



Commissioners Reject Budget Committee's Proposed 2026 Budget, Forcing a Showdown on Further Cuts on Dec. 17

Paul Sylvain

To no one's surprise, Washington County Commissioners on Dec. 11 rejected the 2026 budget presented by the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC), seeking even deeper cuts from the Sheriff's Office.

The unanimous decision by Commissioners Billy Howard, Courtney Hammond, and Chairman David Burns sets the stage for a marathon BAC meeting on Dec. 17, immediately followed by a commissioners meeting to consider the revised spending package offered by the BAC.

The BAC would then reconvene and vote to either accept the budget or choose to override it with a two-thirds majority, which requires a minimum of eight votes.

In presenting the draft budget last week, BAC Chairman and Eastport City Manager Brian Schuth outlined the work the committee had done since receiving the first draft budget from commissioners back in September.

"In September, the committee was presented with an operational budget of \$12,414,376, excluding the debt service,"

Schuth said. "That would've been an increase of about \$2.5 million, or 25.7%. It was presented to us as a budget that would probably fund existing services that the prior year's budget failed to do."

Continuing, Schuth explained, "The budget before you today of \$11,801,820, exclusive of overlay, [reflects] an increase of about \$1.9 million, or 19.5% over fiscal year 2025, and a reduction of \$612,556 from the draft [presented by commissioners in September]."

(continued on page 8)

Calais High Junior Wins Jo's Pizza's Grammar for Giving Contest



Tim Crowe, owner of Jo's Diner & Pizzeria, Grammar for Giving contest winner Olivia Turner, and Blue Devil Fund representative Kari Cole. Read more on page 3. (Photo courtesy of Jo's)

Commissioners Consider Moving Some Sheriff's Office Deputies to the UT's Budget

Paul Sylvain

As the Washington County Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) prepares to square off against a board of county commissioners — two members of which appear to be taking aim at effectively defunding the Sheriff's Department through deep staffing cuts in patrol deputies — Commissioner Billy Howard may have hit on a way to save some of those positions from the chopping block.

Following a motion at the

commissioners' Dec. 11 meeting to accept the minutes of last month's Unorganized Territories (UT) discussions regarding the UT's 2026 budget, Commissioner Howard spoke up, saying, "I think we need to go back and visit that again. After talking to another county commissioner [from Penobscot County], they moved a couple of sheriff deputies positions [to the UT's budget]. That is something we should be looking back into before we approve it."

(continued on page 10)

Commissioners Buy More Time, Vote to Extend TAN Due Date

Paul Sylvain

It turns out that the rush to insert an \$11 million bond question on the November ballot to pay off the county's 2025 tax anticipation note (TAN) and the ensuing disagreement and dispute over the bond may have been totally unnecessary.

Washington County Com-

missioners Billy Howard, Courtney Hammond, and Chairman David Burns pushed the county's voters to pass the bond, saying that without the bond, the county would be in default of the loan from Machias Savings Bank and would be forced to close for business on Jan. 1.

(continued on page 10)



Painting by Tom Brennan

The gift of love. The gift of peace. The gift of happiness.
May all these be yours at Christmas.

Area Christmas Activities

- 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.

See page 20 for Perry Elementary School's grades 1 & 2 Letters to Santa!

Holiday Spirit on Display at Washington County Feztival of Trees

Jayna Smith
jayna@calais.news

The annual Feztival of Trees once again brought holiday cheer to Washington County over the weekend of December 12-14, drawing hundreds of visitors to Washington County Community

College to admire nearly 50 beautifully decorated Christmas trees, each surrounded by an impressive display of gifts.

Held in Calais since its inception in 2016, the Feztival is jointly organized by the Schoodic Shrine Club, which serves northern Washington County,

and the Washington County Shrine Club, which covers the southern portion of the county. The event continues to support an important cause, with all proceeds benefiting Shriners Hospitals for Children, which provides specialized medical care and critical services to

children regardless of a family's ability to pay.

Admission to view the festive displays was just \$1 for adults, while children 12 and under were admitted free. Attendees could also purchase tickets for a chance to win their favorite tree — complete with all deco-

rations and gifts — adding an extra layer of excitement to the holiday tradition.

At the conclusion of the event on Sunday, winners were drawn for each tree and gift package. The drawings were streamed live on Facebook, and winners were also notified by phone.



Ian and Ericka Pratt present a \$2,000 donation on behalf of Pratt Dealership to the Festival of Trees. The annual contribution helps offset event overhead so that more funds can be directed to the children's hospitals. (Pratt photo)



Saint Nick pauses to admire the decorated trees during the Feztival of Trees at Washington County Community College. (Photo by Jayna Smith)



Calais IGA's Festival of Trees entry featured a variety of food items and a gift card. (Photo by Jayna Smith)



Everyday essentials surrounded the F.A. Peabody tree. (Photo by Jayna Smith)



Dunkin' featured a tree surrounded by coffee-themed gifts and gift cards. (Photo by Jayna Smith)



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CCH Employees of the Year Announced

Tabitha Stanley, social worker, and Joe Mayhew, maintenance, were chosen as Calais Community Hospital's 2025 Employees of the Year. Stanley is the clinical Employee of the Year, while Mayhew is the non-clinical Employee of the Year.

CCH staff nominated their peers for these awards. Factors considered are dependability, initiative, attitude, and teamwork.

Since joining the CCH team in 2021, Stanley has brought tremendous dedication, compassion, and invaluable resources to CHH's staff, patients, and their families. She consistently gives her all, going above and beyond to assist families in finding appropriate

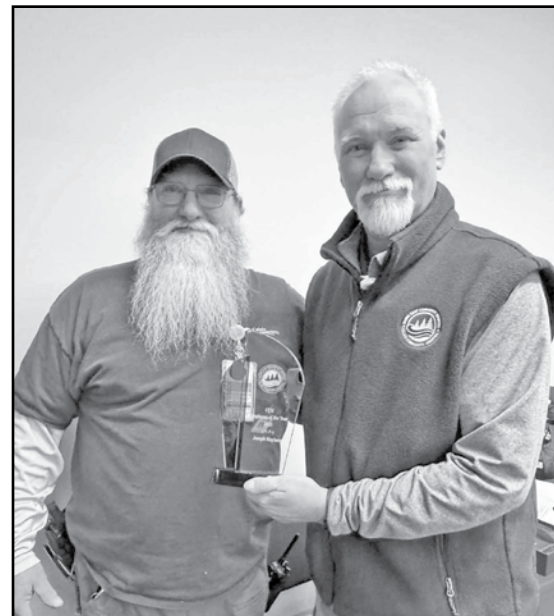
placements for loved ones.

Mayhew is a self-motivated and highly dependable employee who consistently prioritizes tasks effectively and ensures that all responsibilities are completed on time. He is always willing to lend a hand — whether within his own department or in other areas of the hospital — demonstrating a genuine commitment to supporting his coworkers and the organization as a whole.

Congratulations to both winners and all nominees. Calais Community Hospital thanks them for their great jobs done every day and the special way in which each cares for the patients and their co-workers.



Tabitha Stanley, social worker, with Steve Lail



Joe Mayhew, maintenance, with Steve Lail.

Calais High Junior Wins Jo's Pizza's Grammar for Giving Contest

Jayna Smith
jayna@calais.news

Jo's Diner & Pizzeria has announced that Olivia Turner, a junior at Calais High School, is the winner of its second annual Grammar for Giving contest. Olivia's essay focused on the Blue Devil Fund, a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit that raises money for charities in the

greater-Calais area. In recognition of her winning entry, the organization will now receive a day's worth of sales from the restaurant.

Launched last year by Jo's owner, Tim Crowe, the contest encourages high school juniors and seniors from Calais and Woodland High Schools to explore the importance of giving back. Participants submitted

500-word essays advocating for a charitable organization close to their hearts. Olivia's essay stood out for its heartfelt narrative and insightful perspective on the impact of the Blue Devil Fund.

Crowe noted that this year's contest drew an impressive range of entries from both Calais and Woodland high schools. The essays reflect the compas-

sion and creativity of the students, he shared. He added that each one is a testament to the thoughtfulness and dedication of the young advocates, which made the selection process both inspiring and challenging.

As part of her prize, Olivia

received a \$100 gift certificate to Jo's Diner, \$100 in cash, and the satisfaction of knowing her efforts will directly benefit the Blue Devil Fund. In addition, Jo's Diner donated all proceeds from sales on Monday, Dec. 15, to the organization.



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Happy New Year!*

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Please Note:

The Calais Advertiser office will close at noon, Christmas Eve, Dec. 24 and be closed Christmas Day, Dec. 25 and Dec. 26.

Our Dec. 25 newspaper will be available in our office a day early, Tuesday, Dec. 23 and the mailed issues will be sent out a day early.





www.calais.news

Governor Mills Radio Address

Maximize Your Student Loan Savings

You know, choosing to go to college shouldn’t trap somebody in decades of debt, with interest rates that snowball until what you owe becomes impossible to pay off. And yet, that is the reality for many people, especially young people, who make good-faith payments on their student loan debt and still struggle to get by.

Three years ago I worked with the Legislature to make Maine’s student loan relief program a lot less complicated and more generous – in fact, it’s now one of the most generous debt relief programs in the country.

Unlike our old tax credit

that had a lot of complicated criteria, our new student loan repayment tax credit is simple and straightforward. Basically, if you graduated any time after 2007 with a degree in any subject, from any college, community college, or university anywhere, and you now live and work and you pay income taxes in Maine, then you’re eligible to save up to \$2,500 a year on your student loans.

If you’re paying down your student loan, you can claim this credit on your state income taxes and get up to \$2,500 to offset some or all of your state income tax. For a couple who are both paying down their stu-

dent loans it’s \$2,500 for each of them a year.

For example, a taxpayer who owes the State of Maine \$500, but who made \$2,500 in eligible student loan payments during the year, would receive a refund of \$2,000.

Since we overhauled the student loan relief program we’ve provided more than \$140 million in tax relief to Maine people who can now put that money towards buying a house, raising a family, starting a small business, or just keeping up with more expensive everyday needs, like groceries.

The strength of our economy depends on keeping talented

people working in our state and paying taxes here. There’s a simple, generous, and clear tax credit to help you pay down your student debt and start or continue a career here in Maine. As the year draws to a close, and as you start to think about filing your taxes for 2025, I strongly, strongly encourage you to consider claiming Maine’s student loan repayment tax credit to maximize your savings.

For more information about this tax credit for taxpayers in Maine, please visit maine.gov/revenue. That’s maine.gov/revenue.

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1-in-3 Mainers Wrongly Believe Eggnog Is ‘Light Beer’ Strength

Every December, Americans trade their usual drinks for something a little more “seasonal” — steaming mulled wines, cosy Irish coffees, spiked hot chocolates, and candy-cane martinis that feel far more innocent than they are. But a new survey by Bisnar Chase, polling 2,002 adults (21+), reveals just how badly people underestimate the strength of these festive favorites.

Respondents were asked whether they consider a range of Christmas cocktails — in-

cluding eggnog, mulled wine, and hot toddies — to be as strong as low-alcohol beer. The results were surprisingly clear: on average, over 1-in-3 (38%) Mainers believe these holiday drinks are no stronger than low-alcohol beer — this compares to a national average of 38%.

More specifically:

In Maine, 39% of adults think eggnog packs no more punch than a light beer, while another 41% say the same about mulled wine. And in the Pine Tree State, 34% also mistakenly

believe that hot toddies count as low-alcohol cocktails.

The wider data shows how deep the confusion runs:

20% believe holiday cocktails don’t count toward the drink-drive limit.

57% admit they have unknowingly drunk more at a Christmas party because the drinks were “festive” or “didn’t taste strong.”

46% expect warm drinks (such as spiked hot chocolate, lattes, or mulled wine) to be weaker than cold cocktails.

And when faced with a menu item called Santa’s Milkshake, almost half (48%) would assume it’s alcohol-free.

The misunderstandings don’t end there. When asked which Christmas cocktails they believed they could legally drive after having one, 23% chose spiked hot chocolate, 10% chose a sugar cookie martini, and 7% chose a snowball cocktail.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, 77% of Mainers think restaurants and bars should label the alcohol strength of these drinks — a sign that people know they are

operating with guesswork.

The findings point to a cheerful but risky blind spot. And behind all the cinnamon, whipped cream, and seasonal novelty lies a serious issue: misjudging holiday cocktails can quietly push people over the legal limit, exposing them to criminal charges, licence suspensions, and long-term consequences that last far beyond Christmas Day.

“People don’t set out to break the law at Christmas — they simply underestimate what’s in the glass”, says nationally recognized attorney Brian Chase. “Cocktails look fun and harmless, but their alcohol content doesn’t magically drop because it’s the holidays. Our concern is that this misunderstanding can put otherwise responsible people at serious legal risk. A single misjudged drink can lead to a DUI, licence suspension and consequences that follow you long after the decorations come down.”

This article was provided courtesy of Bisnar Chase, <https://www.bestattorney.com/>.

Corrections

- It was incorrectly reported in the front page story titled “County BAC Passes \$11.8 Million Spending Package for 2026” in the Dec. 11 Advertiser that a “David Colson” voted against the budget. The budget committee member who voted no was David Davis. Skip Colson is chairman of the Alexander Board of Selectmen and not a voting member of the BAC. We apologize for any confusion the error may have caused.
- In the story titled “Jonesporters Vote to Pay Town’s Share of County Debt,” County Commissioner Courtney Hammond was reported as representing District 1. Hammond represents District 3; District 1 is represented by Commissioner Billy Howard

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Freedom Studies

BY JONATHAN REISMAN
Opinion

Affordability Fooling

Roger Daltrey, lead singer of the Who, was recently officially knighted at Windsor Castle. Sir Roger arguably earned his knighthood back in 1971 when he wrote and belted out the prescient “Won’t Get Fooled Again”.

Daltrey’s lyrics:
*We’ll be fighting in the streets,
With our children at our feet,
And the morals that they worship will be gone.
And the men who spurred us on,
Sit in judgment of all wrong.
They decide and the shotgun sings the song.
(CHORUS)
I’ll tip my hat to the new Constitution.
Take a bow for the new revolution.
Smile and grin at the change all around,
Pick up my guitar and play.
Just like yesterday,
And I’ll get on my knees and pray
We don’t get fooled again.*

*Change, it had to come.
We knew it all along.
We were liberated from the fold, that’s all.
And the world looks just the same,
And history ain’t changed,
‘Cause the banners, they all flown in the last war.
(REPEAT CHORUS)*

*I’ll move myself and my family aside,
If we happen to be left half alive,
I’ll get all my papers and smile at the sky,
For I know that the hypnotized, never lie
Do you?*

*There’s nothing in the street,
Looks any different to me,
And the slogans are effaced, by-the-bye.
And the parting on the left,
Is now the parting on the right,
And the beards have all grown longer overnight.
(REPEAT CHORUS)
Meet the new boss.
Same as the old boss.*

Sir Roger’s prescience came to mind as Republicans and Democrats struggled to deal with affordability and honesty challenges that were often largely of their own making. Health care affordability and accessibility have been damaged and curtailed since the Affordable Care Act (ACA) was passed in 2010. Inflation spiked at 9%, and our affordability crisis settled in after the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) was passed in 2022.

Here in Maine, Governor Mills and Hannah Pingree pushed climate policies that dramatically raised the price of electricity while averting exactly no climate change whatsoever. They pursued those climate policies using no bid contracts, which rewarded climate

alarmists and various allied Democratic vendors. The ACA aimed to make health care more affordable, accessible, and efficient. Given premium spikes, subsidy snafus, myriad rural health care woes, and general systemic dysfunction, I’d say we got pretty badly fooled.

The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 aimed to fight inflation, reduce the federal government budget deficit, lower prescription drug prices, and promote clean energy. The IRA was as much a policy fraud and failure as the ACA.

As the Maine legislature and Congress reconvene in 2026, I hope without much hope that the truth will set them free and they’ll honestly label the legislation they saddle us with. I’ll get on my knees and pray that we don’t get fooled again.

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

Taxpayers Deserve Confidence that Their Money is Being Spent Wisely

Rep. Paul Flynn of Albion

Recent federal findings of fraud in Medicaid, SNAP, and other welfare programs raise serious questions about how taxpayer funds are being distributed in Maine.

Sadly, these findings reinforce what House Republicans have warned about for years: we need a non-biased, independent review of how your money is being managed.

House Republicans — and our colleagues in the Senate — will continue to push for transparency and accountability. Because it is your money. It comes from your hard work. It does not come from some magic “free money” tree.

We have repeatedly requested information from the administration and asked that it be made public. Most of those requests have been ignored.

However, enough information has leaked out to raise troubling questions, including:

- EBT payments sent to deceased individuals
- Housing resources diverted to non-citizens while homeless Mainers wait
- Non-citizens registering and voting
- Individuals without legal status involved in crimes and car accidents

- Bundles of blank ballots discovered in an Amazon package
- An unexplained spike in deaths of children in state custody

And just last spring, Democratic State Auditor Matt Dunlap released a report that found:

- Lack of internal controls exposing \$2.1 billion in FY2024 contract spending to fraud, waste, and abuse;
- A 100% failure rate for agencies following their own procurement rules;
- Sole-source contracts without justification;
- Contracts signed after work already began;
- Procurements with no cost analysis;
- Agencies splitting contracts to avoid competitive bidding requirements;
- Failure to conduct vendor performance reviews;

The Mills administration and majority Democrats in the Legislature have resisted calls to investigate the deficiencies identified by their own State Auditor.

Unfortunately, too many in Augusta seem to believe the public wants them to reflexively say “no” to any request from Republican legislators — or even from federal agencies — regardless of whether

rejecting those requests harms the very people who rely on federal programs.

Just last fall, Maine’s partisan Attorney General instructed state agencies not to respond to inquiries from the U.S. Department of Justice.

This kind of polarization does nothing to help Maine people.

Mainers are tired of the political games. They want their government to do its job. They want assurance that tax dollars are solving problems — not creating new ones.

The Mills administration and legislative Democrats should cooperate with federal officials to ensure laws are being followed, waste is eliminated, and benefits reach the people these programs were designed to help.

Anything less shows disregard for how other people’s money is spent — or worse, suggests an effort to cover up fraud, waste, and abuse.

Thank you for listening — and thank you for helping us change Maine for the better.

And God bless you all.

Representative Paul Flynn of Albion is serving his first term as the Representative for District 63.


Letters to the Editor and Opinion Pages — Reminder to Readers:

Readers are advised that Letters to the Editor and opinion letters often blend verifiable facts with personal opinions, contested political interpretations, selective framing, and rhetorical contrasts. They should therefore be approached with careful attention to sourcing, precision, and the clear distinction between evidence and rhetoric. Readers are encouraged to remain skeptical of arguments that claim exclusive ownership of truth while condemning others for alleged falsehoods. Always research claims independently to determine where the truth lies, as such certainty is often bolstered by selective framing rather than direct proof and can reflect the very biases it critiques. In today’s polarized media landscape, cultivating intellectual humility and cross-checking claims fosters a truly informed citizenship far better than the persuasions of passionate convictions. We call this wisdom, and everyone should want to have this virtue.

The Calais Advertiser Letters Policy: Letters to the Editor:
We reserve the right to publish or not publish a letter. You must be a paid subscriber — print or digital. We may edit for taste, clarity, and length. Letters that are potentially libelous, slanderous, or written with harmful intent will be rejected. We do not publish form letters, petitions, quotations, or anonymous letters. Please limit letters to roughly 300 words, and send by email to letters@calais.news, by fax to 207-454-3458, or by mail to The Calais Advertiser, 23 Church Street, Calais, Maine 04619. We prefer letters that beget letters — that offer sound opinions on current events, editorials on the community, city, state, and federal matters. Please include your full address and phone number; however, your address and phone number will not be included if/when published.

“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



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City Announces Winter Parking Ban Now in Effect

Jayna Smith
jayna@calais.news

The City of Calais is reminding motorists that its winter parking ban is now in effect, and vehicles left in violation may be towed.

Under the ban, parking is prohibited on all city streets and in city-owned parking lots between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. The restriction is in place throughout the winter months to allow the public works crews to safely and efficiently plow snow and maintain road conditions during overnight hours and winter storms.

Officials urge residents and visitors to plan accordingly to avoid the possible towing of their vehicle and to help keep streets clear and accessible during winter weather.



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What's Up, Calais?

Jayna Smith - jayna@calais.news

The Calais Free Library has been busy with creative holiday themed events, with the final one of the season happening this Friday, December 19, for kids. The children's craft event will take place from 1 to 4 p.m. For more information, contact the Calais Free Library at 207-454-2758.

Don't forget about the Winter Solstice-themed nature walk at Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge this 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.

The Class of 2026 students at Calais High School are selling tickets on a Christmas basket. Tickets are just \$1 each or six for five. Grab your tickets from any senior.

Some may already be aware, area firefighter Vinny Day Jr. suffered a leg injury while fighting a fire last month, causing him to be out of work for at least two months. A dedicated and well-trained volunteer with the Charlotte Fire Department, Vinny has a wife and two young children. While some assistance is available, many have asked how they can help further. Machias Savings Bank has established the "Vinny Day Jr. Fund" to help offset expenses not covered through regular channels. Donations may be made at any MSB branch or mailed to MSB, 210 North Street, Calais, ME 04619.

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.

New Ventures Maine Launches Winter 2026 Mini-Grant Competition for Small Businesses

New Ventures Maine (NVME) has announced open applications for their statewide Marketing Mini-Grant competition. The NVME Marketing Mini-Grant Program aims to strengthen access to markets for small businesses by supporting the development of marketing tools, materials, and activities. NVME will award cash mini-grants — up to \$1,000 per region — to microenterprises for new or expanded business marketing and promotion projects through a competitive application process. The application form is accessible online at newventuresmaine.org/about-us/more-services/marketing-mini-grants and are due by Friday, January 30, 2026 at noon.

Eligible applicants include individual micro-business owners, business partners, or groups of business owners. Businesses apply to the region in which they are based (see below for details). Application criteria include: 1) Five or fewer full-time equivalent employees; 2) sales in the past 12 months; and 3) gross annual sales of no more than \$150,000 (previous calendar year).

Contact for Washington, Penobscot, Piscataquis, and Hancock counties is Banjo Ogunlela, 207-262-7842, oyebanjo.ogunlela@maine.edu.



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Whether you're a seasoned photographer or just snapping pictures for fun, we want to feature your best shot on our wildlife photography page.

Email your photo to editor@calais.news and include your name and where the animal was spotted.

Photos will be featured in color when space allows.

Please note that clear, high-quality images are more likely to be published.

Community Events Calendar

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 on.

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, 63rd 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 Home-school 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, 207-454-2758.

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 Township 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 p.m.

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 Point.

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

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 a.m.

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

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

There will be no public breakfast or supper at the Dennysville-Edmunds Congregational Church in January.

Eastport's Ross Furman Announced as 2025 Philanthropy Award Winner

Husson University is pleased to announce that Ross Y. Furman of Eastport, Maine, was awarded the 2025 Philanthropy Award.

The Philanthropy Award recognizes a member of the Husson community who has made outstanding contributions for the betterment of Husson University and its students. Furman has shown an unwavering commitment and dedication through his generosity, including supporting the creation of the Ross Y. Furman Student Center and the Furman Terrace, both of which enhanced campus life for countless students.

"As I've approached giving back to Husson, I've wanted to help the students offset their studying with fun," Furman said.

For more than 125 years, Husson University has prepared future leaders through innovative undergraduate and graduate degree programs. With a commitment to delivering affordable classroom, online, and experiential learning opportunities, Husson offers quality educational programs in areas including emerging technologies, business, finance, education, animal care, legal studies, healthcare, science and humanities, and communication. For more information about educational opportunities, visit Husson.edu.



DECH Birth

Lila Acheson and Tyunique Pounds, of Indian Township, are pleased to announce the birth of their son, Tyunique James Pounds II. Tyunique was born on December 9, 2025, weighing 7 lbs. 6 oz.



Sheriff Curtis Takes to Social Media to Stave Off Further Staffing Cuts

Paul Sylvain

Hoping for the best but bracing for the worst, Washington County Sheriff Barry Curtis took to social media on Dec. 12, via his department’s official Facebook page, to warn county residents of the threatened staffing cuts he is facing from County Commissioners when they and the county’s Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) hammer out a 2026 budget Dec. 17.

“As your elected sheriff I am writing this letter to inform people [of] what is being proposed by Commissioner David Burns, Commissioner [Billy] Howard, and [BAC] Vice Chair Ben Edwards concerning law enforcement coverage in Washington County,” Curtis wrote.

Curtis said he curtailed training and replacing aging equip-

ment throughout 2025 in light of the county’s budget crisis. “We were also asked to look at cuts in our 2026 budget,” said Curtis. “The Sheriff’s Office (patrol, jail and RCC) offered a \$605,000 saving by not filling two vacant patrol positions, one anticipated jail vacancy, and one vacancy at the RCC, as well as a leasing option for our patrol vehicles. The budget committee recently passed a budget including these cuts and is a budget that we feel is achievable for the public and continued safety for the people of Washington County.”

Referring to comments made by Burns at the commissioners’ November meeting, the sheriff said, “Burns and Howard want to go much deeper in their cuts to the Sheriff’s Office. Chairman Burns would like to see two additional patrol deputies cut, reducing our patrol by

26%, [going from] 15 patrol deputies to 11.”

The sheriff’s fear is that a budget proposal brought to the BAC floor two weeks ago by Edwards seeks even deeper cuts, which, if incorporated into the 2026 budget, would result in a loss of up to six patrol deputies and a 40% reduction in patrol coverage, Curtis said.

“Mr. Edwards was commended by Commissioner Howard for that suggestion to save money,” said Curtis. “Sheriff’s deputies are the only patrol for Washington County. Deputies have handled more than 9,200 calls for service this year. At current staff (three vacant positions) we have four deputies responsible for the entire County [at any one time].”

Curtis went on to say that such extensive layoffs will lead to an unchecked spike in serious crimes in the county, many of which involve illegal drugs. “Commissioner Burns believes that our issue can be solved by removing one of our two detectives and [moving] one of our deputies assigned to the Maine Drug Enforcement Agency to patrol,” the sheriff wrote. “I can assure you this is not the best way to serve

the citizens with our current drug issues and crimes that are being perpetrated in our county.”

District 2 Commissioner Burns responded by email on Dec. 12, stating, “I fully understand why the sheriff is trying to maintain the numbers of deputies he has been instrumental in increasing each year for some time. I always have and always will respect the leaders of our law enforcement agencies.”

Referring to the proposed cuts as “reductions in force,” Burns said he believes the staffing levels he is proposing “are reasonable for our county, and that has been supported by other sheriffs and law enforcement leaders in similar rural counties.”

Continuing, the chairman, who is a retired Maine State Police trooper, said, “I also know that the sheriff has the resources to adjust how and where he deploys his resources, especially if there is evidence of insufficient coverage. In my career, I have managed a unit of uniformed troopers, a task force of drug agents and a ‘section’ of detectives responsible for major crime investigations in eastern and northern Maine. In my eight years in the Legis-

lature, I both served and led in the Judiciary Committee and the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee. So I believe my experience gives me some credibility for my opinion in these matters.”

Burns added, “We are still researching other alternatives to further cuts and I plan to sit down with the sheriff and others soon to consider those. I believe that we all want the same results, which is to protect the communities we serve and the officers who we send out to enforce the laws, while constructing a budget that we can afford.”

Edwards also commended Curtis for his “genuine concern” for public safety in Washington County, adding that he has heard from municipal officials around the county who are deeply concerned about the impact a soaring county budget would have on local property taxes. County commissioners and BAC members are slated for a day of marathon meetings on Dec. 17 as they race to adopt a budget before the end of the county’s fiscal year on Dec. 31.

Reject Budget (continued from page 1)

The BAC chairman also noted that the committee is also recommending that the amount to pay off the 2025 tax anticipation note be assessed as part of fiscal year 2026 taxes, minus whatever prepayments have been received from the county’s towns. “This is in line with the actions you have already taken or already are doing,” Schuth said.

“The committee has not recommended any significant cuts and services, but has adopted recommendations to reduce the cost of [certain county] services,” said Schuth. “The committee has accepted reductions offered by the Sheriff’s Office, including removal of funding for two empty positions in patrol, removal of funding for an empty position in the RCC, and removal of funding for one empty position in the jail. We’ve also recommended reductions in the transition to fleet management for police vehicles.”

He also said the BAC agreed to a proposal reducing a 10% wage increase for the county’s non-union workers to a 3% cost-of-living adjustment.

Two increases to the budget — both recommended by BAC Vice Chairman and Machias Selectboard Vice Chairman Ben Edwards — were agreed to by the BAC.

The first added \$50,000 for improvements in the Finance Department’s administration and for external help to aid with the restructuring of accounts and expedite the 2022 and ‘23 audits.

“The committee has also recommended that next year’s [BAC] do not proceed with

the 2027 budget until the 2022 and 2023 audits are brought to completion,” Schuth said.

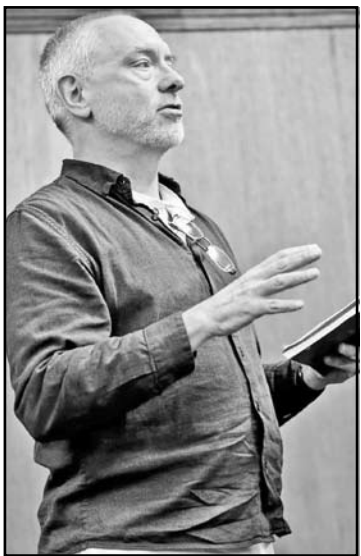
The second called for adding \$50,000 “to building maintenance to allow the county to better address many infrastructural problems.”

Schuth concluded his presentation, stating, “The most important aspect of the budget before you is that it is a real-world, practical, properly funded budget that the county could feel confident is a realistic depiction of its financial needs and restoring confidence in the financial processes of the county, which is crucial for us to maintain our credit standing.”

Commission Chairman Burns began by saying he “greatly appreciates all the work the budget committee has put in,” adding, “The work I’ve seen done since September has been very impressive.” He also observed that the work “has been an incredibly heavy burden” on the committee and stressed that “we’re not out of the woods yet.”

With that, Burns admitted, “I’m still not comfortable with the budget. I think there are more opportunities [for further cuts]. I guess I would say the last time we met, I was very disappointed, and I think others were too, that we didn’t hash out some issues further. I think the final judgment was rushed on several different points, so I’m making the motion that we reject the budget that you just presented us tonight.”

“Presumably, what we produce at the end of that meeting [on Dec. 17] is what they call the final budget, and then it comes to you,” asked Schuth. “Then we’ll recess our meeting so you can meet. And you



Budget Advisory Committee Chairman and Eastport City Manager Brian Schuth called the committee’s version of the proposed 2026 county budget, “a real-world, practical, properly funded budget that the county could feel confident is a realistic depiction of its financial needs and restoring confidence in the financial processes of the county, which is crucial for us to maintain our credit standing.” (Photo by Paul Sylvain)

can make specific changes to the budget if you disagree with it. Once you pass your version, it comes back to us. And it’s either up or down whether we accept or don’t, as you modified it, or override your changes [with a two-thirds vote] and revert to our final budget.”

One BAC member unhappy with the commissioners’ budget rejection was Columbia Selectman Sonny Beal. “My concern is what my residents said at the meeting that we had in town,” Beal said. “We don’t want to lose our services. That’s why we pay county taxes. If we’re not getting the services, why would we want to pay county taxes?”

Said Beal, “This is the bottom line. We need what we’ve got, and it’s already bare bones. We’re not overrun with county services.” The selectman emphasized he did not want to see the Sheriff’s Office cut any further.

“I think we need to take a good, hard look before we slash this budget,” continued Beal. “We’ve already taken almost \$2 million out of it, from what we got initially, which was \$12 million. I just want to make sure that when we vote, we’re voting for the good of the people of the county and not just for the lowest budget. That’s sort of like going to a used car dealership to get an old, beat-up Ford because it’s the cheapest. I don’t want to see that. I’d rather us have a better ride — let’s just put it that way.”

One person fearful of possible layoffs is Regional Communications Center (RCC)

dispatcher Carlen Jay. “I am extremely disappointed in how a lot of this process has worked,” Jay told the commissioners. “If somebody is going to lose their job in the county, their taxes are still going up, and they won’t have a job to pay them.”

Continuing, Jay said, “I don’t want to see any one of us lose our jobs. These other people. They are human beings. There are our neighbors, our friends. Anybody who works in public safety — the people we work beside — they’re our brothers and sisters. They’re not just coworkers. I want to make sure we’re not losing that human element.”

The county must pass a budget no later than Dec. 17 to comply with state law, which requires it to be approved 15 days before it goes into effect. The county’s new fiscal year starts on Jan. 1, 2026.



Budget Advisory Committee member and Columbia Selectman Sonny Beal told county commissioners Dec. 11: “I just want to make sure that when we vote, we’re voting for the good of the people of the county and not just for the lowest budget.” (Photo by Paul Sylvain)

Around the County



County Commissioners Sign Quarter-Million Dollar IT Contract with The Computer Guy

Paul Sylvain

Washington County Commissioners on Dec. 11 voted unanimously to sign a quarter-million-dollar Information Technology (IT) service contract with The Computer Guy in East Machias. That decision is not likely to sit well with certain members of the county's Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) who questioned the expense at a time when some believe additional cuts are needed in the proposed 2026 county budget. The contract goes into effect Jan. 1.

District 1 County Commissioner Billy Howard acknowledged those concerns, saying, "The budget committee had a lot of concerns about the IT budget. Over the years, the IT budget has grown exponentially."

BAC member and Calais Finance Director Crystal Galina expressed frustration at the committee's Dec. 3 meeting, saying at least two times that she wanted to discuss the \$250,000 IT contract before voting on the 2026 budget. Her requests were ignored, observers said, and the proposed budget ultimately passed by a narrow 6-5 vote, with Galina being one of the five BAC members voting against it.

"We went through great lengths to compare our [IT budget] to costs in several other counties, trying to find similarities," District 2 Commissioner and Chairman David Burns said at the commissioner's monthly meeting on Dec. 11. "We found [our costs] were coming under."

"We are," County Manager Renee Gray added. "The other proposal was for a county IT department, which would have included full-time employees with benefits."

District 3 Commissioner Courtney Hammond noted that he had recently read an article that stated Waldo County currently budgets \$900,000 for IT services. Referring to The Computer Guy's contract, Hammond observed, "Nobody else applied for it. We've already voted on it. Nobody else made any bids."

"I think right now we're committed to moving forward with this after all the work that's been done, especially by the applicant," said Burns, shortly before the board voted to sign the contract. Hammond agreed, saying, "We were comfortable with the level of services that he is able to provide."

Commissioners Seek Federal Probe Into New SO Building Contract, ARPA Funds

Paul Sylvain

District 1 County Commissioner Billy Howard has asked the Commissioners' Chairman, David Burns, to contact federal investigators to look into the contractor and federal funds used to build the new, but still vacant, Washington County Sheriff's Office building in Machias.

The request, made during the commissioners' comments section near the end of their Dec. 11 meeting, comes in response to what Howard said was continuing "scuttlebutt" he has heard from citizens, including some unnamed contractors in his district, which includes Calais.

"I wouldn't mind, if possible, having Dave [Burns] contact the federal level — whether it's the DOJ (Department of Justice) or FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation), to review Sheridan, the architect, and maybe the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) money, just for good measure," Howard said. "I'm hearing a lot of scuttlebutt, and I want to put it to rest. Is that something we can do or not?"

Caught by surprise, Burns first replied, "Which David are you talking about? Me?"

Continuing, Howard explained, "No one has really, really looked at the contracts."

"Whoever it is, that's the manager of the ARPA money," Burns replied. "I can ask them

to take a look at this particular contract." Howard added, "Yes, and the architects."

"I guess I can try," said Burns. "We tried, before, to find out who the actual contract manager was. The problem was that there was so much of the ARPA money going out that I was told that the oversight didn't even happen, [and that] anything under \$10 million is peanuts to them. That's the federal government. So, we can try and see who had oversight over this ARPA money in that project."

Washington County received \$6.1 million in COVID-related ARPA funds, which were used to construct the new county public safety building, across from the current sheriff's building on Court Street, which dates back to 1858. The price tag for the new two-story building was reportedly just shy of \$5.5 million.

County Manager Renee Gray pointed out that the bids for the project went out while Betsy Fitzgerald was county manager. Fitzgerald left office in mid-2023, after serving as county manager for about 10 years. Gray said in an earlier interview that one of her first acts as new county manager, two years ago, was the awarding of the contract to Sheridan Construction of Fairfield, Maine. Port City Architecture of Portland was hired as the architect for the project.

The project was undertaken during the tenure of former County Commissioners Vin-

ton Cassidy, John Crowley, and Chairman Chris Gardner. Cassidy was defeated in the 2024 primaries, and Gardner did not seek re-election last year. They were replaced in January by Burns and Howard. Crowley resigned for health reasons this past May and was replaced in June by Courtney Hammond.

During the commissioners' discussion last week, it was noted that Sheridan, as chief contractor, was the project's manager and was responsible for hiring the various subcontractors involved in the project.

As the county's current fiscal crisis unfolded this year, it was learned that the ARPA money was put in the county's general fund and used up for reserves. As a result, the county had to borrow money to pay Sheridan for its work, when payment should have been drawn from the ARPA money.

One local contractor who competed for the project was Northfield developer Justin King. Asked in October if he was offered the job, King said he appeared for an interview but said he had the feeling "it was a done deal" with another contractor. King said he was confident the project could have been done at less cost by a local contractor.

It's expected that Burns will follow up on Howard's request and report back when the commissioners meet again on Jan. 14.

Beals Voters Give Selectboard Decision Power to Pre-pay County TAN Share

Nancy Beal

A group of 16 voting residents gathered at the Beals Town Office Dec. 11 to air opinions and ask questions regarding how the town should pay its share of the county tax anticipation note (TAN) owed by the county to Machias Savings Bank. The debt, taken out annually by the county, is used to cover about nine months of operating costs before tax revenue from the towns begin rolling in around August and September.

Because of several late-year cost-cutting measures and the fact several towns have already begun making pre-payments to the county for their share of the TAN, the amount of principal owed to MSB has been reduced from around \$7.6 million to about \$5.6 million, not including interest. Beals' share is \$185,070.

Voters, given four payment options to consider, ultimately agreed to allow the town's selectmen and treasurer to use unexpended funds from selected municipal accounts, in whole or in part, and including surplus, to pre-pay the debt-in-full. The latter included tapping into and reimbursing the boat excise tax account, usually held in reserve for unexpected expenses.

Beals Selectman Daniel Davis, who had met with the town's treasurer and auditor to determine how Beals could pre-pay the town's share, noted that the

town "had to pay" and presented the list of options. The other three options considered by voters were:

- Take no action and address the matter at town meeting next March, paying interest on the debt in the meantime;
- Borrow the funds from a bank and pay interest to the lender; or
- Take the amount from unspent, undesignated funds, reducing operating money until taxes started to come in late next summer.

Davis also listed some potential sources for the funds. For one, the road repair account, totaling \$35,000, would not be needed until next spring; Other accounts with funds available included the marina float account, for which the town had secured a grant; the town building repair account, from which repairs have been done and were covered by grants; \$7,000 in the cemetery account (presently only one fence has needed replacement for several years); the celebrations and flag accounts, containing approximately \$7,000; and \$11,500 leftover from money appropriated to repair the salt/sand shed.

Additionally, selectmen said, \$189,000 in this year's taxes was still outstanding. Many commercial fishing families rely on rebate money from their lobster buyers to pay their town taxes. Rebate checks are scheduled to go out this week.

Benita Alley asked the question many others present were pondering: "[When we use this money to pay the county tax], will we have enough to pay our bills?" The selectboard replied, "Yes."

Attending the meeting to field questions from voters were District 3 County Commissioner Courtney Hammond, of Columbia Falls, Washington County Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) Chairman and Eastport City Manager Brian Schuth, and BAC member Daniel Daley of Lubec.

Hammond and Schuth explained that the county's financial debacle was caused in large part by "sloppy bookkeeping," dating back a half-dozen years. Federal Covid American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, designated for a new sheriff's building and district attorney's office, were mistakenly mingled with the general accounts, they said. Money tagged to the county's unorganized territories got erroneously transferred into general accounts, and carryovers were double-counted. Additionally, some items — notably, liability insurance — were omitted from the 2025 budget, Hammond said. "[Former County Treasurer Jill Holmes, who has since resigned] was not keeping a good balance sheet, so [the county] was not taxing the towns enough."

Asked by Kevin Beal, "Was there anything illegal?" Hammond replied, "No," and told

the crowd that he and fellow commissioners Billy Howard and Chairman David Burns discovered the errors shortly after he took office last spring and immediately notified state investigators about what they found. "We've given them all we had: accounts, correspondence, everything," Hammond said, adding that commissioners also looked into collecting the small amount of money possibly available from the treasurer's performance bond, but learned that it would only be paid out if criminal action was to blame.

Hammond stressed that the commissioners intend to seek voters' approval to change the treasurer's position from an elected position to a hired professional. That change, he said, will be on ballots next November. Moving money between accounts will stop, he said, and grant applications and expenditures over \$500 must now be authorized by the commissioners.

By 2028, commissioners will seek to change the fiscal year from the current Jan. 1 through Dec. 31 calendar year to a July 1 through June 30 fiscal year, which is in sync with the fiscal year followed by the county's towns and the state. Towns will receive two tax bills in the 18-month changeover, he said, and noted that many towns already make incremental payments instead of one annual lump-sum payment.

"The state is what's really driving our costs," Hammond said, explaining that state police have left the county and sheriff's deputies are "swamped" trying to fill the void. The jail, built to house 42 inmates, averages 55 to 70 each day, and the county must absorb their medical care costs after the first month of incarceration.

Additionally, the county pays for the district attorney's office, the courts, emergency management, and RCC, Hammond said, plus the county's emergency line, which receives 13,000 calls per year.

County officials admitted that the fiscal crisis would cause 2026 county tax bills to show a marked increase, but added that the county portion of municipal tax bills usually represents a small portion of the town's overall tax bills to residents. Beals Treasurer Terry Beal agreed, saying that county tax represented 10% of individual tax bills, while the municipal portion of Beals' taxes amounted to 16%, and the school portion accounted for the remaining 74%.

Amendments to the recently approved aquaculture ordinance were approved, replacing the planning board with an aquaculture review committee as the body that will review and approve or disapprove new licenses and enforcement.

Around the County

Wesley Tree Fest
Raises \$120,000

Will Tuell

The Wesley (Keeton) Foundation took to social media Dec. 11 to thank the community, sponsors, and the University of Maine at Machias for making the ninth iteration of its popular Christmas tree festival the most successful yet. Team Wes spokesman Dean McGuire said that the event raised \$120,000 — the most it has ever raised for youth enrichment activities across Downeast Maine, and the third consecutive year the foundation

has raised over \$100,000 during the ever-growing Christmas tree festival. “This year’s Tree Festival raised approximately \$120,000, all of which will go towards the work of the Foundation — most of which will be reserved for the outdoor rec center!” McGuire said. “The community we live in is absolutely amazing. You continue to show your love and support for Wesley, his family and this organization. We cannot possibly thank you enough.” Wesley’s Tree Festival be-

gan in 2016 as a way to keep the memory of four-year-old Wesley Keeton of East Machias alive. Keeton lost his life in an ATV accident in August 2013, leading his family to set up a foundation that assists area schools, organizations such as Little League, and other community groups that promote youth enrichment activities. Proceeds from the annual ticket drop tree festival have also been used to purchase the old fairgrounds across from Down East Community Hospital in Machias, where the Wesley Foundation plans to develop an outdoor youth rec area. While it would be easy to marvel at Team Wes’s knack for fundraising, especially in a time where affordability is at the forefront of everyone’s mind Downeast, McGuire said that the Foundation is staying focused on its mission of serving the youth of Washington County.

“Our way of saying thanks is to continue the work of the Foundation,” McGuire wrote. “While the big shiny prize that we are all incredibly excited to see come to fruition is the outdoor children’s recreation center at our new property in Machias (across from the hospital), we are also continuing to offer our support to area youth organizations throughout the area throughout the entire year.

We provide funding, equipment, uniforms, etc as much as possible while still planning/preparing for the rec center.” McGuire went on to say the bulk of this year’s tree festival proceeds will go toward the development of that outdoor rec center, offering the public an update on where things stand with the property. “Plans are still being developed for the outdoor rec center. The property was essentially cleaned up this past year with old buildings removed, alders cut, bushes mowed, safety issues addressed, groundwork done, etc. All of which are the boring and monotonous, yet essential things that must happen before the plans can be put into motion,” he said. “We are in hopes of seeing noticeable progress on those plans in the near future. That would not be possible without your continued support!...We continue to encourage everyone to submit your ideas for what you would like to see at the Outdoor rec center property.”

McGuire concluded by thanking the 52 individuals and organizations that donated themed trees, Machias Memorial High School’s Culinary Arts program, which handled on-site concession at UMM, and the university itself for accommodating a festival that has outgrown two venues in its

nine-year existence. “We would be remiss if we did not thank our tree sponsors for all of the amazing trees that they donated. Very creative and impressive trees!!” he said. “A huge thank you also to the University and all of their staff that were involved with our event. They truly made this event run so smoothly with all of their help and expertise.” Festival organizers and attendees alike praised the Dec. 5-7 event, noting that the expanded space reduced congestion and made room for new amenities, including a concession stand and a community area for socializing. The return of Santa Claus only added to the festivities, contributing to what many called the best Wesley Tree Festival yet.

While it’s hard to see the festival getting even bigger, 2026 is a milestone year for Team Wes; organizers have already booked UMM’s Reynolds Center for the event, and more amenities are sure to be added with faithful tree sponsors looking to create once-in-a-decade designs.



TAN Due Date
(continued from page 1)

As election day neared, commissioners determined only \$8 million would be needed to cover the principal and interest on the TAN and pledged to cap the bond at the lower amount. In the end, voters didn’t buy it, and the bond went down in flames at the polls. Now, with just two weeks remaining in 2025, the commissioners have seemingly bought more time from Machias Savings Bank and have further reduced the amount owed on the principal to \$5.6 million. The commissioners at their Dec. 11 meeting acted on a motion read by District 3 Commissioner Hammond, extending the TAN due date to March 20. Hammond previously stated that state statute required counties to repay TANs in the same year as the loans were secured. That said, commissioners also noted earlier that the 2025 TAN was taken out on Feb. 15, meaning the county would not be in default with MSB so long as payment in full was made by Feb. 15. However, the county would be in violation of state

statute if it was not paid by Dec. 31, 2025. County Manager Renee Gray explained to the commissioners at the Dec. 11 meeting that the bond council said the commissioners had to vote to ask the bank to formally extend the 2025 tax anticipation note’s maturity date. Reading from a document, Commissioner Hammond entered a motion “to further amend the \$7,612,174 loan to \$5,679,200 tax anticipation note dated Feb. 21, 2025, and awarded to Machias Savings Bank, Machias, Maine, by extending the maturity date to March 20, 2026, and further to authorize the treasurer and county manager to execute said loan and all other documents necessary to complete said amendment. All other terms and conditions as stated and said tax anticipation note will remain the same.” Asked by Commissioner Howard if there was any change in the interest rate, Hammond replied, “No, it’s the same.” In moving the question for a vote, Howard observed, “Well, it gives us a little more time.” Hammond’s motion passed unanimously.

Deputies
(continued from page 1)

Commission Chairman David Burns said that he had recently heard about that also at a meeting earlier in the week with commissioners from other Maine counties. Ironically, Howard is one of the two commissioners open to a proposal floated by BAC Vice Chairman Ben Edwards which goes beyond the BAC’s budget decision to simply not fill two existing patrol vacancies; Edwards proposes laying off four additional deputies — a plan that would result in a loss of six patrol deputies in a county with no state police on patrol and less than a handful of mu-

nicipal police departments. Howard’s motion to delay consideration of the minutes of the UT’s previous meeting “until we can review it again,” was not without some confusion, especially since the commissioners voted unanimously at their previous meeting to accept the county’s 2026 UT budget. The UT budget is separate from the county’s non-UT operational budget, which applies to services provided to the county’s municipalities. UT Supervisor Heron Weston immediately asked the commissioners, “Are you delaying approving the minutes?” Howard at first replied, “No, the [UT] budget.” “So, you’re repealing the previous vote [to accept the UT budget]?” Weston asked in disbelief. Burns jumped in, saying,

“No, but you tell us if we’re off base here, but I think we might discuss this budget even though it was approved. We’d like to discuss it again.” After a short discussion, the commissioners moved forward, opting to revisit the UT budget — which must be approved by the Legislature — in January. “I think we can approve the minutes [now], but put it [the UT budget] on the agenda,” Burns added. “So, the proposal would be to revisit the UT budget at the next meeting [on Jan. 14].” Continuing, Howard said, “And add a deputy or two under the UT budget. It might save a couple of deputies if we can do that.” The commissioners then voted to accept the UT’s November meeting minutes.



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Wreaths Across American - Baring



Veterans were remembered on Dec. 14 at the Baring Cemetery during the Wreaths Across American ceremony. (Photos submitted by Sherri Oliver, WAA location coordinator)



Alexander Residents Lay Wreaths to Honor Veterans

Seventy-one veterans were re-membered with wreaths laid at the Alexander Cemetery. Helping with the project were (front) Aiden Sanford, Eileen Newman, Pacey Sanford, Rhonda Oakes, Jane Manza, Skip Colson, Marty Colson, Dale Holst, (back) Joe Manza, Carl Oakes, Dakota Sanford, and David Sanford. Missing from the photo is Ana Sanford. (Submitted photo)



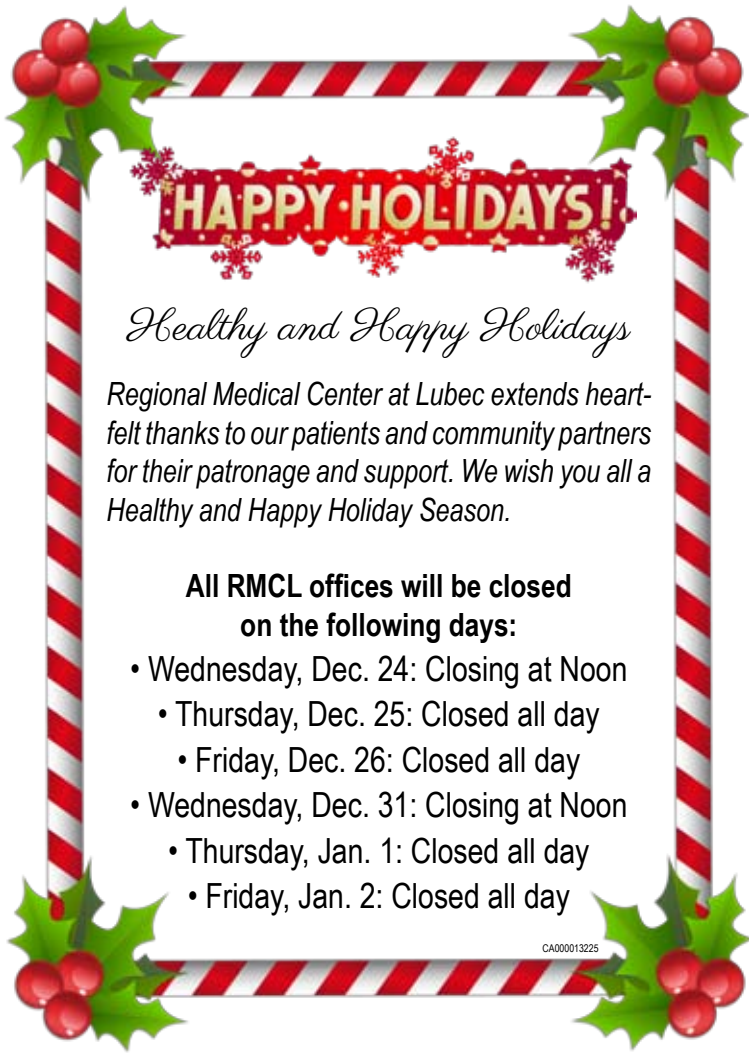
Wreaths were laid for every branch of the Armed Forces at the Alexander Municipal Building on Saturday, Dec. 13, 2025. (Submitted photo)



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- Thursday, Dec. 25: Closed all day
- Friday, Dec. 26: Closed all day
- Wednesday, Dec. 31: Closing at Noon
- Thursday, Jan. 1: Closed all day
- Friday, Jan. 2: Closed all day

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Sports

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CHS Wrestlers Compete at Ryan Detour Invitational Tournament in Bucksport



Manager Cecilia McGouldrick, Destiny Holmes, Chase Scott, Ashaliegh Sulkowski, Rose Lozada, Alizay Mitchell, Jack Lanier, Parker Bailey, Bradley Walton, Rhys Dilio, Josh Crews, and Coach Spencer McCormick. (Submitted photo)



Chase Scott, 1st Place, 144 lb weight class. (Submitted photo)



Bradley Walton, 2nd Place, 285 lb weight class. (Submitted photo)



Rose Lozada, 3rd Place, 107 lb weight class and Alizay Mitchell, 2nd Place, 107 lb weight class. (Submitted photo)



Ashaliegh Sulkowski, 1st Place, 132 lb weight class. Ashaliegh received Outstanding Female Wrestler at the tournament. (Submitted photo)



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Sports

Award-winning sports coverage!

Woodland Girls Battle Through Opening Week

Jayna Smith
jayna@calais.news

The Woodland girls' varsity team opened the season on Monday, Dec. 8, with a road game at Narraguagus, where the Dragons ran into a strong Knights squad and fell 64-24. The Dragons were led by Karleigh Smith with 14 points. The Dragons returned home on Wednesday, Dec. 10, hosting Machias. Woodland battled throughout the contest, but ultimately came up short, dropping a 69-47 decision. Karleigh Smith led Woodland with 22

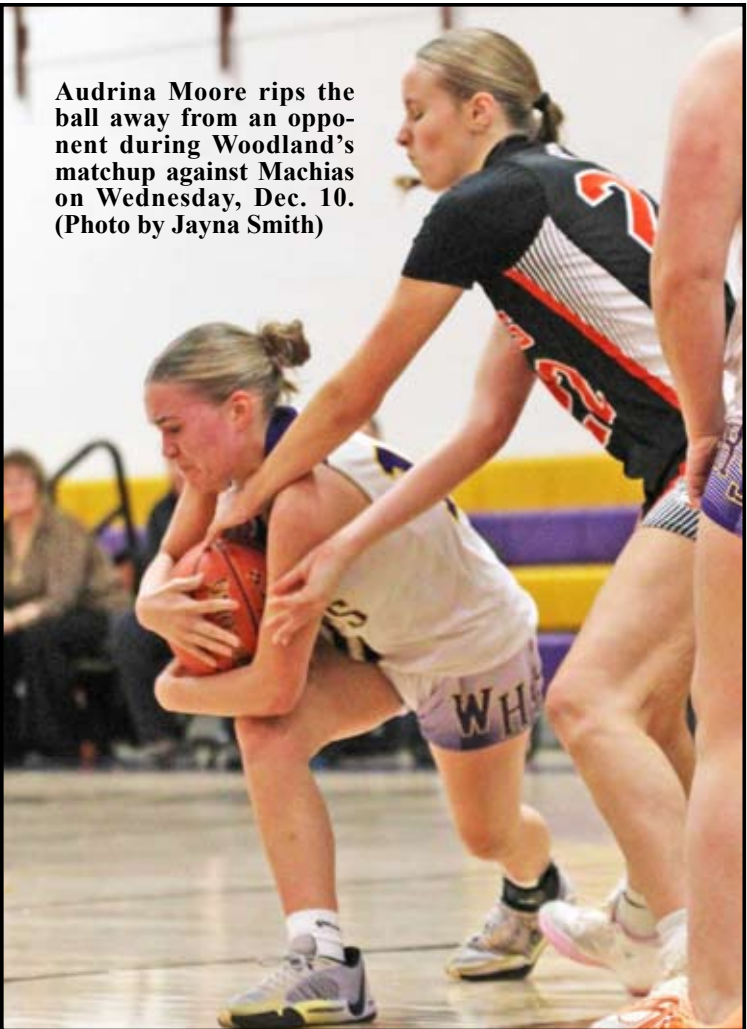
points and Mishun Cornelius added another 13. Woodland closed out the week on a high note Friday night, Dec. 12, traveling to Schenck in East Millinocket and earning a 60-43 victory. Mishun Cornelius led the Dragons with 20 points and seven rebounds, while Karleigh Smith and Kaylin Hamilton each added 18 points. Woodland ended the week 1-2 on the season, with their next game scheduled for Wednesday, Dec. 17 at home against Jonesport-Beals.



Kaylin Hamilton fires a three-pointer. (Photo by Jayna Smith)



Addison Tripp applies defensive pressure. (Photo by Jayna Smith)



Audrina Moore rips the ball away from an opponent during Woodland's matchup against Machias on Wednesday, Dec. 10. (Photo by Jayna Smith)



Mishun Cornelius shoots over a Machias defender. (Photo by Jayna Smith)



Karleigh Smith drives through the defense for a layup while drawing a foul. (Photo by Jayna Smith)

Woodland Boys Fall to Machias in Season Opener

Jayna Smith
jayna@calais.news

The Woodland High School boys varsity basketball team opened its regular season Thursday night with a tough road loss, falling 83-73 to the Machias Bulldogs in a game that featured strong individual performances from both squads. Woodland (0-1) was led by senior Evan Monk, who delivered an impressive 40-point effort to keep the Dragons within striking distance throughout the contest. Monk also added five rebounds. Despite Monk's standout night, Woodland struggled to overcome Machias' balanced attack and experience, as the Bulldogs improved to 3-0 on the season. Brayden Dana and Jace Roussell each finished with 12 points for the Dragons, with Roussell contributing six rebounds. Gavin Berry added six points and pulled down eight rebounds. The Bulldogs were paced by Mickey Fitzsimmons, who scored a game-high 33 points and dished out eight assists. Fitzsimmons also reached a major milestone in the victory, scoring the 1,000th point of his high school career. Liam O'Connell added 20 points for Machias.

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Dennysville Chorus



The Dennysville Festival Chorus is preparing for the annual Festival on Nine Lessons and Carols at the Congregational Church in Dennysville on Sunday afternoon, December 21 at 4 p.m. All are welcome.

Blue Christmas

Blue Christmas is usually held on December 21, the longest night of the year. It provides an opportunity for lament and healing during a time of the year that could be hard for some.

Saint Timothy’s Lutheran

Church letter explains it this way: “Christmas is a painful time for some. It may be the first Christmas after a big life change like the loss of a family member or a loved one. The constant re-

frain on TV and radio focuses on

the happiness of the season and getting together with family and friends, but only reminds some people of what they have lost. We long for space and time to acknowledge our sadness and concern to know that we are not alone.”

For this reason, the Calais Veterans center and Monday Grief Circle will offer a special “Blue Christmas” ceremony on Sunday, December 21, at 4 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

You are invited to come join us, placing a blue ornament on the tree, saying your loved one’s name, and lighting a candle to honor your loved one. We will hear scripture, prayer, and music acknowledging God’s presence to all of us who mourn and that God’s word comes to shine light in our darkness.

Healing is a process not a moment. Blue Christmas is for our cherish ones who are deeply missed this Christmas.

Tom, the Office Cat



Tom is ready for Christmas!

Santa Stops by Meet and Greet



Pictured are Commander Dennis Brown & Santa at Fitzgerald's Tavern & The Townhouse Restaurant for the Christmas Veterans Meet and Greet, sponsored by Bob Craft and David Pike (Calais/Orono IGAs). (Calais American Legion photo)



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Obituaries

Ronald W. Gallant Sr.
Ronald W. Gallant Sr., 70, passed away on December 11, 2025, surrounded by family following a battle with cancer. Hailing from Eastport, Maine, where he was born to Gerard Joseph and Sedora (Moore) Gallant on November 9, 1955, Ronald, known affectionately to his family and friends as Ronnie, left an indelible mark of kindness and love on everyone he met. A beloved husband, father, and grandfather, Ronald was a pillar of strength, a beacon of wisdom, and an endless source of joy to those lucky enough to have known him.



Ronald's life was a testament to his passion for service and commitment to excellence. After graduating from Shead Memorial High School in 1976, he embarked on an illustrious career, starting at the Merrill Corp. and Guilford Industries, before finding his calling in the U.S. Army. Ronald served as a mechanic, with postings at Ft. Hood, TX; Garlstedt, Germany; and Ft. Knox, KY. Here, he formed lifelong friendships and retired as a Staff Sergeant after over 20 years of faithful service to his country in the U.S. Army and National Guard. Ronnie also worked as a laborer/operator with the City of Calais for 18 years. His tireless dedication to his work and country was matched only by his love for his wife, Sandra "Sam" Gallant, whom he married on March 17, 1978. Their union was blessed with two children, Ronald and Aleisha, and two granddaughters, Khloe and Kaylee, who were the light of his life.

Aside from his professional and personal accomplishments, Ronald's life was a symphony of passion and joy. An avid outdoorsman, he loved hunting, fishing, and spending time at the camp with his friends Tony, Leslie, Ralph, and Joe. A gifted musician, Ronald played the guitar with a zest that was infectious. His music family — Barb, Bob, and April — held a special place in his heart. Ronald is survived by his loving wife, Sandra; their children, Ronald Gallant Jr. and husband Matt, and Aleisha Milburn and husband Mike; his granddaughters, Khloe and Kaylee; along with his sisters, Jeanette and husband Stanley, Irene and husband Robert, and Kathryn; sister-in-law Debbie; and several special nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, Gerard Joseph and Sedora Gallant; his siblings Jimmy, Richard "Skip," George, and Phyllis; and brother-in-law Ralph.

Ronald's legacy is a testament to a life well-lived, filled with love, laughter, and music. He will be remembered not just for his remarkable achievements, but for the warmth of his smile, the depth of his compassion, and the strength of his spirit.

A Celebration of Life will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday, December 20, 2025, at Mays Funeral Home, 26 Church St., Calais. We invite you to share your memories and upload photos of Ronald to the memorial page at www.MaysFuneralHome.com as a tribute to his extraordinary life.

CA000013234

Merry Christmas!

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 4:30-5:20 pm • Sunday 7-7:45 am
- St. Joseph's, Eastport: Saturday, 3-3:45 pm
- St. James, Baileyville: Sunday, 10-10:20

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CA000002568

Ruth E. Lucas
It is with profound sadness and yet with deep gratitude for her long life that we announce the peaceful passing of Ruth E. Lucas on December 13, 2025, at her daughter Nancy's home in Brewer, Maine. Born on March 13, 1941, in Brockton, MA, Ruth was a devoted wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. Ruth was the cherished daughter of William E. and Mabel W. (Cook) Whitaker.

A black and white portrait of Ruth E. Lucas. She is an older woman with short, light-colored hair, wearing glasses and a dark jacket. She is smiling at the camera.

In addition to her parents, Ruth was predeceased by her husband, Marshall W. Lucas, with whom she spent 62 years of marriage, and older brother John Whitaker. Ruth is survived by her younger brother, Edward Whitaker; her four children, Mary L. (Lucas) Bishop and husband Rob, James W. Lucas and wife Sharon, Nancy Ellen Lucas and husband David Wunder, and Russell W. Lucas; eleven grandchildren, Emily Ruth (Bishop) Dixon and husband Ryan, Duncan Bishop and Sarah Boutin, Jason Lucas and wife Jennifer, Joshua Lucas and wife Jamie, Kara Mitchell, David Townsend and Vanessa Flood, Melissa (Townsend) Phelps and Jason Phelps, Megan Ellen (Ellsmore) Polk and husband Michael, Russell A. Lucas and wife Elizabeth, Paul Lucas, and Amy (Lucas) Watt and husband John; nineteen great-grandchildren, Ellsie Dixon, Scarlett Dixon, Declan Dixon, Tyler Lucas, Braeden Lucas, Alex Mitchell, Gage Mitchell, Mitchell Townsend and fiancé Elizabeth, Caleb Townsend, Ava Townsend, Lee Phelps, Avry Phelps, Lainey Ellsmore, Brayden Ellsmore, Evan Polk, Emerson Lucas, McKenna Lucas, Addley Lucas, and Payton Lucas.

Ruth's life was full of love and memories, filled with countless joyful moments and milestones that she celebrated with her extensive family.

Ruth enjoyed traveling, crocheting, and was especially skilled at cross-stitch and ceramics. She enjoyed making puzzles with her family. Following her years as a dedicated homemaker, Ruth worked for the Calais School Department in food services and later as the office manager at Lucas Oil.

Arrangements for Ruth's final farewell are under the thoughtful direction of Mays Funeral Home & Cremation Services. A graveside service will be held in the spring of 2026 at the Brewer Cemetery in Robbinston. Ruth's life was a journey of love, resilience, and joy. Her memory will forever be engraved in the hearts of those who knew her.

We invite you to share your precious memories and photos of Ruth on her memorial page at www.MaysFuneralHome.com. Relive the moments that made Ruth special to you, and let's continue to celebrate the extraordinary life she lived.

CA000013242

Joan (Travis) Burgess
Joan (Travis) Burgess was born November 4, 1946, in Calais, Maine, the daughter of William and Pauline Travis. She grew up in Woodland, now known as Baileyville, Maine, with four siblings — sisters Jane, Judy, and Jo-Ellen, and brother Monty. She attended Woodland High School, where she was a cheerleader and a member of the color guard, basketball team, student council, and National Honor Society. She graduated as salutatorian.

A black and white portrait of Joan (Travis) Burgess. She is a woman with short, light-colored hair, wearing sunglasses on her head and a dark jacket. She is smiling at the camera.

From a young age, Joan expressed a desire to see the world. She was determined to make her dreams a reality and took action to make it happen. For example, since shopping options in her hometown were limited, she often sewed her own clothes to create the look she wanted. Her desire to see the world eventually led her to move to San Diego, California, with a friend. There she met Navy Lieutenant Roy Burgess, and their history began. They married in 1974 and began a life together that lasted more than 51 years.

Roy's naval assignments resulted in them living in places around the world, from Italy to San Diego to the island of Guam in the Pacific Ocean. At every stop, Joan connected with neighbors and other Navy families to create a sense of support and belonging. Her thoughtfulness and loving persistence brought people together and resulted in lifelong friendships around the world. Joan was able to fulfill her dream of seeing the world, making trips to places like Belgium, Turkey, Morocco, Russia, Japan, Korea, and the Philippines, along with U.S. destinations from Rhode Island to Hawaii. Roy and Joan eventually settled in Fairfax, Virginia, where they remained after Roy's retirement from the Navy. They settled into their neighborhood, which became a source of continual fun and friendship. She continued to be active in the community, supporting Roy and the City of Fairfax Band and Cathedral Brass, and was a cherished member of Chapter E, Virginia, P.E.O. sisterhood. She was also busy planning and organizing events, keeping a full social calendar with family and friends.

Throughout her life, Joan was generous and giving in spirit, inclusive of others, and protective of those she loved. She had the strength to forge her own path while nurturing the personal relationships that meant so much to her. Joan passed away on December 10, 2025. She will be missed by devoted husband Roy, sister Jo-Ellen Gallant (John), sister-in-law Kathy Kapp, immediate family members, and a lengthy list of close friends and loved ones.

Service will be at the Vienna Presbyterian Church on Saturday, December 20, at 1 p.m. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to:
-Program for Continuing Education, P.E.O. Executive Office, Treasurer's Dept, 3700 Grand Ave., Des Moines, IA 50312 (<https://www.peointernational.org/make-a-gift/#donate>)(select Program for Continuing Education),
-Hospice at Capital Caring (<https://capitalcaring.funraise.org/>).

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Obituaries

Paul “Jeff” Felker

Paul Jeffrey “Jeff” Felker, 74, died quietly in Calais, Maine, on December 12, 2025, after a short aggressive cancer took his energy and his strength. He said he was blessed to live pretty well, and he could try to die well, and he did. Jeff was born in Lewistown, Pennsylvania, on June 13, 1951, to Paul Franklin Felker Jr. and Jane Elizabeth (Alexander) Felker.

Jeff is survived by his sister Christine in Maine, and by special cousins, neighbors, and friends. He was bright and funny, and he tried to be thoughtful and helpful. He was appreciative of kindness. He was a Navy Seabee and worked in the building trades until his retirement. He completed a lot of projects with and for family and friends. He enjoyed his travels around the country. Jeff loved the woods, the water, the sky, all the creatures, his sister’s cats, his neighborhood in Maine, his conversations with people he met, and his walks at Moosehorn and at the Garcelon Track.

If you feel drawn to remember him, take a walk or sit by the water, smile at someone or start a friendly conversation, or just perform any random act of kindness.

A memorial service will be held at St. Anne’s Episcopal Church in Calais, Maine, in the spring of 2026. Arrangements by Mays Funeral Home & Cremation Services. Condolences and memories may be shared at www.MaysFuneralHome.com

CA000013243

Devotional

Sharon Grant, Pastor, All Saints United Methodist Church

This week, we entered the Season of Advent. It is a time of waiting and preparation for the followers of Christ. It is also a season that seems to be lost in the commercial Christmas our culture has developed. People still wait and prepare, but not for the coming of Christ and the Kingdom of God, but for Santa, decorations, food, and parties. Waiting is not an action that comes to us easily; we have fast food that isn’t fast enough, so we have the drive-thru, and preparing a meal has become putting a plate in the microwave. This time of year, we are jumping from checkout line to checkout line trying to find the fastest way out of the store (I found myself doing it the other night in Walmart).

*Isaiah 2:2
New International Version
2 In the last days
the mountain of the Lord’s
temple will be established
as the highest of the moun-
tains;*

*it will be exalted above the
hills,
and all nations will stream
to it.*

These words from Isaiah talk about the end times, which sounds far off and not really attainable for us today. We don’t have the feeling of urgency that the early Christians lived under, waiting for the Lord to come again. They expected Jesus to come back during their lifetime. We have the past 2000 years to read about and ponder how much longer it might be, and we lose that sense of urgency. What if those words were not “in the last days” but SOMEDAY? Someday Christ will come back the second time. Would we feel an urgency to watch and work for justice when we think of it as someday rather than “In the last days?”

Someday,
*the mountain of the Lord’s
temple will be established
as the highest of the moun-
tains;*

*it will be exalted above the
hills,
and all nations will stream
to it.*

For those watching for the coming of Jesus, the reason can also be lost. December 25 was chosen to commemorate the birth of Jesus by Roman Christians in 336 AD. Two theories have been put forth for this: the April 7 Theory, which places His birth and death on the same date of March 25, supported by early Christian histories like Sextus Julius Africanus and Hippolytus of Rome. The date of December 25 was selected as it is nine months after the death date.

The second is the Paganism Theory: The Roman winter solstice was celebrated on this date, as well as other pagan celebrations around that time of the year. Christians thought pagans might find this date more appealing and be absorbed into the holidays of Christians.

We are not sure of which, if either, is correct or if both theories might have been influential in the selection of December 25.

Methodist Advent theology has a dual focus as a time to anticipate and celebrate the birth of Jesus, while also preparing for his future return. It links the past of the incarnation to the future hope of Christ’s second coming.

We are to wait! Not passively wait but actively wait on the Hope of the second coming of Jesus by repentance and working for justice in this world we live in now. Watching for glimpses of the Kingdom of God on the Earth today. As we celebrate Christmas and enjoy all of the trappings, let us keep the focus of the Second Coming of Christ front and center of the Advent Season.

Merry Christmas to all.



Sewall Memorial Congregational Church



Bonnie Lyons
bonnielyons@roadrunner.com

There will be no church services for a couple of weeks until we get the new heaters all installed. Our sister churches are in Perry at 9 a.m. and Dennysville at 11 a.m. On December 12 at 4 p.m., Dennysville will host the Lessons and Carols.

This week, we attended the Perry church. The children from the Perry school sang a couple of songs and lit the Advent Wreath. Everyone enjoyed the young people singing. (see photos)

If you would like to shine the front window in memory of a loved one or to celebrate or honor someone special, call me or email me at bonnielyons@roadrunner.com

“One thing I know that though I was blind, now I see.” John 9:25

Every believer has a testimony. Some people have hard-to-believe backgrounds, amazing conversions, or fantastic stories. Others have tales that are far from radical, extreme, or glamorous. But everyone’s testimony can be boiled down to something like John 9:25.

Once you were blind, but now you see. Once you were



The children above are Rayel Calder, Emma LaCasse, Emma Newcomb, Carter Calder, and Celia LaCasse. (Submitted photo)

in darkness, but now you are in the light. Once you were dead, but now you are alive. Once you were headed toward hell, but now you are going to heaven. Share your testimony with someone today.

Apply It: Take a moment to reflect on your own testimony. How has Jesus transformed your life? Even if it’s not a dramatic story, the change from

spiritual blindness to sight is profound. Share your testimony with someone today, whether in person or through a message, and let them see the difference Jesus has made in your life.

Pray It: Lord, thank You for opening my eyes and giving me new life in You. Help me to share my story with others so that they, too, can see Your love and power at work. Amen.



Shown singing are Emma Newcomb, Carter Calder, Kutcher Owen, Rayel Calder, Emma LaCasse with Pastor Ron, Colin Windhorst, and music teacher Kris Paprocki. (Submitted photo)

Need a last minute gift idea for a cat lover!?



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Get your mug while supplies last.

Makes a great Christmas gift!

Community News



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Monday - Friday 10-4 | www.firststepbangor.com

336 Mt Hope Ave #11, Bangor, ME 04401 | info@firststepbangor.com

Alexander

Cassie Oakes

The Veterans Wreath Laying at the Alexander Cemetery took place on December 8. It was another year of folks coming together and honoring those veterans who helped keep our great country free. This year, 71 veterans were remembered. It was a cold afternoon, but it didn't deter the 13 folks who cleared the graves or trudged through a foot of snow to place the wreaths. Thank you to everyone who sponsored a wreath for the cemetery, who delivered the wreaths, and who waded through the snow. (See photos on page 11).

The next day, a beautiful four-foot wreath mysteriously arrived at the cemetery. Rumor has it that one of Santa's elves and his elf in training brought it down from the North Pole! If you drive by, please take notice of the wreath on the cemetery sign. To whoever those elves were, thank you!

The 2025 Wreaths Across America Ceremony at the municipal building was a great success. Lenny Hanson did the ceremony with the assistance of his wife, Debbie. There were

wreaths placed for every branch of the service, so if you drive by, check out the display and the beautiful Christmas tree that the volunteer fire department erected.

We got snow, and the Breakneck Mountain Snowmobile Club would like you to know that their next meeting will be on January 6 at the clubhouse on the Cooper Road, starting at 6:30 p.m.

"Coffee and" continues at the Breakneck Mountain ATV/Snowmobile Clubhouse every Monday from 7 to 10 a.m. Both the ATV and snowmobile clubs appreciate all who stop in, either to say hi, have a game of cribbage, or perhaps purchase a coffee.

Don't forget Kim Rendell wants you to know that there will be an afternoon of cribbage at the Breakneck Mountain Snowmobile/ATV Clubhouse on January 3 from 1 to 3 p.m. Food will be available for purchase. If you have a cribbage board or two, or extra cards, please feel free to bring them. For more information, contact Kim at 207-904-8894.

This week, I went to the usual Eastern Area Agency Com-

munity Cafe, where we had a yummy chicken tenders meal. It is also the last Tuesday Cafe until January 30. I also finished my Zoom online Strive course. I have no more classes until the middle of January due to the holiday season. Wednesday through Friday, I was FBC-bound. Friday night, Mom, my best friend Krystal Smith, and I attended another fantastic ladies' supper at Bethel Chapel in Talmadge, where we brought gifts for families in need. We enjoyed a delicious Christmas buffet meal followed by a plethora of sweets. Saturday, Mom, Dad, and I headed to Bethel for "A Superhero Christmas" play practice to perform during the Sunday afternoon church service. It was a huge success; we got lots of applause and plenty of laughs. Sunday morning, I attended the Methodist Church in Calais. It was the third week of Advent, and I helped light the candle that stood for Joy.

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. Until next time, stay safe!

Perry

Suzanne Leone

Staff and students at Perry Elementary School have been busy with Breakfast with a Buddy, a Christmas Concert, and their elf, who has been up to shenanigans like fishing, hiding in a plant pot, hiding behind a flag, and flying from a ceiling fan.

On December 12, first and second graders' letters to Santa

were read on 92.7 FM. The 67th day of school was celebrated with a snowman and an elf, welcoming staff and students with the current 67 meme trend. Seeing the picture on their Facebook page made my day.

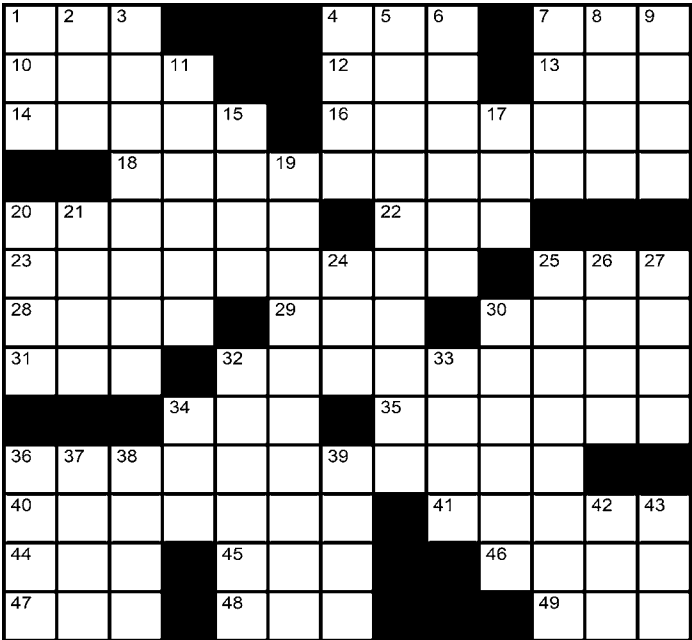
If you need a gift idea, pick up some gift certificates at The Polar Treat. They never expire. Message The Polar Treat's Facebook Page for more information.

December 14 marked the third Sunday of Advent, which is also known as Rejoice Sunday at North Perry United Methodist Church. The Joy Candle was lit, Kevin Raye delivered a message, MaryIna Goodyear played piano, and retired Pastor David Peterson performed a baptism.

Please email me all your Perry news at leone1490@hotmail.com. Thank you!

THE TV CROSSWORD

by Ricky Cruz



Created by Ricky Cruz

ACROSS

- 1 Bit of foundation
- 4 Screen-reading tech (abbr.)
- 7 "Sanford and ____"
- 10 Mapa of "Half & Half"
- 12 "I see!"
- 13 Shade
- 14 Tower of ____
- 16 Home for the Flintstones
- 18 Young girl in "How the Grinch Stole Christmas!"
- 20 "The Assassination of ____ Versace: American Crime Story"
- 22 Are in the red
- 23 Controlling, in a way
- 25 About to die, say
- 28 In word and ____
- 29 The Browns, on a scoreboard
- 30 Chocolate bar with a bubbly texture
- 31 Pigs' home
- 32 Iconic line from the Terminator
- 34 Alicia of "Falcon Crest"
- 35 Shadow sections
- 36 Jack who takes over Christmas Town

DOWN

- 40 Broadcast period
- 41 Cherry attachments
- 44 Brain scan
- 45 "____ Yokie"
- 46 "Star ____"
- 47 Somerhalder of "Lost"
- 48 South suffix
- 49 Cunning
- 1 Dit's counterpart
- 2 In the style of
- 3 '60s medical drama with Vince Edwards
- 4 Paul Lieberstein's "The Office" role
- 5 "Herbie, ____"
- 6 "Us too!"
- 7 "Regular ____"
- 8 "That hurt!"
- 9 Singer Case
- 11 Invented, as a term
- 15 Some hotels
- 17 Regret
- 19 Small print in some credits sequences
- 20 "Twilight of the ____"
- 21 "You're telling me"
- 24 Unwell
- 25 ____ permit
- 26 Killer whale
- 27 Deep pans
- 30 Costello's partner
- 32 Type of skates
- 33 Life support specialists
- 34 Account that isn't one's main
- 36 People featured in 2019's "Klaus"
- 37 Light's alias, in "Death Note"
- 38 "Nobody Wants This" creator Foster
- 39 "____ Genesis Evangelion"
- 42 Voice actor Blanc
- 43 The UK's ____ News

Solution to Last Week's Puzzle



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By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



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

YOUR BOGGLE RATING

- 151+ = Champ
- 101-150 = Expert
- 61-100 = Pro
- 31-60 = Gamer
- 21-30 = Rookie
- 11-20 = Amateur
- 0-10 = Try again

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Boggle BrainBusters Bonus

We put special brain-busting words into the grid of letters. Can you find them?

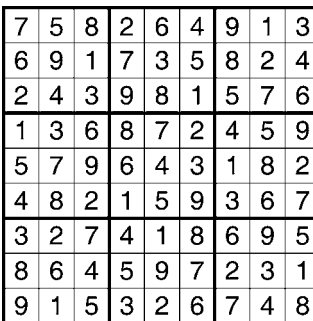
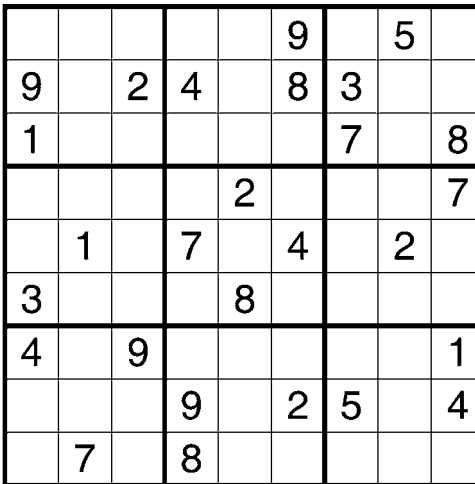
Find AT LEAST FIVE TYPES OF CONTAINERS in the grid of letters.

Last week's answers: AREA • AROMA • ARENA ARMADA • AGENDA • AORTA
www.bogglebrainbusters.com



THE SAMURAI OF PUZZLES By The Mephram Group

Level 1 2 3 4



Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-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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Community News

Grand Lake Stream

Mike Remillard

It's Monday, December 8, and GLS got another 6-inch snowfall last night. It's a light, fluffy snow, easy to plow and shovel. Tonight's temperature is predicted to be 0 degrees. This morning's weatherman said, "...only 2007 has had a colder December." I also heard, but knew, that you should walk your dogs for a much shorter time. Their paws tend to get very cold. Minka rolls in the snow. It doesn't matter how deep. Still, I got her and Gardi outside and then back inside fast today. They still got their morning rubdowns.

I don't know if my Rinnai heater needs adjustment or if it just senses the cold because it seems like it has been running almost non-stop for two days.

Happy birthday, Cathy. I hope you did nothing all that day and Bill cooked you a nice supper.

It's December 9, and the Pine Tree Store had two snowmobilers today. That has to be a record. Somebody should know. I'll ask Brinda during morning tea. I'm glad I went out to check camps by truck last week, but I bet I could have made it by snowmobile. Now that I think of it, I saw snowmobile tracks near the gas docks a day or more ago. I'd better check with Brinda and Les about that earliest snowmobile record.

It's Wednesday, December 10, and we had 2 inches of snow last night with more coming this mid-afternoon. The temperature is 16 degrees. It is not supposed to be warmer than 30 degrees for the next 7 days, and the warmest night will be 16 degrees. I was kind of joking last week when I said, "...it won't stop snowing."

I wake up around 6 a.m. and lie around in bed. During that time, my Indian Township, First Native friends must have been on the job well before 5 a.m. because they have been in and out of GLS twice during that time, plowing and sanding. Thanks, I.T. Highway Department!

I was in Walmart on Thursday for corn toasties, truck tires, computer accessories, and a few other things. I had extra time and decided to check out dinosaurs in the toy department for my buddies Hayes and his little brother Marshall. They had a Pterosaur, maybe 15 inches in size, for \$35. It was nice, not body accurate, maybe too futuristic, but for \$35. Other slightly bigger dinosaurs, more body accurate, were \$40. I don't have kids, but that's a high price, right?

It's Friday, December 12, and it was a cold, windy day. The wind was not lower than 15 MPH all day. That brought the temperature down to the low 20-degree area. To stay

out of the cold, Laurie and I worked indoors on a good-sized John Deere Utility Tractor, and of course, a snowmobile. I fired up the "Old Cat" about a week ago. It ran fine, but today I changed the plugs. It made a difference, and fired up immediately. The Cat wants to go outside. The nice NGK plugs were two years old and coated with dirty, burnt oil. It's time. Change your spark plugs if needed. It's an easy job. I'll check the weekend weather in the morning and decide which day is in my favor for a little camp work-related snowmobile ride.

Congratulations Addi. Drive carefully, and take your time always while driving

It's Saturday, 30 degrees. I'm going to check a camp by snowmobile. The dirt roads were a mess of truck rutted up frozen solid snow. The Cat was being bounced around from one frozen rut to another. I was trying to stay on. I drive slow, say 30 MPH, but I bet my average speed was just 15 MPH. Every few seconds, I had to slide from one side of the seat to the other, trying to keep from rolling over, as the trail and terrain changed constantly. You can't look away and enjoy the scenery for even 3 seconds. Twice, I almost rolled the Cat. No idea how many times I fish tailed a little on the icy trail, although that is exciting to me. All was fine at camp. Remember, ride with food, drink, tools, a nearly fully charged cell phone, extra and different types of gloves, and hand your itinerary to a friend.

All was going fine the other day, while walking Jerry and Pam's dog Minka in the snow.



She did her duty, ran around crazy, and kept burying her head in the snow, up past her eyes. She stops at times and sniffs and sniffs. One of those times, she came out from under the snow with a big hunk of frozen deer poop. She stared at me with a look that said, "Try to get it." We had a little battle, right there in the snow. You know who won. I got her up to the porch steps, and she jumped onto the dog bed. Minka then dropped the now-melting poop on the dog bed, making a mess. In the excitement, the thawing out poop then rolled onto the frozen wood floor of the porch. We both dived for it, and both missed. There was bumping and pushing. It was like a hockey game, but with deer poop. Minka won again. I got her into the mud room and yelled for help from Brooke. She couldn't believe it, but didn't panic. She is used to Minka and Mike problems. While Brooke was putting on plastic gloves and gathering cleaning supplies, the hockey

game continued on the mud room floor. Soon, Brooke was back, and while I held onto the Dark Angel, Brooke cleaned her up and also cleaned the mud room floor. There will be no Minka kissing Mike for a day or two. Well, for an hour anyway.

While relaxing in my pajamas and watching TV in the dark, my eyes were about to close when inside my house lit up with red and white lights and sirens roaring. It was Santa Claus riding around town in the newish GLS firetruck. Within minutes, I was surrounded by Santa, his many helpers, the Grinch, and several firemen in fire gear. They gave me a Christmas tin of cookies and a nice gift certificate from the Pine Tree Store. After a photo session, they were off spreading happiness throughout town. Merry Christmas, everyone!

Thank you for taking the time to read about what happens in this special little town. mikeremillard42@gmail.com.

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Dining with Diane

I can't believe how good these turned out and they are so-o-o-o easy. All ingredients are to taste and approximate. This can easily be doubled or tripled. I sometimes mix Parmesan in with the mayonnaise and skip the cheddar.

EASY CHEESY PORK CHOPS

4 boneless pork chops, 1/2" thick
4 t. butter, softened
4 t. Mayonnaise
1 t. garlic powder
Salt & Pepper to taste
1 t. dried parsley
1 c. shredded cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 350°F. Put non-stick foil (or just spray your foil) on a baking sheet. Pat the chops dry and place on the foil. Sprinkle each chop with garlic powder, salt, and pepper. Try to spread a teaspoon of softened butter onto each chop, then a teaspoon of mayonnaise, and then 1/4 cup of the shredded cheddar cheese on each. Top with a sprinkle of parsley. Bake for 35 minutes or until the cheese is melted and lightly golden. Serves 4.

NOTE: Sometimes pork chops can be dry and tough; try soaking them in baking soda and water before cooking. In a bowl, mix 1 t. baking soda in enough cold water to cover the chops. Let them soak for about 20-30 minutes while you gather your other ingredients. Pat them dry before proceeding with the recipe. This tenderizing method works with chicken or beef, also.

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CA000001918

LETTERS
TO SANTA

Perry Elementary
School's
grades 1 & 2



Dear Santa,
My name is Adalind. I want a phone, scooter, and guitar for Christmas. My sister would like a dinosaur and jump ropes. Santa, do you have a big dog? Do you have cats?

From, Adalind

Dear Santa,
This year I would like a violin, toy phone, and a bunny toy. Could you bring my younger brother a baby toy? What is your favorite TV show? Have a great Christmas!

From, Beezey

Dear Santa,
Could you bring my Mom and Dad some flowers for Christmas? For myself, I'd like a PS5, basketball shoes, and a sweatshirt. Can you make the world hot?

Love, Benson

Dear Santa,
I would like a Chromebook, a dirt bike, and a drone. For my Dad I would like him to get a phone. I think my Mom needs a phone, as well. Santa, can I be an elf?

From, Carter O

Dear Santa,
My name is Liam. For Christmas I would like a dirt bike. I'd also like a cat named Olive. The last thing I'd like is a pogo stick. For my Mom and Dad I'd like a vacation to Bangor. I would like to know how many elves you have. Do you have every color of elves?

Love, Liam

Dear Santa,
I would like a 3D printer, a drone, and a crystal experiment kit for Christmas. Some things I'd like you to get other people are pink and purple nail polish for my Mom and tools for my Dad. I like the presents you give me every year. Thank you. Santa, what do you do all summer?

Love, Landen

Dear Santa,
I love you. I like your reindeer. I hope you can bring me a blue plush rabbit, a green sparkly hair bow, and a Christmas book. I would like you to bring a teddy bear for my Mom and a book for my sister, Rowan. How do you deliver all the presents in one night?

Love, Brynn

Dear Santa,
For Christmas I would like some make-up. I also want a phone. The last thing I want is a vanity. My puppy, Denver, needs some toys. My Dad needs a hat with the Broncos logo on it. I have a couple of questions for you too. How did you make your elves? How did you make your magic?

From, Adalee

Dear Santa,
For Christmas this year I would like three things: a puppy, a Barbie airplane, and a four-wheeler. For my Mom, I would like you to get her new makeup since I used most of it for Halloween. For my Dad, I would like you to get him new tools. I also have a quick question: Can I ride in your sleigh?

Love, Thea

Dear Santa,
Hi! My name is Mary and I would like high heels, a long dress, and a make-stand for Christmas. I also would like it if you bought my family some gifts. My Dad needs new boots. My Mom wants make-up. I was wondering if you have a moon at the North Pole. Thank you, Santa!

From, Mary

Dear Santa,
Do you have a cat? I have 2 cats. This Christmas I want a pair of headphones and a couple pairs of shoes. I also want a dirt bike. I would like my Dad to have a new motorcycle.

Your Friend, Carter C

Dear Santa,
I would like an iPad, a VR, and a baby cat. Can you please bring an orange sweatshirt for Lucian, my brother? Do you have a Christmas tree and a car?

From, Charlotte

Legals / Notices

Notice

Town of Baileyville Transfer Station Users

The Baileyville Transfer Station will be closed on Thursday, December 25, 2025 in observance of the Christmas holiday. Regular hours will resume on Saturday, December 27, 2025. Curbside trash pickup for Baileyville residents will be on Friday, December 26, 2025.

CA000013239

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

Town of Dennysville
Monday, Dec. 29th • 6 p.m. • Town hall

CA000013235

PUBLIC HEARING & 2nd READING

Food Sovereignty Ordinance

The Town of Baileyville is holding a Public Hearing regarding a proposed Food Sovereignty Ordinance.

The purpose of this ordinance would be to provide Baileyville residents with unimpeded access to local food and to reduce governmental regulation of local foods to the extent permitted by home rule authority.

The Second Reading & Public Hearing will be held on Monday, December 22, 2025 at 5:30 PM.

A copy of the proposed ordinance is available at the Baileyville Town Office and the Town's website at www.baileyville.org.

The Town of Baileyville is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

CA000013232

Meddybemps News & Musings

Linda Baniszeski

Here we are with only one week until Christmas. A very busy week for sure, with more preparations, events, and probably cooking and baking. Try to be filled with Christmas joy throughout it all. It is the most wonderful time of the year. For those who have experienced losses in the past year, it can certainly be bittersweet. We have not forgotten you and your loved ones. This year, many will spend their most amazing Christmas ever in Heaven with Jesus — “the reason for the season.” For that, we can rejoice.

Happy Birthday to Pete Trouant on December 18, Kenneth Frost - 22, Dr. Renata Bartneke - 23, and "Skip" Carter on Christmas Day, the 25th.

Speaking of Pete Trouant, he recently posted the official “Ice-In” dates for Meddybemps Lake. This year, it is reported that ice-in occurred on December 7, 2025. Pete added, "Previous ice-in dates were January 11, 2024, for 23/24 and December 24, 2024, for 24/25." We are earlier this year, so perhaps we will also have an earlier spring. We can always hope.

Here is a correction about last week's information. To contact Meddybemps Historical Society and receive “The Meddybempster,” send membership dues to the Society at 710 Main Street, Meddybemps, ME 04657.

Christmas lights continue to grow in number throughout our community. Dana and Patty Reynolds have had their house decorated for several weeks. Lite and Coyote Lanes have also brightened the nights. Everywhere we look throughout the community, we are greeted with the beauty of the season. It is especially pretty when the lights reflect from the snowy landscape and frozen lake.

Teddi was quite excited when the box from Chewy arrived. It is fascinating how these smart critters just know when something is for them. Teddi doesn't seem to realize that she cannot have a look inside as soon as it shows up (like most times), or it will ruin her holiday surprise. The crusted snow makes it difficult for pets to get around. Before this latest deep freeze, Teddi's little legs would get trapped in the snow as she walked. Now that the surface is frozen hard, she sort of slides around,

which she does not like. So much for “zoomies” outside this time of the year. Instead, she zooms through the house every now and then to get the wiggles out of her system.

It is nice how The Calais Advertiser lists area holiday activities throughout the community. There really are a lot of fun things to do nearly every day of Christmas week. Beautiful Christmas Eve services at area churches of all denominations welcome everyone to celebrate. The generosity of the community is seen in the Christmas gifts donated for children and meals for families and the less fortunate.

For many, Christmas is only about the gifts, although it should be a reminder of the greatest gift ever given. A Savior for All Mankind. Don't let the hustle and bustle distract you from what really matters. “Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.” (I Corin 2:12)

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

Many Christmas blessings to all!

Community News

Princeton

Sandra Smith

The Town Office schedule for the holidays is as follows: closed on December 24 and 25, open on December 26, open on December 29, 30, 31, closed January 1, and open January 2 and 3.

The Princeton Public Library's mascot, Cindy Lou, has on her new dress for the holidays. Also, Heidi, the librarian, made sure she had her own Christmas Tree. Heidi has set out a selection of books that celebrate the holidays. Be sure to stop in at the library. Anyone visiting will get a ticket for a drawing for a special gift bas-

ket. The drawing will be next week, on Tuesday, December 23. Also, stock up on your books and DVDs, because after Tuesday, the 23rd, the library will not be open until Monday, December 29. However, note that although the library will not be open on New Year's Day, cribbage will be held at the usual time, starting at 6 p.m.

Reminder: This week is Parks & Recreation's Home Decorating Contest for homes in Princeton, Big Lake Township, Indian Township, Waite, and Talmadge. Judging is early in the evening of December 19. There is still time to register

until 6 p.m., this Thursday, December 18, on the Parks & Rec. Facebook page or call 207-619-1466. Prizes will be awarded: \$100 for first place, \$50 for second, \$25 for third, and Parks & Rec. merchandise for honorable mention.

December 19 - Princeton Parks & Rec Home Decorating Contest Judging

December 22-Jan. 4 - Princeton Elementary School Winter Break

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

January 1 - Princeton Town Office and Princeton Public 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.



Cindy Lou, the public library's mascot, standing next to the Christmas tree. (Submitted photo)

Lincoln Memorial Public Library

Last week, Storytime was held, as usual, on Tuesday for the Pembroke School young folks, as you can see in the photo, which shows the project of decorating cutout mittens and attaching them to a paper, including a connecting string to keep them together. Winter stories were featured, and it was difficult to persuade the children that they should stay inside, instead of outdoors in the cold. The Edmunds group on Thursday was, as usual, a smaller, but equally enthusiastic crew.

This week, the Tuesday Storytime session will feature Christmas stories beginning with "The Night Before Christmas" read by none other than Santa himself. For this special session, the Edmunds students have been invited to join with the Pembroke students. However, there will also be the usual ordinary Storytime on Thursday, especially because not all of the Edmunds children who usually come will probably be able to join in on Tuesday. Pre-Christmas scheduling can get pretty complicated!

Do keep in mind that there will be a historic film shared at the monthly meeting of the Dennys River Historical Society on Tuesday, December 30, at 6:30 p.m. Also, in January, the library will begin holding a monthly Movie Night, the first film chosen being the



The project this week was decorating cutout mittens and stringing them together. (Submitted photo)



classic "The Fiddler on the Roof."

Just a reminder that the regular open hours at the library are Mondays, 4 to 7

p.m.; Tuesdays and Fridays, 1 to 4 p.m.; and now also Saturdays, noon to 3 p.m., thanks to Miss Sam! Stop by and welcome her.

COUNTDOWN
TO
Christmas
7 days

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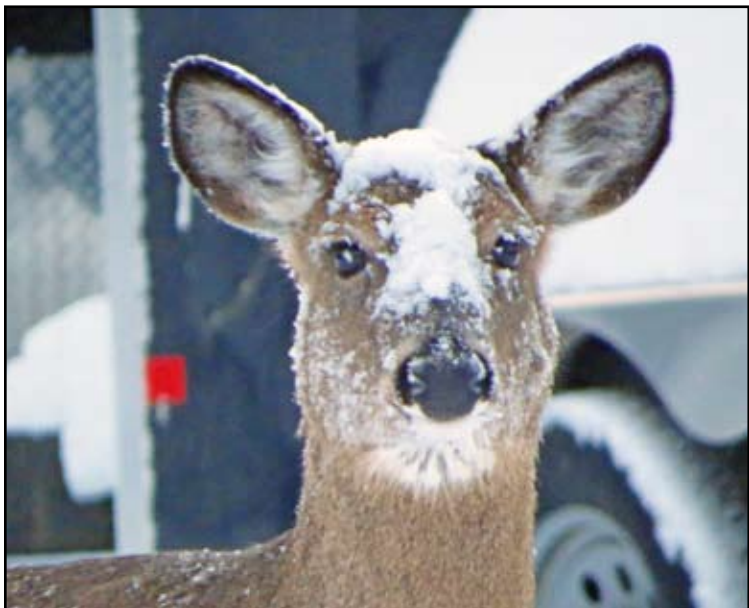
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A deer in Princeton. Photo by Donna Melanson)



Female cardinal and mourning dove in Baring Pt. (Photo by Courtney Erskine)



Ermine in Meddybemps. (Photo by Jason Gibson)



Deer in Grand Lake Stream. (Photo by Mark Story)



Pigeons in Princeton trying to keep warm! (Photo by Donna Melanson)

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19 Chase Road, Baileyville:

A 2 bedroom, 1 bathroom home on Meddybemps Lake with 200' of shorefront, a full foundation, first floor bedroom, & large eat-in kitchen & living, the second floor has an open loft bed. 2 car garage with a 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom apartment on the second floor with open kitchen & living all sitting on 1.7 +/- acres. Easy access to the property & also to the water. **\$480,000**



26 Ridge Road, Cutler: A 2 bedroom, 2 bathroom home sitting on 2.45 acres on Little Machias Bay with 250' of shore-front. Home has full daylight basement, cathedral ceilings with open loft, big deck, 2 car garage with second floor, great views of the bay! Move in ready! **\$679,000**



18 + 24 Sunny Cove Lane, Meddybemps:

A lakeside retreat with 200' +/- shore-front on the edge of Meddybemps Lake! The home features a 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, open living & kitchen, front patio deck with hot tub, a 28x40 3-bay garage with a 1-bedroom, 1 bathroom apartment on the second floor, & another 14x30 garage. Property consists of 3 +/- acres, with lawn to the water edge, great views looking up lake. Everything is like new & ready to move in! **\$600,000**



5 Burns Place, Eastport:

A newly built home in the center of town. The inside is not finished but could accommodate a 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom home, this is a 3 story home with some water views with a new metal roof in 2024. Home is a blank slate for all of your ideas! **\$199,900**



24 Willow Street, Calais: A 3 bedroom 1 bathroom ranch with full foundation, attached 2-car garage, HWBB heat, in-ground pool, & fenced in yard in the center of town. Close to schools & parks, great single floor living. **\$259,000**

37 Price Street, Calais:

A 3 or 4 bedroom, 2 bathroom home in the center of town featuring HWBB heat, large gambrel garage, sitting on a big lot. The home needs TLC but has lots of potential! **\$90,000**



21 & 27 Northfield Road, Marshfield:

An old bowling alley that is 40'x120'. The bowling alley is still operational but would also make a great multi storage unit sitting on 2+ acres, just a short drive to Machias. **\$179,000**



451 + 455 Houlton Road, Waite:

A store & old home on Route 1 with high traffic count sitting on 2 +/- acres. The home is a 1 bedroom 1 bathroom that has not been lived in for many years. The store has just recently closed. This location holds a lot of potential! **\$119,000**



4525 Airline Road, Wesley:

A 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom home on Route 9 with .83 of an acre all open, access to miles of ATV trails, also a big hunting & fishing area. **\$119,000**



00 S River Road, Calais:

369 +/- acres just a couple minutes south on Route 1 with a 50' +/- right of way. This property has nice views overlooking the St. Croix River! A good spot for future housing development. **\$349,000**



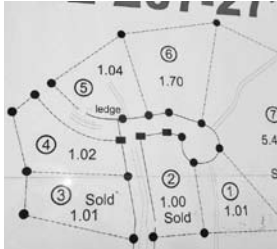
Lot 12 Hayward Point Road, TWP

26: 1.50 acres with 238' shorefront, power at site, driveway & 2 bedroom septic design. The lake looks over wadding bird marsh with a channel of water you can boat into the lake. About 2 miles off of Route 9 Wesley. A great get-a-way or home site. **\$99,900**



Lot 4 Higgins Farm Road, Calais:

1.02-acre house lot on Higgins Farm Road with views of St Croix River, & power at roadside. **\$20,000; Lot 5 Higgins Farm Road, Calais:** 1.04 acre house lot on Higgins Farm Road with views of St Croix River, & power at roadside. **\$20,000**



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Thank you to our valued customers!



Wishing you a Christmas filled with family, friends, and festive fun.

