inches of light snow. It basically snowed all morning. It was a mess, but we are all used to it. I feel it's too early for snow. Getting used to the newish GMC diesel plow truck, Green Hornet, took a few minutes. During the storm, a Maine Guide skidded off the Low Road while taking the 23mile shortcut to Route 9. I'm told that at a curve, his truck went straight for 30 feet. Then, the truck's bow sank down into the terrain, and the stern went up, eliminating most of the rear tire traction. Alvin went out with his oldish Tacoma and was unable to rescue him. Danny and Les had to go out with Danny's rugged work truck and got him out. Four months of plowing and shoveling have started. To be safe, watch the weather reports and plan your big or small road travels.

It's Thursday, and all has settled down. Laurie and I had an emergency camp repair job to do, so after checking in with Brinda at the Pine Tree Store and being put on the watch list, off we went. I was hoping the High Road was traveled, even though that meant it would be hard, ice like snow. I was right, there were two ruts that were flat, hard, and also wide. We were moving up the long incline with ease, maybe 20 MPH. Naturally, at curves and downgrades, you had to go slowly. At big downgrades, I put the Tacoma in neutral and applied the brake. We made it safely, did a few jobs, and off we went. It was clear sailing. We didn't meet anybody. There were signs that three vehicles went off the track. One was a car. You could tell because he got stuck good on a flat surface. What I thought would be the worst trip truck ever was pretty easy. We got 6 degrees coming tonight. That road should become icy. Even if it does not, I have to say, "Stay off the dirt roads, unless you are working.'

On Friday, I woke up, and the

outside temperature was as predicted, 6 degrees. I opened my kitchen cabinet doors last night, so the room heat will get in there and help prevent the water pipes from freezing. I should have reminded you to do the same, but you're all Mainers and know these things. I did text Laurie to remind her and suggested she remind Greg and Willow. Tonight's temperature prediction is 9 degrees. It is winter, but in my opinion, winter conditions are here early. Be ready.

While turning on the stove top for my second cup of tea, it wouldn't light. I checked my Rinnai, code 11, no ignition (no propane). My Empire heater pilot light was off. I got propane tanks filled a day ago, but it wasn't going through the copper tubes. I called Tammaro. They arrived within an hour and changed the frozen regulator.

There will be a special town meeting on Tuesday, December 16, at 6 p.m., at the GLS schoolhouse. It's about paying Washington County our taxes ahead of time. There will be a county manager at the meeting who will answer all questions.

Linda Curtis had one of her giant, over three-foot-diameter pine trees cut down. She hired a huge crane that was set up on Water Street, closing down the road. To get by, you had to use Tanbark Street and Danny and Nichole's property. Once cut down, you could see that 80% of the tree's insides were rotten. Now it can't cause any property or power line damage.

The December 7 Downeast Lakes Land Trust, DLLT, Wreath Making and Cribbage Tournament at the schoolhouse was attended by 20 people or more. Six of those were cribbage players. There were plenty of evergreen branches, ribbon, and decorations for the wreath makers. They had a table just for beginners with one expert teaching them. They had hot chocolate and coffee, plus two types of brownies and two types of Christmas cookies, covered with plenty of colorful frosting.

It was a pretty good event. Thank you for taking the time to read about what happens in this special little town. mikeremillard42@gmail.com.

Brew House, Restaurant Building for Sale



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Legals / Notices

PUBLIC NOTICE OF INTENT TO FILE

Please take notice that Coast of Maine Organic Products, Inc., 207-812-9138 is intending to file an application with the Maine Department of Environmental Protectoin (DEP) on or about 12/12/25 pursuant to the provisions of 38 MRSA, Section 1301 et. seg. and Maine's Solid Waste Management Regulations.

The application is for site expansion to improve traffic flow around operations at 445 Cathance Road, East Machias, ME 04630.

According to Department regulations, interested parties must be publicly notified, written comments invited, and if justified, an opportunity for public hearing given. A request for a public hearing or for the Board of Environmental Protection to assume jurisduction over this application, must be received by the Department, in writing, no later than 20 days after the application is accepted by the Department as complete for processing.

The application and supporting documentation are available for review at the Bureau of Remediation and Waste Management (BRWM) at the appropriate DEP regional office, during normal working hours. A copy of the application and supporting documentation may also be seen at the municipal office (or county office if project is to be located in an unorganized township) in East Machias, Maine.

Send all correspondence to: Maine Departmen tof Environmental Protection, Bureau of Remediation and Waste Management, 17 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333-0017, (207-287-2651 or 1-800-452-1942).

Legals / Notices

Alexander Special Town Meeting

December 15, 2025, 6:30 p.m. **Alexander Elementary School Gym**

In accordance with the "ME Self Service Storage Act" 1989, c62 (new), the personal property belonging to the following individuals will be sold at public auction: Marie Nagel at 1:00 pm, Saturday, December 13th, 2025 at Calais Self Storage, 410 South Street, Calais, ME 04619, 207-454-0454. (US Cash Only).

Community News

Alexander

Cassie Oakes

There will be a special town meeting on December 15 at 6:30 p.m., in the school gym, concerning the county tax. There are three articles on the warrant: one to choose a moderator for the meeting and one to see if the town would like to pay \$120,033.93 — Alexander's portion of the 2025 tax note. The third article pertains to Article 2; if it passes, where would the funds come from, possibly from the undesignated fund balance? Please come find out more about what is happening and let your voices be heard!

Don't forget that there will be the Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Alexander's Veterans Monument at the municipal building on December 13, at noon. For more information, contact Lenny Hanson or Dale

"Coffee and" continues at the Breakneck Mountain ATV/ Snowmobile Clubhouse every Monday from 7 to 10 a.m. There is coffee and food to purchase, along with great conversations and sometimes a cribbage game or two! The club appreciates your patronage more than you know, along with all those who volunteer their baking talents! Stop in sometime when you are in Alexander on a Monday morning and say hi!

A cribbage tournament will take place at the Breakneck Mountain ATV Clubhouse on January 3, 1 to 3 p.m. Food will be available. If you have a cribbage board or two or extra

cards, please feel free to bring them. For more information, contact Kim Rendell at 904-8894.

The Alexander Grange has shut down for the winter, but before it did, they went out with a bang! It all started on Wednesday, December 3, when members gathered for a delicious potluck supper and then spent the evening decorating the hall for their Community Christmas Party.

Their last activity was the "Santa is Coming to Town." The event was full of fun, laughter, food, and Santa! There was time for each child to visit with Santa and get their pictures taken and family shots, too. All the children left with a gift from Santa and the opportunity to head upstairs for snacks, more photo op areas, and a letter-writing and coloring station. A huge hit this year was Santa's desk, where kiddos added their names to the good — and sometimes naughty — list! This event wouldn't be possible without

all of the Grange's financial supporters, bakers and sandwich makers, the little elves working in the background and foreground, Santa and the Alexander Volunteer Fire Department getting him safely to and from, and the families that brought their little and big ones to the event! Thank you, all. You made 2025's Santa's Visit a success! If you'd like to see some more pictures, head over to the Alexander Grange #304 Facebook page.

Don't forget about All Saints United Methodist Church Christmas Bazaar happening on Saturday, December 13, from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m.

Just another reminder that Darlene White Harvey is once again recovering from another back surgery. She is happy to be back in Washington County! Donna loves getting mail. Her address is Marshall's Health Care, Donna Harvey, 16 Beal Street, Machias, ME 04654.

This week, I sure was a busy-beaver. On Monday, we took my nephew Carlos back home to Monticello due to the impending weather, and we stopped for lunch at McDonald's. Tuesday was no Cafe because of a snowstorm, so a day off for my mom and me. From Wednesday to Friday, I attended FBC. While with them, I went to the podiatrist, hung out with peers, and played BINGO. I started my Christmas shopping. On the home front, I continued doing my online Zoom Strive class. I attended a potluck supper and Christmas decorating at the Grange, and on Saturday, we enjoyed the Grange Christmas Party. Sunday, we attended church at All Saints in the morning and Bethel Chapel in the evening, where delicious snacks were enjoyed and wonderful singing took place.

How was your week? You can send news my way through Facebook Messenger or email me at cassieoakes1986@gmail. com. I greatly appreciate everyone for their contributions to this column. Until next time, stay safe!

December is a Leading Month for U.S. Home Fires

National Fire Protection Association Press Release

The holiday season is often touted as the most wonderful time of year, but it also presents an increased risk of home fires. According to the National Fire Protection Association, NFPA, December is a leading month for U.S. home fires, with Christmas Day and Christmas Eve representing the second- and third-leading days of the year for home cooking fires, respectively, in 2024.

While cooking significantly contributes to the increased risk of home fires during the holiday season, other contributing factors include Christmas trees in the home, the use of holiday decorations, particularly those involving candles or electrical lighting, and the use of heating equipment.

NFPA's latest statistics (annual averages between 2020 and 2024) underscore the factors that collectively contribute to the December spike in home fires:

Cooking is a leading cause of reported U.S. home fires, home fire injuries, and deaths. An estimated 48% of home structure fires, 35% of home fire injuries, and 16% of home fire deaths involved kitchen and cooking equipment. Unattended equipment is a factor in an estimated one-quarter of reported home cooking fires and nearly half of the associated deaths. Thanksgiving is the leading day for home cooking fires, followed by Christmas Day and Christmas Eve.

Heating equipment is another leading cause of U.S. home fires

with nearly half of all home heating fires occurring from December through February. Space heaters and heating stoves were the type of heating equipment responsible for the largest shares of home heating equipment fires, accounting for nearly half of the fires, seven out of 10 deaths, and seven out of 10 injuries.

U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated 835 home structure fires that began with decorations (excluding Christmas trees), resulting in three civilian fire deaths, 29 civilian fire injuries, and \$18 million in direct property damage. Nearly half of these fires occurred because the decorations were too close to a heat source, such as a candle or other heat-producing equipment. Candle fires peak in December and January; 12% of candle fires occur in December, and 10% occur in January.

Christmas tree fires don't happen very often, but when they do, they tend to be more serious. U.S. fire departments responded to an average of 143 home fires that started with Christmas trees, resulting in an estimated seven civilian deaths, 13 civilian injuries, and \$15 million in property damage. Nearly one in four Christmas tree fires were started by lamps or bulbs. 11% were started by candles. Electrical distribution or lighting equipment was involved in 40% of home Christmas tree fires.

NFPA offers a wealth of information and resources to help minimize the likelihood of cooking, heating, candle, Christmas tree, and decoration fires. Learn more at nfpa.org/winterholidaysafety.

Princeton

Sandra Smith

The town office cancelled the selectboard meeting last week due to the snowstorm. The next meeting is Tuesday, December 16. Also, a reminder that dogs need to be licensed by December 31. Meanwhile, planning ahead, the office will be open on Wednesday, December 31.

The Princeton Public Library's gift basket is ready and waiting for patrons. Everyone visiting the library will have a ticket put in for the drawing on Tuesday, December 23. Note that this Saturday, December

13, is the 4th Annual Book Fair and Literary Festival at the Bangor Public

Library. They expect 100 authors and seven publishers, as well as special lectures. This wonderful event starts at 10 a.m. and ends at 3:30 p.m. I attended last year and just so enjoyed meeting the many Maine authors and purchasing their books for Christmas gifts!

There is still time to enter the Parks & Recreation's Home Decorating Contest. Registration is no later than 6 p.m. on December 18. Judging is early evening of December 19.

Register on the Parks & Rec. Facebook page or call 207-619-1466.

December 19 - Princeton Parks & Rec Home Decorating Contest Judging

December 22-Jan. 5 - Princeton Elementary School Winter Break

December 24-25 - Princeton Town Office and Princeton Library Closed

To send me news, just drop me a note at princetonnews@ outlook.com or give me a call after 10 a.m. at 796-2261. Note that my deadline to submit the column is 2 p.m. on Mondays.

Meddybemps News & Musings

Linda Baniszeski

Meddybemps is aglow with all of the beautiful Christmas lights! It is now even prettier with the lights reflecting on the snow.

Happy birthday wishes to Mary McLellan on December 14 and Tammi Smith on the 16th. Here is wishing each of them wonderful birthdays filled with family and lots of love. Happy birthday to our Teddi—she is 2 on December 12. This little dog really enjoys life and has given us many smiles as well.

Vince Dineen's services last Saturday were a real tribute to a good man. A very large number of family, neighbors, and friends attended. It's difficult knowing he will not be waving and smiling at us from his log truck. He is missed.

Meddybemps Historical Society has issued a new newsletter. There is extensive coverage of the Bridges family in Meddybemps dating back to the 1800s. Part 2 to follow in the next issue. To become a member of the Historical Society, send \$10 a year (or \$12 or more for sustaining membership) to Linda Gordon at 9 Sand

Cove Lane, Meddybemps, ME 04657.

Tony Leavitt's new camp is coming along really nicely. The foundation and floor are done, and some walls are now in place. Tony does everything first class. This property will be a nice new addition to the neighborhood. We are looking pretty spiffy in the Reynold's Beach area.

We had a beautiful first snow-storm last week — about 5 inches. As temperatures dropped and wind whipped up last Thursday, Meddybemps Lake froze into "many-bumps." On Monday, we awoke to another 6 inches of snow and added to the first storm's accumulation. It is now quite the winter wonderland out here. It was 14 degrees Monday morning. Despite the cold temperatures, various Christmas parades were beautifully festive and well attended.

With cold temperatures come little critters trying to move inside our homes. Our home is really tight and doesn't allow much inside. However, when garage doors are open, some things sneak in and make themselves quite comfortable. A mouse family did just that and

was actually nibbling cracked corn by biting an opening in the bag. Out came the traps. There were five in all who thought they were home for the winter. It is sad that these cute, little, mindless things become such pests. Before the mice, we had a little red squirrel trapped in the garage, and Barry had to chase it out. They are adorable but also very destructive.

We've had a few flocks of birds come through to feed up before the storms. A large flock of Juncos was hanging around for a few days. There was also a pileated wood pecker pecking beneath the tree bark for some kinds of food morsels.

Please share your news with LBaniszeski@myfairpoint.net or phone 454-3719.

December celebrates the light of the world personally coming to earth for all mankind. Whenever I delight in the glow of Christmas lights, it is a reminder of how Jesus IS the TRUE light of the world. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. He who follows me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." (John 8:12)

Blessings to all!



~ (MSSIFICUS ~ advertising@calais.news



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Help Wanted



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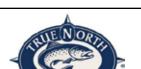
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\$24-28/hr + benefits (health insurance for employee & family) Responsibilities include managing building maintenance, janitorial duties, landscaping, and office operations, including coordinating contractors, handling office support tasks, maintaining clean and welcoming facilities, and performing seasonal grounds maintenance.

5+ years relevant experience (or equivalent skills). Ability to lift 75 lbs. Washington County knowledge preferred.

APPLY: Submit resume, cover letter, and 3 references to HR@sunrisecounty.org by 12/12/25. Open until filled.

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Positions offer full-time year-round employment, competitive hourly rates, and insurance starting at no cost to employee.

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EOE



Help Wanted

Accounting Specialist with Tax Reporting Expertise for multiple companies.

Bring your skills in financial reporting and Maine tax compliance. Must have proven experience in sales tax, payroll tax, MERIT reporting an asset with a keen eye for detail and accuracy. Location: Our office or work from home.

Up to 10 hours per month contract.

Send resume and interest to publisher@calais.news No calls please.

FOR RENT

Under new ownership, onsite management, and renovation. 1 & 2 BR apts. w/W-D hookups on North St., Calais. Fresh paint and new fixtures, security camera video system, no inside smoking or vaping, no hard core drug users or dealers allowed, references, background & credit check required, first, last, & deposit, no application fee. St. Croix Housing: 207-454-0046.

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Machias and Eastport

Perry

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Contemplating suicide?

Help is here.

For crisis, mental health and substance

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National: Call the National Suicide Prevention Line at

1-800-273-8255, chat online at suicidepreventionlifeline.org/ chat, or text CONNECT to 741741 for completely anonymous

• State: 1-888-568-1112 is the Maine Crisis Line, open 24

• AMHC in Calais: 800-244-6431 or 454-0775

• Eastport Healthcare: 853-6001, offices in

• AMHC in Machias: 800-244-6431 or 255-0996

Suzanne Leone

The elf is loose at Perry Elementary School. Check their Facebook page to see the elf's antics!



Grades 1 and 2 at the school are currently learning about Christmas celebrations around the world. Please check their Facebook page to see their journey.

Here is a friendly reminder to have all your Maine-ly smoked orders in by December 10 to ensure on-time delivery. The last day of shipping is December 15. Please call (207) 853-4794 for more information.

A gorgeous tree in memory of Jeffery A. Stanhope was among the many trees at the Wesley Tree Festival held at UMM.

The Shelter Wishlist at Donkey and Draft Rescue in Perry includes alfalfa and Bermuda shavings, pine shavings, grain, towels, paper towels, and rubber mats. For more information, please go to their Facebook page.

Help Wanted



Washington County Regional Steward

Maine Coast Heritage Trust is hiring a Regional Steward to work in our Whiting, Maine office.

The Washington County Steward is responsible for property maintenance, community engagement, execution of assigned tasks and implementation of existing management plans to protect the ecological and aesthetic value of the land, uphold legal restrictions and requirements, foster sustainable public benefit opportunities, and outreach.

To learn more about the position and see the job description please visit the Maine Coast Heritage Trust job board at https://www.mcht.org/job/regional-steward-washington-county/

This is a full time, permanent position with a benefits package including health insurance, generous vacation and sick time, and a retirement plan.

To apply please send cover letter and resume to search@mcht.org with "Waco Regional Steward" in the subject line. The deadline to apply is 12/22/2025.

Help Wanted



Marine Site Technicians & **Deckhands**

Primary duties include monitoring and operating the feeding systems, net-washing and general site maintenance. Applicants must be comfortable working outside and on the water. Must be willing to work flexible hours and have reliable transportation.

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Cooke Aquaculture appreciates all resumes; however, only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

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Wildlife Pholos Please email to editor@calais.news



Eagle in Princeton. (Photo by Michelle Perkins)



Eagle in Princeton. (Photo by Donna Melanson)



Squirrel in Calais. (Photo by Bobby Oliver)



Squirrel in Calais. (Photo by Bobby Oliver)





(Taken in Calais, Maine by Sharleen G.)



Eagle in Princeton. (Photo by Donna Melanson)



Squirrels and a pigeon in Princeton. (Photo by Donna Melanson)





Bluejay in Calais. (Photo by Sherri Oliver)

Tom, the Office Cat



Tom doesn't love hearing the plow go by!

Visil us online: www.calais.news

Help Wanted

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Father Joseph Blesses the Christmas Creche

Parishioners of St. Kateri Tekakwitha Parish and St. Anne's Episcopal Church gathered on Main Street in Calais on Sunday, December 7, 2025, for the blessing of the Christmas creche erected by St. Croix Council #149 of the Knights of Columbus.

Father Joseph Lukong read the gospel story of the birth of Christ and led the faithful in prayers and invocations before blessing the creche. Reverend Sara Gavit of St. Anne's Episcopal Church prayed that the community experience a holy Advent. The group recited the Lord's Prayer and sang Christmas carols led by Anne Scott

The Knights of Columbus erect the creche annually, in the hope of reminding the community to keep Christ in Christmas.



Father Joseph Lukong reading the gospel story of the birth of Christ during the Blessing of the Christmas Creche.

Lincoln Memorial Public Library

This Tuesday, being a Snow Day early dismissal, the Pembroke School had no Storytime this week, but the Edmunds School students were more fortunate! The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats was the primary story read by Miss Sam, and the project was to decorate paper mittens, complete with connecting strings to keep them together! Later, young Edith, daughter of Miss Sam, read a book to anyone who was free to listen: I Am Not Going to Get Up Today! by Dr. Seuss. It expressed the rebellion that we all may have felt at some

A milestone was achieved last week when a book, which had been electronically checked out by Library Director Colin Windhorst, was returned and electronically checked back in again by Miss Sam, who is also our newest volunteer librarian. We are very close to being able to have our library's database of materials available online, so that anyone can view it and discover if a book they are looking for is in the library's collection.

The final activity of the week was the monthly First Friday Tea at the Library. The group was small, only five, but most enjoyable, not to mention, very delicious! It's a lovely oasis of peace and quiet, with such pleasant and interesting conversations. Next month's will be January 2nd and a wonderful quiet way to relax into the new year.

There are two occasions coming up in our future. For the Dennys River Historical Society, there will be a screening of a historical film, title to be announced, while a new monthly event for the library will be a screening of one of the many wonderful classic movies that are in the library's collection. The first one, probably beginning in January, is planned to be "Fiddler on the Roof," which was brought up



First Friday Tea at the Library.



Students decorating mittens as part of their after-school activity.

at the Tea because of discussing Russian history in connection with Melinda Jaques' genealogical roots.

As always, the library is open for all to enjoy or use for copying or computer access on Mondays 4 to 7 p.m., Tuesdays and Fridays 1 to 4 p.m., and Saturdays noon to 3 p.m. The library is closed for official holidays and also for inclem-

ent weather or unexpected events, such as illness of the scheduled volunteer librarian. We are always looking for new volunteers to assist us in making the library available to our community for more hours. For more information please contact our volunteer coordinator, Ann Carter at 214-4540 or ahcarter@midmaine.com.