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Volume 13 • Issue 29
April 19, 2024 • Week 3

Turner Publishing, Inc., PO Box 214, Turner, ME 04282-0214 • 207-225-2076 • Fax: 207-225-5333 • E-Mail: articles@turnerpublishing.net • advertising@turnerpublishing.net • turnerpublishing.net/news

Solar eclipse worth the trip

By Bill Van Tassel

It would be a safe guess to say that all those people, from Southern Maine, the rest of New England and beyond, who made the drive to the Rangeley Lakes Region for the ultimate view of the April 8 Solar Eclipse, would say, "It was worth the trip."

Only the experience of this incredible event could mollify those who had to endure the halting and frustrating traffic jams getting there and returning home. Whether your home was in Lewiston/Auburn, Southern



While waiting for their solar eclipse moments, these Bates College professors had a nice table set for their pre-eclipse lunch. Around them was a mass of hundreds of excited tourists gathered in Rangeley's Lakeside Park for this unique April 8 event.



L to R: Adrian Tucker from Turner, Pat McCluskey of Peru and Sue Tymozcko of Lewiston taking a look at the moon's progress in blocking the sun's light during April 8 full solar eclipse in Rangeley. The very active trio are all retired educators.

he had done some research.

As the sun's fullness began to get diminished by the encroaching moon, lunch-time foods were packed away and more eyewear, some highly creative, began to appear on everyone's face. It was fun to watch the little children who, unaware of the rare moment's significance, reacted with their nervous energy, simply happy to be doing what all the adults were doing.

It was a beautiful, cloudless day in Rangeley, Maine. Those of us by the shore of the lake could feel a steady, cool breeze coming off the still frozen water. Predictably, as the sun continued to disappear the temperature of the breeze cooled by around five degrees. At full totality, with just a black circle surrounded by a thin coronal ring, the crowd got noticeably quiet. Then, in the dawn-like darkness around Rangeley Lake, the crowd began cheering.

We had been given a rare opportunity to see an astronomical event that will not happen in the United States until August 2044. I will be ninety-four years

Eclipse

→Page 7



Bill Van Tassel photos

The April 8 solar eclipse in Rangeley, just coming out of totality around 3:30 in the afternoon. Photo taken with hand-held Pentax camera and Tamron telephoto lens. The full totality of the moon's blockage of the sun lasted about 2.5 minutes.

Maine or below the 45th parallel, drivers had to deal with miles of unusually, heavy traffic, very heavy for these parts.

My seventy-five-mile trip from Turner to Oquossoc took only 1 and 1/2 hours, though you had to slow to a crawl when passing the various Scenic Lookouts which were overflowing to the narrow roadsides with vehicles and tailgating parties. Returning home after the Eclipse show was a different story.

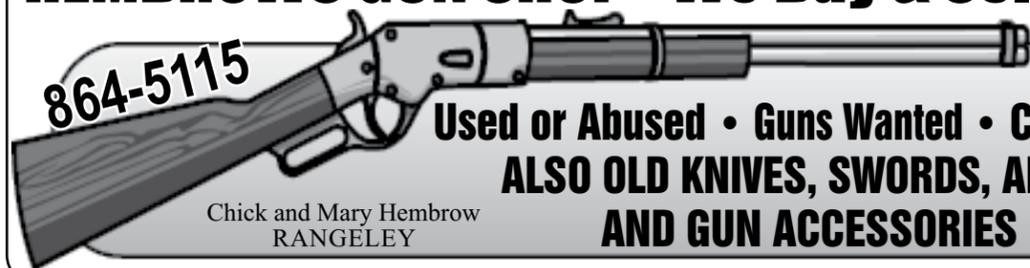
After 4 p.m. the main roads from Rangeley and Oquossoc, Routes 17 (to 108) and 4 were nearly bumper to bumper for miles. Where 108 and 4 meet in

Livermore, the confluence of vehicles created a new single line that ranged from two to five miles in length. So, my return trip was nearly double the 1 and 1/2 hours.

But, yes, though I didn't handle my drive-home attitude as well as I should have, it was most definitely worth it to witness a full Solar Eclipse. The crowd in Rangeley began filling the Lakeside Park early that Monday morning, though the moon would not start gradually blocking the sunlight until after lunch. We all had time to test our special safety glasses; one fellow was walking around wearing a welder's mask. I guess

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MAINE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

APRIL

April 20 — Understanding Symbolism on Maine’s Early Gravestone, 10 a.m. in the library’s Community Meeting Room, Lithgow Public Library, 45 Winthrop Street, Augusta, FMI call 207.626.2415 or www.lithgowlibrary.org.

April 20 — Annual Smile Fund, 9 a.m. to noon, West Parish Congregational Church. All donations to this sale will be used to buy dentures for adults that need them. Donations of household goods, books, toys, and puzzles may be dropped off at the Congregational Church starting on Friday, April 12. For an application for dentures call the church at 207-824-2689. FMI, please contact Jane Chandler at jane.h.chandler@gmail.com.

April 20 — Earth Day Trailhead and Garden Cleanup, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Alan Day Community Garden, Whitman Street, Norway, give back to celebrate Earth Day by helping us clean-up the Farm to Town Trailhead and the Alan Day neighborhood, come back to the garden for lunch and afternoon activities, wear safety vests, work gloves, boots, free. registration required, meet at the garden.

April 20 — Spring French Toast & Pancake Breakfast, 6:30 a.m. - 10 a.m., Leeds Volunteer Fire Department, Ridge Road, Route 106, Leeds, french toast, pancakes, eggs, bacon, sausage, ham, home fries, coffee, cider and OJ, Adults \$10, Kids 4-12 \$6, funds raised will be used to replace air packs and air bottles.

April 21 — Vernal Pool Explorations, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., Smith Bridge Preserve, 577 Allen Hill Road, Norway, learn to identify vernal pool species: wood frogs, spotted salamanders, and the elusive fairy shrimp with our partners at Lakes Environmental Association, free, registration required.

April 27 — Rural Commu-

Starting April 29, 2024 the Rangeley Town Office WILL BE OPEN MONDAY – THURSDAY, 7AM TO 5PM CLOSED ON FRIDAYS

nity Action Ministry Auction 4 Action, 4:30 p.m. to live auction end, Boofy Quimby Memorial Center, 96 Howes Corner Rd., Turner, for more info call 207-524-5095.

April 27 — Earth Day Workday, Spring Cleanup at MOFGA’s Common Ground Education Center, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association, 294 Crosby Brook Rd., Unity, Tasks include raking, garden bed prep.

April 27 — Earth Day Event, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association, 294 Crosby Brook Rd., Unity, Volunteer to help clean, for more info call 207-568-4142.

April 27 — Annual Topsham Train Show, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Mount Ararat High School, \$5 per person and children under 12 are free, will have meet and greet at 12:30 pm and 1:30 pm for everyone to participate.

April 27 — Saturday Night Church Supper, 5 p.m., First Congregational Church of Gray at the Parish House, 5 Brown Street, Gray, handicapped accessible, menu includes: variety of casseroles & salads, baked pea beans, red hot dogs, breads, assortment of desserts & beverages, meals are single-sized and are \$10.00 each, please pay at the door.

MAY

May 2 — Woodland Wonderplay, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Shepard’s Farm Preserve, 121 Crockett Ridge Rd, Norway, nature exploration & play, Educator Lisa Henderson will guide little ones and their caregivers, geared towards 3–5-year-olds, older and younger siblings welcome, free, registration required, <http://norwaymaine.com>.

May 3 — Little Keepsakes: My Little Sunshine Tote Bags in honor of Mother’s Day, 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m., Lewiston Public Library Children’s Department, 200 Lisbon Street, Lewiston, caregivers will be able to create a personalized keepsake tote bag using the handprints of their young children, for more information about our programs please contact the Lewiston Public Library’s Children’s Department at 207-513-3133 or by email: LPLKids@lewistonmaine.gov.

May 4 — Greater Freeport Community Chorus Spring concert, “I Dream a World,” 7 p.m., North Yarmouth Congregational Church, May 5, at 3:00 p.m. at Brunswick United Methodist Church, admission at the door is \$10 for adults, and free for children under 18, no online or presale tickets.

WILTON: Coffee and

Cribbage (new dates and time), Thursdays (starting February 1), 9:30–10:30 a.m., SeniorsPlus, 284 Main St., Suite 100, Wilton, welcome to all beginner and experienced cribbage players, we will have limited cribbage boards available, so if you are able to bring your own, please do so.

WILTON: Loose Ends Knitting Group (new dates and time), Tuesdays (starting February 6), 1–2 p.m., SeniorsPlus, 284 Main St., Suite 100, Wilton, bring your own knitting, crocheting, needlepoint, or anything you enjoy, relax and socialize as we learn and grow together as a group, extra yarn and needles will be available.

WILTON: SeniorsPlus Walk-in Tech Assistance, Thursdays 10 a.m.-noon, SeniorsPlus Wilton, 284 Main St., Suite 100, Wilton, assistance with a device like a phone, tablet, or laptop?

FARMINGTON: St. Joseph Nutrition Center, corner of Quebec and Middle Street (across from St. Joseph Church) A “Blessing Box” in front of the building provides food for any who need it and an opportunity to donate for

MAINE CALENDAR PAGE

If you are hosting a free community event and would like it added to our calendar, please email your details to: advertising@turnerpublishing.net and include: Date of event; name of event; time of event; venue location; town; contact phone number. Late submissions may not be published. Emailed events are processed faster. Our Maine Events calendar page is FREE for free community events. Church, library and school event news is free on this page. If you are a business and/or charging admission/fee, there is a charge for a display ad on these pages. Email: advertising@turnerpublishing.net. Call 207-225-2076 for pre-payment options. Events for the Maine Events Calendar should be received two weeks before the event in order to be considered for publication. Please refer to our deadline chart at this link for specific publication deadlines: www.turnerpublishing.net/pdf/Deadlines.pdf

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those who have the means. More information or to help out: (207) 778-2778.

FARMINGTON: The Farmington Farmers’ Market has moved indoors to its winter home at the St. Joseph Center, 130 Quebec Street. Farmington’s winter market is held each Saturday, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., November through April. St. Joseph Center is located at the corner of Quebec and Middle Streets, near the UMF Fitness & Recreation Center.

ONGOING:
Food Addicts Meetings FREE - Food addicts in recovery meetings Tues, Thurs and Sun by phone and ZOOM. foodaddicts.org FMI call 623-8375 or 623-1924.

BRIDGTON — Ping Pong at Bridgton Town Hall

every Sunday from 1-4PM. It is great exercise, it is fun, and it is free! Bring a friend.

CANCELLATIONS
None listed.

Events for the Maine News Calendar should be received two weeks before the event in order to be considered for publication. Please refer to our deadline chart at this link for specific publication deadlines: <https://www.turnerpublishing.net/pdf/Deadlines.pdf>. Email your event information to articles@turnerpublishing.net and include: Date of event; name of event; time of event; venue location; town; contact phone number. Late submissions may not be published. Emailed events are processed faster.

Scam Alert Bulletin Board



Let It Go...to Voicemail

When it comes to combatting scams, we all have the same superpower. The single most effective way to avoid scam calls is to let your answering machine or voicemail screen calls for you. It’s a power we all have, but unfortunately, it’s not a power we all use.

Federal Trade Commission data from last year show that the telephone was the source for more than a third of reported scams. Reported losses

were nearly \$700 million, with a median loss of \$1,200. That’s a lot of phone fraud. Thanks to criminals, we can’t rely on Caller ID, so our best defense is letting calls go to the machine. This gives you the opportunity to listen to messages with intent, and with time to consider its validity.

So don’t forget that YOU have a superpower, one that can protect you from the IRS scam, or the Medicare scam, or the grandparent scam, or dozens of other impostor scams – by letting them go to voicemail.

Be a fraud fighter! If you can spot a scam, you can stop a scam.

The AARP Fraud Watch Network is a free resource for all. Learn how to proactively spot scams or get guidance if you’ve been targeted. Visit www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork or call our dedicated helpline to speak to a fraud specialist at 1-877-908-3360.



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- Summer Custodian (Flexible Hours)
- Substitute Teachers (newly established hourly rates based on experience and education)

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Blue Vue Plants

I am writing this on the first of February, and you are now reading it in April. I can tell you I am EXCITED for Spring, and I know I have 3 more months! But starting this article and finding a few photos just crank me up another notch to think of all the lovely plants coming plus the ones that are in the snowbanks just waiting for Spring. I want to write this article on 4 major plant groups (that have many varieties within the family). But before that – let’s talk about the early Spring. The Thu/Fri of Memorial Day weekend my big delivery truck arrives with annuals, veggies, herbs and HANGING BASKETS. I remember May Baskets in May – choosing them from the lady who sold them next to my grammar school. Off to the store for lots of great penny candy and then to your best friend to “hang” it and run through the fields and woods until they caught you! Those May baskets were works of art – and then the great can-



Bartzella Itoh yellow peony



Ripening blueberries



Sensation lilac



Primrose lilac



Congo lilac

dy treats. That is what my hanging baskets remind me of! They are breathtaking and need no candy to enhance them. I have 80 13” hangers @\$29.97 and 60 11” hangers for \$21.97. I probably will have some 10” hangers coming in early June. Of course, veggies, herbs and annuals are on that truck also! Check for the coupon in this paper for pricing. However, the main thrust of this article is Fruit Trees, Blueberries, Peonies and Lilacs. All Fruit Trees are \$25.97 – and I have the following coming in in mid-March. Reliance & Contender Peach, Montmorency Cherry Tree, Red Delicious, Wolf River, Ambrosia, Cortland and Macin-

tosh Apple trees, plus 20 Snow Fountain Weeping Cherry for beautiful landscaping effects. No photos of those. Check out <https://www.facebook.com/bluevueWeld/> for an “early” sale on these – probably 2nd week of April on a Saturday a.m. I have over 15 varieties of peonies all for \$12.97 each – EXCEPT for the Bartzella Itoh Yellow Peony which is just under \$25.00. I planted 18 different varieties of peonies this past Fall along a large rock barrier. I can hardly wait to see them come up this Spring. Bartzella Itoh Yellow Peony Next are the Blueberries – I love them best when picked full

of sunshine. The warm sweet flavor cannot be beat. Several varieties for our area. All \$9.97. Some plants are on the small size, but they grow fast. I also have Haskaps – google about them. They are another great fruit. I also have other fruit-bearing shrubs as well as strawberries. Finally, the Lilacs – remember, lilacs, peonies, blueberries and fruit trees all typically live well over 50 years! These plants are ones that will stick by

you and be beautiful in their own time each year. I am just featuring the following 3 photos – Congo, Primrose and Sensation – but have many more gorgeous ones. Think about having these (and other) beauties blooming in your yard – and all priced at \$12.97 each! That is not all – I have hundreds of varieties of perennials and thousands of plants. No plant I sell is over \$30. You could buy 2 blueberries, 3 peonies,

3 lilacs and a fruit tree for around \$125.00. Try to match those prices. I am known for my pricing, the variety and the quality of my plants. You can even buy some of my premium potting soil (bring your own 5-gallon bucket and spade - \$5.00 per bucket). Come on over – the opening is May 1st officially, but often open a few days earlier (depending on the snowbanks). That is Blue Vue Plants, 586 West Side Road, Weld, ME.



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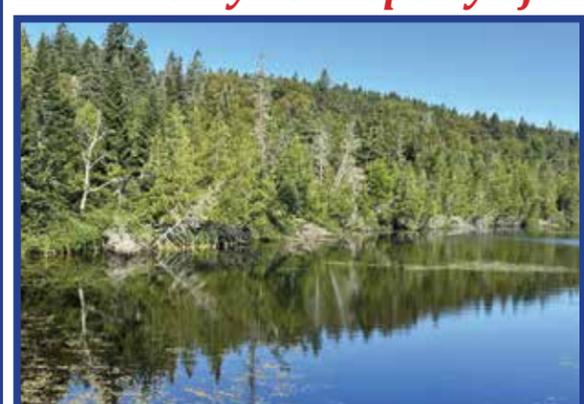
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A brief history of Earth Day

Metro

Earth Day is celebrated each April and draws attention to a range of issues affecting the environment. Earth Day aims to raise awareness in the hope of inspiring change.

Earth Day is observed on April 22. According to National Geographic, the first Earth Day was celebrated in 1970. Wisconsin senator Gaylord Nelson was inspired to begin a national celebration uniting the environmental movement after witnessing environmental activism

in the 1960s. With the help of Denis Hayes, a graduate student at Harvard University, Nelson organized the first Earth Day. Twenty million people participated in events across the United States and strengthened support for environmental legislation like the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act.

Earth Day was expanded to a global initiative in 1990 under guidance from Hayes. Nearly 200 million participants in more than



Metro photo

140 countries now join together in the name of protecting

the planet. Awareness continues to be raised each year regarding renewable energy and climate change.

One of the hallmarks of Earth Day celebrations is the planting of trees. Researchers estimate roughly 15 billion trees are cut down each year across the globe. By planting a tree every Earth Day, people can make a difference. Trees absorb carbon dioxide

and release oxygen and bolster ecosystems for wildlife. Shade trees can reduce reliance on fans and air conditioning systems.

The main message of Earth Day 2024 is the need to commit to ending reliance on plastics, says *EarthDay.org*. The goal is a 60 percent reduction in the production of all plastics by 2040. Plastics are bad for the environment a growing body

of research indicates they have an adverse effect on the major systems of the body, including immune, respiratory, digestive, and hormonal systems.

Everyone can do their part to promote the ideals behind Earth Day. For 54 years, millions of people have been advocating for change to benefit the planet and human and animal health, and that fight is ongoing.

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Hours	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
4-7 am	Eclectic Music Mix						
7-8 am	Country Classics						
8-9	Eclectic Music Mix					New York Philharmonic	Millennium of Music Blue Dimensions
9-10						Classic Jazz	Classic Jazz
10-11	Ron Hoar Oldies Hour (50s/60s; 70s/80s)					Folk Alley2	Jazz Over Time
11-12	Eclectic Music Mix					Milk Street Radio	General Store
12-1pm	Country Classics Hour					Int'l Americana Music	Chamber Society of Lincoln Center
1-2	Eclectic Music Mix						
2-3							
3-4							
4-5							
5-6	Eclectic Music Mix						
6-7	Global Village						
7-8	Big Picture Science	Int'l Americana	Folk Alley1	Living On Earth	Fur Piece Ranch	Planetary Radio Bioneers	Philosophy Talk
8-9	Reveal	Old Time Radio	Old Time Radio	WRGY Presents	Wood songs	Paul Ingles Good Songs	Victrola Show
9-10	With Good Reason	Ozark Highlands Radio	Golden Oldie Hour	Singer Songwriter	Singer Song	Indie Informant	Alternative Music Hour 2
10-11	Classic Rock Hour	Country Music Hour	Singer Songwriter	Alternative Music Hour	Alt Music	Dance Music Hour	Classic Rock Hour 2
11-12	Classic Jazz						
12am - 4am	Late Night Rock						

RANGELEY FITNESS CENTER **CLASS SCHEDULE**
 (Subject to change. Call 864-3055 or stop in for the most up to date information.)

Check out our schedule or check our website for class descriptions and prices.

MONDAY
 9am-10am Ski Prep with Hawk
 10:15am-10:45am Functional Fitness with Hannah
 11am-12-Water Aerobics with Diane
 5-6pm- Power Yoga with Hannah

TUESDAY
 8-9am Total Body Strength with Brit
 1015-11am-Chair yoga with Hannah

WEDNESDAY
 9am-10am Ski Prep with Hawk
 10:15am-10:45am Functional Fitness with Hannah
 3-530pm - Jiu Jitsu with Shawn

THURSDAY
 8-9am Total Body Strength with Brit
 5-6pm- Karate (kids) with Dan
 6-7pm Karate (teen, adults) with Dan

FRIDAY
 8-9am Spin with Cyndy
 9am-10am Ski Prep with Hawk
 11am-12-Water Aerobics with Diane

Noon member drop ins \$12

COMMUNITY DIRECTORY



Join the Mountain Messenger Community Directory Page Call 207-225-2076

Farmington Earth Day Cleanup Volunteer

Farmington’s 11th Annual Earth Day Volunteer Cleanup - April 22

Volunteers of all ages are invited to participate in the 11th annual Farmington Earth Day Cleanup on April 22nd. The cleanup will be held from 1-3pm rain or shine (hopefully shine). Volunteers meet at

the Pierce House at 204 Main Street, next to the Post Office, any time between 1 and 3pm. Bags and gloves will be provided. The adorable baby goats will be back this year so everyone can have some time to pet them before they get to work cleaning the streets, parks and paths around Farm-

ington. There will also be green/gardening books available for free provided by the Franklin and Somerset County Literacy Volunteers (if we have shine and as supplies last). For questions contact Jessica Casey at 381-0393 or email: director@farmingtonlibrarymaine.org.

APRIL MENU 2024 - RANGELEY TOWNHOUSE MEAL SITE

14 School Street, Rangeley (across from the Fire Barn/Town Office complex) 864-3986

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
4/1 Meatloaf Mashed Potato w/ Gravy Veggie Chocolate Pudding	4/2 Bacon/Lettuce/Tomato Sandwich Chips Tapioca Pudding	4/3 Spaghetti w/ Meatballs Garlic Sticks Cherry Jello with Topping	4/4 Baked Ham Baked Potato Veggie Van Cake w/ Choc Frost	4/5 Clam Chowder Biscuit/Crackers Lemon Cake
4/8 CLOSED	4/9 Chicken Salad Sandwich w/ Pecans & Cranberries Chips Pecan Cookies	4/10 American Chop Suey Garlic Sticks Éclair Cake	4/11 Pot Roast Mashed Potato w/ Gravy Veggie Choc Cake / P.B. Frost	4/12 Baked Haddock Baked Potato/Rice Pilaf Veggie Vanilla Pudding
4/15 Shepherd’s Pie Butterscotch Pudding with Topping	4/16 Italian Sub Chips Butterscotch Cookies	4/17 Chicken Alfredo w/ Egg Noodles Garlic Sticks Chocolate Chip Cookies	4/18 Roast Pork Mashed Potato w/ Gravy Veggie Spice Cake	4/19 Fish Chowder Biscuit/Crackers Brownies
4/22 Tomato Bisque w/ Grilled Cheese Sandwich Peanut Butter Cookies	4/23 Meatball Sub Chips Molasses Cookies	4/24 Baked Stuffed Shells Garlic Sticks Peaches	4/25 Roast Turkey w/ all the Fixings Pears	4/26 Baked Haddock Baked Potato/Rice Pilaf Veggie Lemon Pudding

DONATION for meal is \$8.00.

NOTE: ALL MEALS ARE HOMEMADE – SODIUM REDUCED MENU.

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Seasonal Guide

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Safety tips ahead of your Memorial Day barbecue

Metro
Memorial Day weekend marks the unofficial start of summer for millions of people across the country. Backyard barbecues are a staple of Memorial Day weekend, and such informal gatherings contribute much to the laid back vibe of this beloved three-day weekend.
Backyard barbecues may be all about food and fun, but it's important that hosts take measures to ensure such soirees are safe as well. By employing the

following measures, hosts can ensure their Memorial Day barbecues are safe for all in attendance.
• Place the grill in a safe location. The National Fire Protection Association urges hosts to place their grills a safe distance away from the home, deck railings and out from under eaves or overhanging branches. The NFPA also notes no grill should be placed within 10 feet of any structure, including a home.
• Check propane tanks

for leaks prior to using the grill. Memorial Day may be the first time many people use their grill since the previous summer or fall. The NFPA recommends propane grill users check their tanks for leaks prior to using the grill for the first time. This inspection is simple. Apply a light solution of soap and water to the hose. The NFPA notes a propane leak will release bubbles. The smell test also can reveal a leak, as a strong odor of gas can indicate a leak. In such instances, close the tank valve and turn off the grill. If the leak stops, have the grill serviced by a professional. If the leak persists, call the fire department.



Metro photo

The NFPA urges hosts who detect an odor of gas while

cooking to get away from the grill immediately and call the fire department. Do not move the grill in such instances.
• Man the grill at all times. An unattended grill poses a significant safety hazard. Whether you're using a propane grill, a charcoal grill, a smoker, or a hybrid, make sure an adult is keeping an eye on the grill at all times.
• Purchase long-handled cooking tools. The American Red Cross notes that long-handled cooking tools are designed to keep chefs safe. Such tools ensure cooks' hands and arms do not have to be directly over flames, which can periodically flare up and pose a safety hazard.
• Ensure children are supervised when swimming.

The grill is not the only safety threat that may be present at Memorial Day barbecues. Hosts who will open their pools or provide inflatable pools for children should make sure kids are supervised when in or around the water at all times. Before allowing kids in a pool, hosts should confirm their swimming abilities and insist kids who cannot swim or only recently learned to swim wear inflatables or life jackets to reduce drowning risk.
Memorial Day weekend is a festive time at many households. By emphasizing backyard barbecue safety strategies, hosts can ensure everyone has a great time and gets home safe this Memorial Day weekend.

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Eclipse
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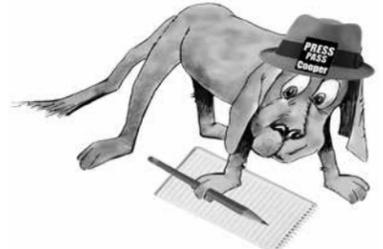
old and surely not able to handle heavy traffic. So, it was worth it to spend one half of the day in the sun, and the other half in my car. My wife's sister's family drove from Rochester, NH way up to Millinocket to witness this event. (Total drive time: 12 hours.) Her Facebook post declared, "It was so totally worth it."
(Turner Publishing would like to thank the Rangeley Chamber of Commerce for its Shadow of the Sun Festival, and opening its facilities for a major influx of visitors to the Solar Eclipse event. Thanks also to the Franklin Savings Bank for letting our reporter park at their site.)

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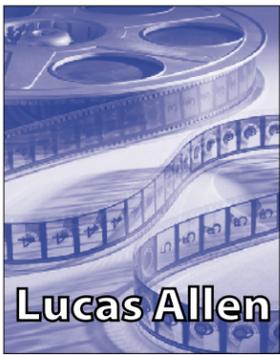
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MOVIE REVIEW

Road House (2024)



(MGM/Amazon Studios)

Original Road House was a product of 80's action highlighted by the tough, machismo presence of the late great Patrick Swayze. No matter where you are on the subject, you will agree that it is too special for a cult favorite to get remade.

But Hollywood is looking for more money, and the new Road House is made and dumped onto the Prime Video streaming service. It is directed by Doug Liman, who is better known for directing The Bourne Identity, Mr. and Mrs. Smith, and Edge of Tomorrow.

Ex-UFC fighter Elwood Dalton (Jake Gyllenhaal) is haunted by his actions during one fight in the octagon that left him with a notorious reputation. One night, he's approached by Frankie (Jessica Williams), who owns a Florida Keys bar simply called The Road House that's been terrorized by menacing bikers on a nightly basis, and she is finding a new bouncer. Dalton reluctantly agrees before arriving in the community of Glass Key and befriending some locals. But right from his first night, his reputation precedes him when he makes mincemeat on a group of bikers before driving them to the hospital, where he meets the beautiful young nurse Ellie (Daniela Melchior).

However, his heroic deeds caught the ire of rich

businessman Ben Brandt (Billy Magnussen), who wants to dismantle the bar to make room for his empire. Desperate, he turns to the psychotic Knox (UFC champ Conor McGregor) and the town's corrupt sheriff (Joaquim De Almeida) to scare the new bouncer away. But push comes to shove for Dalton as he musters up the strength to save the town and his newfound friends.

This remake just takes the original movie's script, keeps the same structure, and only makes little changes to it like character names and locations. But it's the least of its issues when it can be described as lazy and uninteresting. The script does not do much to justify this film's existence, especially when it takes away the original's fiery energy. Worse, there is no real satisfaction for it by the end and it leaves you feeling frustrated and empty. At least, the older film was trying to be entertaining and over-the-top and it is certainly proud of itself, but this one has absolutely nothing to make you feel that proud.

For an action movie trying to be realistic, it is sadly littered with cookie-cutter CGI. The fight scenes are haphazardly filmed and edited while stitched together with CG photoshop, making them look pitifully unnatural. It does not help that the cinematography is vanilla and unappealing to look at with heavy emphasis on darks and whites. It gets grating on the eyes after a while when almost every scene is an outside location.

Gyllenhaal can be a very good actor and he is quite good here, but he certainly does not hold a candle to Swayze no matter how much training he

puts into the role. He does not have those well-remembered lines of dialogue from the original to work with and instead of bringing wisdom to the part, he just smiles and cracks a joke like he's in another movie. Melchior makes a fine romantic lead, but there is not much chemistry during their romance scenes like, standard TV storytelling.

One thing the original film did well is making the villains act threatening toward the good guys including Ben Gazzara's smug and charming Wesley. Here, the villains are written very one-note and the actors are directed to chew scenery. While Magnussen is simply acting like an unlikable YouTube celebrity, McGregor's first film role is him just shouting his heavy Scottish accent in each of his scenes and nothing else. De Almeida is the only one at least trying to bring some personality to his role though this movie could have used Sam Elliot's character from the other film to balance out this amount of craziness.

Say what you will about the original Road House, but this remake fails to match or surpass its raw energy and it's a complete disappointment. Sure, it is on streaming for a reason, but it needed a lot more to make us care about watching it and it could not even do that. It is times like this when it's better to pop the original into your DVD player, crack open a bottle of beer, and enjoy the fun all over again.

THE MOVIE'S RATING: R (for strong violence, pervasive language, and some nudity)

THE CRITIC'S RATING: 1.75 Stars (Out of Four)

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Shopping for Yard Equipment: Things to Know

(OPEI) - With the weather warming up, now is the time to think about how you want your yard to serve your family, pets and wildlife. Maybe you're aiming to have the best yard on the block, want to install an outdoor family room or outdoor office, or want to expand your space for entertaining. Perhaps your kids or pets could use a better space for play. Regardless of need, now is the time to get "backyard ready" for spring. What tools do you need?

"Completing big outdoor jobs is always easier with help from outdoor power equipment," said Kris Kiser, President and CEO of the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI). "The right outdoor power equipment can help you get the work done faster and can help you safely maintain

your yard."

Here are some tips from Kiser to help you select the machinery you need to get the job done.

Plan your needs. Draw a sketch of your yard. Include any major features like trees, bushes, an herb or vegetable garden, flower beds, lawn furniture, play or sports patio, or bird bath. Note where maintenance may be required. Will bushes need to be trimmed back from your home or garage? Do you want to put in some flowering bushes or a tree? Are you planning to install a fence and more grass because for your pet? Now list the tools and equipment needed to take care of your yard, and what will make the job easier.

Consider equipment needed. Visit your garage or shed and find your lawn and garden

tools. Wheel out your mower and get out other equipment. Look it over and make a list of what is needed or could be upgraded. Repair anything that needs attention or identify where a newer or other machine is required. If you have a large vegetable garden, you may need a cultivator or tiller. If you have a large lawn, an upgrade to a riding lawn mower might make mowing easier. A string trimmer might make caring for bushes or trimming grass near a fence line easier. A pole pruner can help trim back limbs that are too high to reach safely with a saw, and a leaf blower can clear leaves faster than a rake.

Research equipment online before you buy. Think about efficiencies of scale. The right equipment can mean more time for other ac-

tivities, and make doing yard work more enjoyable, too. Doing online research in advance will help you pick the right equipment for the job. Outdoor power equipment can be gas, electric or battery-powered, and technology is rapidly impacting product design. There are even robotic lawnmowers available today. Equipment may be sized to handle a smaller job or a massive one. Ultimately, your decision should be based on your needs.

Ask questions. Talk with the staff at the store or ask online about the equipment. In the store, ask to pick up and hold equipment to determine its "fit" for you. Discuss safety features and ask about manufacturer fueling and care instructions. Find out how often equipment may need to be serviced.

Make a plan for storage and maintenance. Store your equipment in a cool and dry place. It also should typically be

serviced at the end of the fall and the beginning of the spring. Put service dates on your calendar with a reminder.

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