

MOUNTAIN MESSENGER

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Volume 15 • Issue 45
August 7th, 2026 • Week 1

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

Mt. Blue Area Garden Club awards three community grants

FARMINGTON – The Mt. Blue Area Garden Club awarded three Community Grants this year, expanding the program beyond a single annual grant. Inspired by the quality of this year's applications, the club awarded \$1,500 in three grants to support projects that beautify public spaces, strengthen community connections, and promote environmental stewardship.

The Community Grant Program was introduced last year to support beautification and community gardening projects throughout the Mt. Blue region. Its inaugural grant helped the Farmington Public Library complete a landscape redesign that removed invasive plants and replaced them with native species, creating a more welcoming, environmentally sustainable entrance. Building on that success, the club expanded the program this year by awarding three grants.

"This year's applications demonstrated just how many meaningful projects are happening throughout our area," said Lisa Laffin, Chair of the Community Grant Committee. "We were delighted to support three organizations and help bring their ideas to life."

The 2026 MBAGC Community Grant recipients are:

Cape Cod Hill

Community School (New Sharon)

Students and staff at Cape Cod Hill Community School will revitalize the school's front entrance with colorful native plantings, creating a vibrant and welcoming first impression for students, families, and visitors. The school's student-led Seed Squad already completed community planting projects at locations including the Holman House and the Franklin County Courthouse, and this project continues with that tradition of community stewardship.

Work First, Inc. (Farmington)

Work First will create a welcoming garden around its new Little Free Library and transform an existing gazebo into an inviting outdoor reading space. The project includes raised planting beds, flowers, shrubs, and containers that will encourage visitors to stop, read, and enjoy the landscape while supporting the organization's mission of serving adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

UMF Campus & Community Garden (Farmington)

The University of Maine at Farmington Campus & Community Garden will use its grant to repair greenhouse doors and ventilation systems, improving accessibility



and extending the garden's ability to grow food and pollinator plants. Operated entirely through grants, donations, and fundraising, the garden

has produced hundreds of pounds of fresh vegetables for local food pantries while also serving as an educational resource, community gathering

Submitted photo
space, and volunteer site for Master Gardener Volunteers.

The Mt. Blue Area Garden Club established its Commu-

nity Grant Program to encourage beautification projects that enhance public spaces and promote environmental stewardship throughout the Mt. Blue region. Applications for the 2027 Community Grant Program will be accepted beginning early next year, with an April 1 deadline. Eligible applicants include nonprofit organizations, schools, businesses, and community groups located in Farmington, Wilton, Chesterville, New Sharon, New Vineyard, Temple, Starks, Vienna, and Weld.

The Mt. Blue Area Garden Club is a member of the Garden Club Federation of Maine and National Garden Clubs, Inc. The club promotes gardening in all its phases, civic beautification, conservation, and community education throughout western Maine. New members and guests are always welcome. More information is available at www.mtbluegardenclub.org.



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MAINE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

AUGUST

Aug 16 - Concert at Norcross Point, LQH, 2-4 p.m., Norcross Point, Bowdoin St., Winthrop, FMI call 458-5485 or www.concertsatnorcrosspoint.com.

August 16 – Leavitt Area High School Class of 1976 50 Year Reunion, 1-4 p.m., Highlands Golf Course, Turner, dress code casual, no fee to attend (food and beverages will be available for purchase), RSVP on the LAHS Facebook page or text to (207) 649-1247.

Aug 23 - Concert at Norcross Point, Katie Daggett & Ed Desjardins, 2-4 p.m., Norcross Point, Bowdoin St., Winthrop, FMI call 458-5485 or www.concertsatnorcrosspoint.com.

Aug 30 - Concert at Norcross Point, Keiyana Marie Trinidad, 2-4 p.m., Norcross Point, Bowdoin St., Winthrop, FMI call 458-5485 or www.concertsatnorcrosspoint.com.

OCTOBER

October 14 - Shiloh Pond Community Forest (Kingfield), 10 a.m., 200 acres owned by the Town of Kingfield and stewarded by High Peaks Alliance, featuring two ponds, wetlands, a small waterfall, and a scenic forest trail, registration is free but required, as space is limited, <https://secure.qgiv.com/for/highpeaksalliance/event/woodwalks/>.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

LOCKE MILLS: Green-

wood Farmer’s Market every other Friday during the winter, starting on October 3rd, 270 Main St., Rt. 26, Locke Mills, next door to the Greenwood Post Office, FMI Brian and Suzanne Dunham 207-665-2967.

SOUTH PARIS: South Paris Farmers’ Market, Thursdays 2-6 p.m., 9 Market Square in the parking lot right next door to Oxford Hills Mercantile/Ollie & David’s.

OQUOSSOC: Rangeley Region Skeet and Trap Association (RRS&TA) announces its 2025 shooting schedule, welcoming members and visitors to experience clay shooting sports, Wednesday: Trap and Skeet starting at 4:00 p.m., Thursday: Sporting Clays and Skeet starting at 4:00 p.m., Saturday: Five Stand and Skeet starting at 10:00 a.m., Sunday: Trap and Skeet starting at 1:00 p.m.

GILEAD: Gilead Historical Society open every Saturday 12 – 3 p.m., 14 Depot St., Gilead, FMI call (207) 836-2987.

RUMFORD: Celebrate Recovery meetings, every Thursday and Sunday at 6:30 p.m., Larry Labonte Recovery Center, 412 Waldo St., Rumford, free, FMI contact Justin Teixeira at 207-393-7205 or Erika Teixeira at 207-418-7777.

BETHEL: Every Wednesday, Story time at the Bethel Library, 5 Broad Street, Bethel, 10 – 11a.m.

FARMINGTON: Nami

Farmington Family Support Group, for family and friends of people living with a mental illness, 3rd Monday of each month, 6:30-8 p.m., Maine Health Franklin Hospital, 111 Franklin Health Commons, Farmington, Contact Louise (207) 592-9933 or Kathy (207) 318-1075

FARMINGTON: Farmington Chess Club meets every Tuesday from 6-8 pm at the Parks and Rec Center, 127 Middle St., Farmington. All skill levels are welcome.

FARMINGTON: St. Joseph Nutrition Center, corner of Quebec and Middle Street (across from St. Joseph Church) A “Blessing Box” in front of the building. More information or to help out: (207) 778-2778.

JAY: St. Rose of Lima Food Assistance, 1 Church Street (Parish Hall) A “Blessing Box” faces the street in front of the building. More information or to help out: (207) 897-2173.

JAY: St. Rose of Lima Community Meals, 1 Church Street (Parish Hall), Community meals offered on the first and third Saturdays of the month from 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. For more information or to help: (207) 897-2173.

MADISON: Music Jams - Open Mic. 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month, 1-4 p.m. Masonic Hall, Madison.

RANGELEY: The Lakeside Contemporary Art Gallery’s spring/summer show, paintings by Ashton F.

LeCraw, will run from May 29 - July 6th. All is welcome & artwork is available for purchase. LCAG is located at 2493 Maine Street, Rangeley & open Tues - Sat. 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. & during theatre showing. <https://rangeleyarts.org/event/lcag-artist-reception-ashton-lecraw/> or call 207-864-5000.

RUMFORD: Old School Food Pantry, 115 Maine Avenue, Wednesdays from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., For more information or to help: (207) 364-4556 or email Shannon at rvhccglover@gmail.com

FARMINGTON: Farmington Grange has WWW, Wednesday Welcome and Warm Up, First and third Wednesdays, November thru April. Everyone is welcome, 10-2, coffee sweets, light lunch, social time, projects, games and puzzles. Grange Hall is located at 124 Bridge Street, West Farmington. For more information call Bonnie Clark 207-778-1416

FARMINGTON: Nine-ish- NA Meetings (In Person), 9:15-10:30 a.m., Franklin Memorial Hospital, 111 Franklin Health Commons, Farmington.

Food Addicts Meetings

FREE - Food addicts in recovery meetings: Tues Zoom and phone, Thurs phone and Sun in person. foodaddicts.org FMI call

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 prepayment 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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<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.

GOLF TIPS

Here we are getting ready for another golf season; I’m sure many of you have already been playing. This is the time to work on one or two of the chronic mistakes that always come up to ruin a round.

For some of you, it might be an infrequent hook or slice, putting problems, short game blunders or whatever drives you nuts. If you can eliminate one or two of these, just think of the improvement to your everyday scoring — sounds good to me.

As you know, golf is a difficult game. Trying to change the things adversely affecting your game is also difficult, but going online to many golf websites or reading tips in magazines can sometimes help. The best way to improve your game is to take some lessons with an instructor you can communicate with; that’s the key. So good luck with your new game improvement.



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Scam Alert Bulletin Board



Tech Support Scams

A new surge of tech support scams is threatening consumers. Criminals use scary warning pop-up messages, or cold calls pretending to be a major software company to gain access to your device.

Many modern tech support alerts closely resemble real system warnings, making them difficult to detect at first glance. Vulnerable targets include standalone home computers, tablets used for online banking, and personal laptops used in busy public Wi-Fi areas.

If your screen freezes or a strange alert pops up, pause before reacting. Reflect on what you might have heard (or read) about scams that start out like this. To clear the warnings, you may have to shut down your device to get rid of them.

To help stay safe, keep your operating system and antivirus software up to date. If you are concerned that your device may be compromised, get it checked out at a repair shop you trust.

Learn how to spot and avoid scams with AARP Fraud Watch Network™. Suspect a scam? Call our free helpline at 877-908-3360 and talk to one of our fraud specialists about what to do next.

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Previously ran in June of 2017

When Lillie was six years old we were talking about what she wanted to be when she grew up.

She thought about it and then replied, “A boat. I want to be a big boat when I grow up.”

I was stunned and trying to not laugh when I explained why she couldn’t be a boat, ever. – Pauline and Lillie, of Auburn.

As a three-year-old, our grandson Isaac, who is now 21, had spent many a summer day enjoying the beach and water at the family camp at a lake. Nana and Grampa decided to take Isaac to camp on a winter day to check it out.

We parked and walked the 100 yards to the camp. When we got there, the first thing Isaac said was, “Hey, where did all the water go?”

Of course, we knew the lake would be frozen and covered with snow, but he being young, didn’t.

– Clint of Anson.

Rangeley Congregational Church Women’s Fellowship donates \$12,000 to charity

RANGELEY - This past year, Rangeley Congregational Church Women’s Fellowship participated in two summer festivals in Rangeley and our Annual Holly Fair, where handmade crafts, Rada cutlery, jams, and baked goods were sold. All proceeds from these events are donated to charity. On Friday, May 8th, the women of the Rangeley Congregational Church and our Women’s Fellowship community met to distribute \$12,000 to charity. Once again, we were fortunate to be able to distribute donations to 15 wonderful organizations, with a large percentage of these benefiting people in the Rangeley region.

Following is a partial list of organizations which received funds from our proceeds: Rangeley Meal Site, The Giving Tree, Rangeley Library, Grandmother’s Purse, Rangeley Ski Scholarship program, Sargent Family Community Fund – Just One Day, Arbor House, Safe Voices of Farmington, Andwell Health Partners, Western Maine Community Action, Farmington Animal Rescue, and other national & international charities.

The Rangeley Congregational Church Women’s Fellowship’s participation in summer festivals and Holly Fair have generated proceeds which have benefited many organizations for over 30 years. Since 2017, the Women’s Fellowship organization has donated over \$80,000 to charity.

This year marks our 31st Annual Holly Fair which will be held on November 21st at the Rangeley Congregational Church Barn from 10 am to 2 pm. Please come and find our tent at the 2026 Strawberry and Blueberry Festivals where your purchases will continue to help us, help others.

With sincere gratitude, the Women’s Fellowship organization thanks the Rangeley community and summer visitors for supporting our efforts this past year. We are grateful for the opportunity to continue this important mission in 2026.

2026 Maine Shrine Lobster Bowl a winner again

By Bill Van Tassel

LEWISTON - The annual Maine Shrine Lobster Bowl was held at Lewiston High School on July 18 in front of a huge, rain-soaked crowd of parents, peers, grandparents and friends. The traditional All-Star game of sorts features some of the best recently graduated senior players from schools throughout the state, from York to Houlton.

The rain during the first half of the game didn’t dampen the enthusiasm of the fans, players or cheerleaders. Like the players, the cheerleaders from East and West high schools got together during Lobster Bowl Week to practice and get to know each other well. Sixty-plus schools nominated a few of their top senior players and cheerleaders to take part in the once-in-a-lifetime event, with the final selection of athletes chosen by the Maine Coaches Association.

The event has been held 35 times since 1990 and has raised over a million dollars for Shriners Hospitals. The generosity of the fans and local Shrine members in time and money continues to provide medical and therapeutic treatment for thousands of young people with orthopedic disabilities, burn injuries and cleft palate conditions. Much of this care is given regardless of a family’s ability to pay.

Over the years the Western teams have come out on top at winners, but the point is not the scores or who wins. The young people competing have a wonderful time doing one of the things they enjoy doing, whether it is occupying the field or cheering for the crowd and the East-West Teams. The winners are the children who get the caring medical and personal support from the Shriners Hospital personnel. The 2026 event raised a record \$317,385.

Incidentally, the game was an outstanding battle and fun to watch even in the soaking first half. Some of the plays looked almost college-level. The lead went back and forth a little with the West making an exciting, late comeback to win 28-26. Before awards were passed out, there were handshakes and hugs happening amongst the players, cheerleaders and Shrine personnel that were present all day to keep things organized and moving along.



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Summer Seasonal Guide

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Conserving fuel as prices rise

Metro Fuel is a necessity for millions of drivers on the country’s roadways. According to a recent report from Experian Automotive, approximately 1.4 percent of the 292.3 million cars and trucks on the road in the United States in 2024 were electric. Even though the number of EVs is rising, there are still plenty of people behind the wheels of gas-powered vehicles that require routine fill-ups. As of late March 2026, the national average gas price in the United States at the same was \$3.98 per gallon. When gas prices rise due to various factors, drivers are increasingly interested in ways to conserve fuel and stretch their dollars further. Here are some ways to mitigate rising gas prices.

- Reduce your speed. Driving at moderate speeds
- Practice smooth driving. Drivers should avoid aggressive starts (gunning it) and hard braking, which can eat into fuel efficiency. Letting off the accelerator early and coasting to red lights or stop signs helps.
- Rely on cruise control. Cruise control helps maintain a steady speed, which can save fuel on highway travel.
- Keep tires inflated. Properly inflating tires to the manufacturer’s recommended PSI can improve fuel economy by roughly 0.6 percent to 3 percent for most drivers, offers the U.S. Department of Energy. Driving on tires that are 20 percent under-inflated can reduce fuel economy by as much as 10 percent. Removing unnecessary heavy items from the vehicle also can help to reduce drag.
- Limit idling and combine trips. Turn off the vehicle when stopped for more than a few minutes. When running errands, combine short trips to keep the engine warm, which is more efficient.
- Skip the premium fuel. Unless a vehicle owner’s manual specifically recommends filling up with premium fuel, drivers will not see an increase in performance by choosing this more expensive option, offers Progressive Insurance. A person will just be paying more for premium, which is always more expensive than standard 87-octane fuel.





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*Bob Barton
Westbrook*

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Did You ? **How America**
KNOW **got its name** ★

As residents of the United States of America celebrate the nation's two hundred and fiftieth anniversary, some might be curious where the "America" portion of the country's name comes from. According to the Library of Congress, America is named after Italian explorer Amerigo Vespucci. The LOC contends that Vespucci was the first to suggest that the lands Christopher Columbus sailed to in 1492 were part of a separate continent. German mapmaker Martin Waldseemüller honored Vespucci's assertion in 1507, when he created a notable map that was the first to depict the lands as a separate continent, naming the area "America," which is a Latinized version of "Amerigo." That map is now part of the cartographic collections at the LOC, and is sometimes referred to as "America's Birth Certificate."

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2026 Shriner's Lobster Bowl



Bill Van Tassel photos

FITNESS CLASS SCHEDULE

monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday	saturday
	8-9AM Total Body Strength w/ Brit	8-9AM Essentrics w/Kristi	8-9AM Total Body Strength w/ Brit	8-9AM Total Body Strength w/ Brit	
9-10AM Super Circuit w/ Hawk	9-10AM ALL LEVELS SPIN w/ Cyn	9-10AM Super Circuit w/ Hawk	10-11AM Gentle Flow Yoga w/ Holly	9-10AM Super Circuit w/ Hawk	9-10:15AM All Levels Yoga w/ Kristina
10:15-10:45AM Functional Fitness w/ Hannah	10:15-11AM Chair Yoga w/ Hannah	10:15-10:45AM Functional Fitness w/ Hannah		10AM-11AM Gentle Yoga w/ Kyle	
11AM-12PM Water Aerobics w/ Diane	4-5PM Karate (Kids) w/ Dan	11AM-12PM Gentle Yoga w/ Kyle	5-6PM Karate (Kids) w/ Dan	11AM-12PM Water Aerobics w/ Diane	<i>sunday</i>
11AM-12PM Gentle Yoga w/ Kyle	5-6PM Power Yoga w/ Hannah	3-6:30PM Jiu Jitsu w/ Shawn	6-7PM Karate (Teen/Adult) w/ Dan		10AM-11AM Gentle Yoga w/ Kyle

SCAN ME
For updated online schedule

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- BLUE CLASSES - \$10
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@rangeleyhealthandwellness

RHW is a nonprofit community organization dedicated to promoting health, wellness, and quality of life in the Rangeley Lakes Region.

Through fitness programs, physical therapy, youth and senior activities, community partnerships, and educational initiatives, RHW serves residents and visitors of all ages. As a nonprofit, Rangeley Health & Wellness relies on grants, fundraising events, and charitable contributions to make wellness programs accessible to the entire community.



MOVIE REVIEW

by Lucas Allen

THE ODYSSEY [2026]

After winning two Academy Awards with “Oppenheimer,” writer/producer/director Christopher Nolan returns to grand-scale filmmaking with an epic story that’s three thousand years in the making. Based on Homer’s ancient poem, “The Odyssey” may have been faithfully and loosely adapted in the past, but never in such a Hollywood big-budget, ambitious fashion as this. It is worth noting that Nolan and cinematographer Hoyte van Hoytema shot the entire movie with IMAX film cameras, which is a sign that you are not just watching a movie; you are becoming part of the experience.

Many years after the end of the Trojan War, Odysseus (Matt Damon) on his way home to Ithaca is stranded on an island without any memory of how he got there. His only companion is the beautiful and obsessive Calypso (Charlize Theron), who nursed him back to health by feeding him lotus flowers. Eventually, he can recall leading his Greek army under the command of Agamemnon (Benny Safdie) to overtake the city of Troy from the Trojans but then faces many obstacles on the journey back, including a giant cyclops, the vengeful witch Circe (Samantha Morton), a trip to the underworld, and the wrath of the gods.

Meanwhile, Queen Penelope (Anne Hathaway) is still waiting for her husband’s return, though a large group of suitors led by the slimy Antinous (Robert Pattinson) are vying for her hand in marriage. However, her determined son Telemachus (Tom Holland), with the help of half-blind Eumaeus (John Leguizamo), sneaked out of

the kingdom to sail with Mentor (Ryan Hurst) to find his father. On a stop to Sparta’s kingdom of Menelaus (Jon Bernthal), the king tells him he does not know if his father is still alive but can recall fighting alongside him in the fall of Troy before marrying Helen (Lupita Nyong’o). As Odysseus finds his way back to his wife and son, Antinous conspires with the other suitors to take the Queen and the kingdom by force.

Those who know the story will tell that it had to be condensed for the entirety of this three-hour film, including minimizing the role of the goddess Athena (Zendaya) to simply being Odysseus’ spiritual guide. Still, the main core of the poem remains, and Nolan does a very good job keeping a tight and concise focus on the journey itself, especially with his habit of going back-and-forth with the timeline. There are just enough necessary side characters to use, so that the film wouldn’t feel too overstuffed. The writing and directing are once again in full display in a top-notch manner that it’s an unquestionable success.

Thanks to its IMAX photography, every frame looks astounding and easily comes right out of the screen. It also makes great use of its stunning locations, bringing a more exotic flavor to this ancient tale. Since the director likes to bring more practicality to his filmmaking, there’s definitely some careful attention to both the cinematography and the special effects to help complement the story.

There’s also a nice balance between dialogue scenes

and intense action sequences that are wonderfully placed together to keep the flow of the story moving. The tone is very consistent between the emotional drama and the battle scenes, which brings home a thrilling experience for the big screen. Everything naturally comes together in the climactic fight scene between Odysseus and the suitors that becomes a well-choreographed battle to the death.

Like in his other films, Nolan put together an astonishing all-star cast, who each give it their all successfully. Damon may be playing the ancient hero equivalent of Jason Bourne, but he’s still a very capable lead actor honoring his character’s journey. Holland is equally at his very best, as is Hathaway, giving a powerful performance. Even Pattinson isn’t afraid to go a little extra mad in his villainous role no matter what his scenes call for. But while all their roles are small, Zendaya, Nyong’o, and Theron each still bring a touch of elegance and emotion to their portrayals.

Christopher Nolan has certainly made another winner with “The Odyssey,” not just for the box office, but also for the hearts and minds of filmgoers around the world. Whether or not it will take home awards history like “Oppenheimer” remains to be seen, though he still made quite a near-perfect masterpiece of cinematic proportions.

THE MOVIE’S RATING: R (for violence and some language)

THE CRITIC’S RATING: 4 Stars (Out of Four)

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