

# Sanford Springvale MAINE NEWS

Nonprofit newsletter produced with volunteers

Free

March 15, 2024

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## We've Come a Long Way, Baby!

Welcome to the inaugural print issue of the Sanford Springvale News — our latest milestone reached. Ever since reading the newspaper's last edition would publish in March 2023, a dedicated group of community members have been working to find a way to continue the important mission of distributing accurate, unbiased local information to the community.

With support from the founding editor and publisher, Zendelle Bouchard, as well as volunteer efforts and continued community support, we now produce:

- a weekly E-News edition emailed to 1,346 subscribers
- an updated website viewed by 5,000 visitors a month
- multiple weekly Facebook posts with 4,000 followers of our page
- a print edition (see our website for distribution locations)

Community volunteers have made this happen. Some write weekly columns covering calendar events, news, recreation, nature, obituaries and more. Others write feature articles reporting on City Council and School Committee happenings. Still others edit, proofread, take local photos and distribute the publication. We even have volunteer student writers from the University of New England, The New School and St. Thomas School.

Despite our commitment, we would not have succeeded without the much-valued donations from our readers and support from our business sponsors and local advertising. We are grateful and continue to ask for support from donors, sponsors and advertisers to help us provide even more content to more people.

It's been one short year, but we've come a long way, baby! ■

We couldn't fit all the news in. There's much more in our free weekly E-Newsletter. **Subscribe today.**



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- and much MORE

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## Community CALENDAR

Compiled by Lisa Blanchette

Have an event coming up? Email [events@sanford-springvalenews.com](mailto:events@sanford-springvalenews.com)

Visit [www.sanfordspringvalenews.com](http://www.sanfordspringvalenews.com) for more details on these and future events.

### Monday, March 18

- Baby Rhyme Time, 10a, Spvl Library, 443 Main St.
- Sanford Food Pantry, 10a, 1204 Main St.
- Crafts, Coffee, & Conversation, 10a, Pleasant Street Free Baptist Church, 10 Pleasant St., Spvl
- Lego Builders Club, 3:30p, Spvl Library, 443 Main St.
- School Committee, 6p, City Hall, 919 Main St.

### Tuesday, March 19

- Baby/Toddler Rhyme Time, 10:30a, Goodall Library, 1364 Main St.
- Pre-K Story Time, 11a, Goodall Library, 1364 Main St.
- Free Lunch at Sanford Warming Ctr, Host YC Shelter Program, Noon, 69 Brook St.
- York County Food Pantry, Noon, YC Shelter Program, 5 Swetts Bridge Rd., Alfred
- Knit Lits, 3p, Spvl Library, 443 Main St.
- City Council Budget Mtg, 4p, City Hall, 919 Main St.
- Bingo, 4p (doors open) 6p (start), Elks Lodge, 13 Elm St.
- Dulcimer (Beginners), 6p, Goodall Library, 1364 Main St.
- Slow Flow Gong Yoga-Yin Yoga & Sound Healing, 6p, 21 Bradeen St., Spvl

## How the Jagger Mills Came to Be

By Lawrence Furbish

One could say it really began when Uriah Barstow Jagger, responding to an invitation in a letter from Tom Goodall, arrived in Sanford from Bradford, England in 1884. He went to work as the superintendent of the Goodall worsted spinning mill. Uriah had two sons, Sam and Fred, who both began working for their father in the mill. In 1898, the two brothers formed a "handshake" partnership and set up shop in the Butler and Clark shoe factory building near Bridge Street in Springvale.

David Jagger made time to talk about his family's century-plus history in the wool business while the sale of the mill's current building moves toward closure.

In 1906, the brothers bought the Willard Mill Privilege in South Sanford on what later



Jagger Brothers Mill in Springvale

Photo: Russell J. Goodall

became Jagger Mill Road. "Privilege" is an old colonial term that refers to the legal right of the owner to dam a river, in this case, the Mousam

*Cont'd page 3*

*Cont'd page 2*

**GUYS and Dolls**

Sanford High School Theater Company Presents

Sanford Performing Arts Center

Friday, March 29 - 6:30pm  
Saturday, March 30 - 1:00 & 6:30pm

[www.SanfordPAC.org](http://www.SanfordPAC.org)

## Big School Budget Cuts Proposed; Council Wants More

By Zendelle Bouchard

Sanford's Superintendent of Schools Matt Nelson is proposing to make hundreds of thousands of dollars in additional cuts to the school budget following input from School Committee members and City Councilors who pushed for the reductions.

The Committee met at a budget workshop on Monday, March 11, 2024, where Nelson presented four tiers of possible cuts. The exact details of the four tiers were not shared with members of the public in attendance, as the employees whose jobs might be eliminated were not given advance notice.

Nelson announced that Harvard Pilgrim Health had made an offer to reduce their planned 17.5% rate increase to 15% if the School Department agreed not to put the contract out to bid. This would save over \$165,000 just in that single line item. He indicated that further negotiation could potentially produce even more savings. The School Department also anticipates saving more than \$20,000 in electricity costs thanks to a new contract.

Nelson recommended the Committee discuss the Tier 1 and 2 cuts, and possibly Tier 3. He reminded them that the City Council indicated they were unhappy with the proposed 11.1% increase in taxation but did not reach consensus on a percentage they would approve. He recommended the Committee not eliminate the Alternative Education program at Sanford High School this year but said instead he would like to see it transition to something more financially sustainable in the future.

The Committee members present each weighed in with their thoughts. (Chair Paula Cote was absent.)

At the regular School Committee meeting which followed the budget work session, a number of school employees and members of the public spoke to advocate for continued support for counseling and social work services and the Alt Ed program.

At the City Council meeting the following night, Nelson went through his presentation of the budget from the previous week in greater detail before outlining his proposed reductions based on Tier 1 and 2 cuts and other adjust-

ments. He explained that the positions formerly funded by federal ESSER grants being added to the local budget this year were needed to meet the School Department's priorities. He said while taxpayers were expecting all those positions to go away, he balanced them by taking other positions out of the local budget.

He showed a chart of per-pupil spending comparing Sanford to other school districts. At \$13,502.78, Sanford is well below the state average of \$16,426.89 and even further below the York County average of \$17,480.51. Sanford spends the least amount per pupil of any district in York County. He said he is proud of the fact that Sanford does a good job educating its students for less money.

The proposed reductions from his previous presentation to the Council total \$450,379. In addition to the health insurance and electricity savings, the reorganization of the central office and maintenance staff would save more than \$107,000 and the removal of the SMS counselor position would save almost \$75,000. He also explained that, because the ESSER positions are funded through the end of September, the last month of funding for the positions that are being eliminated can be transferred to the local budget to save an additional \$75,000. Replacing the First Team field hockey program with a First Team volleyball program, which has greater interest from students, will save more than \$6,000.

In summary, Nelson said the cuts and adjustments he made with input from the School Committee reduce the operations expense increase to 5.6%, with the net-to-taxation increase reduced from 11.1% to 8.4%. He noted that three of the Committee members still feel that 8.4% is too much, but he is tasked with meeting the needs of all 3,228 Sanford students enrolled in Pre-K through grade 12, including those with learning disabilities, medical needs and crippling anxiety, as well as the advanced placement and gifted students. He said any further cuts would involve the elimination of programs.

Councilor Jonathan Martell asked why

*Cont'd page 4*

## Calendar - Cont'd from page 1

### Wednesday, March 20

- Community Café, 11:30a, Mayflower Place, 27 Mayflower Dr.
- Lego Builders Club, 2:30p, Goodall Library, 1364 Main St.
- Poetry Group, 5p, Goodall Library, 1364 Main St.
- Paint Night at Pilots Cove Café, 5p, 199 Airport Rd.
- Toddle Time, 5:30p, Memorial Gym Cafe, 678 Main St.
- Wednesday Night Bite Free Community Meal, 6p, Curtis Lake Church, 38 Westview Dr.

### Thursday, March 21

- Free Lunch at Sanford Warming Ctr, Host YC Shelter Program, Noon, 69 Brook St.
- St. Therese of Lisieux Food Bank, Noon, Holy Family Church, 66 North Ave.
- Free Community Meal, 5p, New Beginnings Christian Church, 181 Grammar Rd.
- Canvases & Cocktails, 6p, Smitty's Cinema, 1327 Main St.

### Friday, March 22

- Toddler Time, 9a, SCAE, 668 Main St.
- Winter Story Time Spvl Library, 10a, 443 Main St.
- Salvation Army Produce Pantry, 10a, 871 Main St.
- York County Food Pantry, Noon, YC Shelter Program, 5 Swetts Bridge Rd., Alfred
- Public Haddock Dinner, Knights of Columbus, 4:30p, St. Thomas Cafeteria, 69 North Ave.
- Two Acts of Shakespeare, 7p, Nasson Community Center & Little Theatre, 457 Main St., Spvl

### Saturday, March 23

- Winter Pruning Workshop, 9a, McDougal Orchards, 201 Hanson Ridge Rd., Spvl
- Veterinary Clinic, 9:30a, Pet Supplies Plus, 1364 Main St.
- Baby Blessings, 10a, St. George's Episcopal Church, 3 Emerson St.
- Spring Prep for Gardening Season, Eldredge Lumber, 1p, 1787 Main St.
- Seacoast Warhawks Season Opener, 7p, SHS Alumni Stadium, 100 Alumni Blvd.
- Two Acts of Shakespeare, 7p, Nasson Community Center & Little Theatre, 457 Main St., Spvl

### Sunday, March 24

- Chamber Talk with Rick Stanley, 7a, 104.3 The Oldies
- Two Acts of Shakespeare, 2:30p, Nasson Community Center & Little Theatre, 457 Main St., Spvl
- Weekly Softball Clinic, 5pm, SHS, 100 Alumni Blvd.

Check School Department sports schedules at [www.mpschedules.org](http://www.mpschedules.org). ■

## Car Accident?

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## Jagger Mill - Cont'd from page 1

River. The Willard Privilege dated from 1758 and it had been a sawmill and a grist mill. It was dilapidated when the brothers bought it and was torn down; they built a new dam and a factory.

In 1956, the company purchased the former Maine Alpaca Mill on the corner of Water and Mill streets in Springvale. The mill had been originally built around 1840 out of wood, with a bell tower and a bell. It was rebuilt in the 1920s from brick, and the bell and tower were retained. The large bell rang on the hour for many years. The bell is now in the courtyard of the Springvale Library.

Sam had six children; the three boys, Winston, Allan and Robert, all worked for Jagger Brothers, taking over management after Sam's death in 1948. Allan's son, David, and Winston's son, Tom, in their turn, took over management of Jagger Brothers. Tom retired in 1994 and was bought out by David, who has run the company since. David recently made the difficult decision to sell the building.


Jagger Brothers shut down its yarn spinning operation in 2019 and supported the creation of a new business, Worsted Spinning New England, run by President Greg Fall. (The Yarn Craft Store is still open every Thursday from 9:00 to 2:00 pm and on the second Saturday of the month from 10:00 to 2:00 pm.)

Fall is making arrangements to move operations elsewhere and plans to retain the eight current employees.

"We expect to continue spinning at a new location," said Fall, whose business processes bales of wool and other fibers into yarn and sells the colorful product to home knitters and industry customers.

Fall says he is deeply grateful to Jagger for supporting the startup of his business, which was born of his own deep family roots in agriculture.

"I could not have opened here without David. He has been hugely supportive and gave me a deep discount," he said. He added that he has acquired two prosperous wholesale fiber businesses to support the transition to a new location. ■



City of Sanford | 919 Main Street, Sanford, ME 04073

## Public Hearing Notice

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### JOINT PUBLIC HEARING

City Council and School Committee

City Council Chambers and  
Via Remote Video and Teleconference  
Pursuant to 1 MRSA §403-B (2) (D)  
And Section 6 of the City Council Rules of Procedure  
Tuesday, March 19, 2024  
6:00 PM

Notice is hereby given that the Sanford City Council will hold a public hearing at 6:00 PM on Tuesday, March 19, 2024 in person at City Hall Council Chambers, 919 Main Street, Third Floor, Sanford, Maine and via remote video and teleconference pursuant to 1 MRSA §403-B (2)(D) and section 6 of the Sanford City Council Rules of Procedure. The purpose of this public hearing is to discuss the proposed Municipal and School Budgets.

#### PROPOSED MUNICIPAL AND SCHOOL BUDGETS

A. Municipal and School budgets and budget messages are available for inspection by the public on the City of Sanford's website at [www.sanfordmaine.org](http://www.sanfordmaine.org). The School Department's budget is available on the School Department's website [www.sanford.org](http://www.sanford.org).

B. The Public Hearing will be held in the Third Floor Chambers and via teleconference on Tuesday, March 19, 2024 and will be broadcast on Channel 26 and live streamed at <https://townhallstreams.com/towns/sanfordme>.

C. Members of the public may also submit comments via the City of Sanford website at [www.sanfordmaine.org](http://www.sanfordmaine.org) under government/city council/contact the council.

Date Posted: March 11, 2024

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## Notice of Formal Meeting


### ON-DEMAND PUBLIC MEETING Sanford

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#### Installation of Traffic Signal at the Route 4, Jagger Mill Road, and Alumni Boulevard intersection

Access to this and all other active meeting presentations is available at our Public Meetings Page located at [bit.ly/mainedot-meetings](http://bit.ly/mainedot-meetings)

MaineDOT will have an on-demand presentation available for this Formal Public Meeting. This meeting will give information about the proposed project, including video presentations and other pertinent information to help the public understand the project. These on-demand meetings allow for convenient viewing at any time. The meeting also provides the ability for online comments and questions that will be answered by MaineDOT staff.



This public meeting is to inform and invite public comments. We are particularly interested in learning local views, discovering local resources, and identifying local concerns and issues. Anyone interested can view the presentation at the above website or scan the QR Code with their smartphone for access.

MaineDOT invites and encourages you to review the meeting and share your thoughts on this project during the formal comment period from March 20, 2024, to April 3, 2024.

Reasonable accommodation has been made to provide access to these meetings by providing access at any time within a two-week period. Additional accommodation to allow full participation in these meetings can be requested by contacting the Project Manager listed below. Please see the Accessibility/Accommodation document on our [Public Involvement Background Information Page](#) for more information regarding requesting accommodations.

Questions, comments, or inquiries can be made directly through the on-demand meeting or can be directed to the Project Manager listed below.

Jerry Dostie, Project Manager,  
Maine Department of Transportation,  
24 Child Street, 16 SHS, Augusta, Maine 04333-0016  
Telephone: (207) 624-3457  
Email: [Gerald.P.Dostie@Maine.Gov](mailto:Gerald.P.Dostie@Maine.Gov)  
Work Identification Numbers 027030.00  
Federal Aid Project Number 2703000

**School Budget Cuts - Cont'd from p2**

teaching positions are being eliminated in the budget while social workers are being retained. Nelson responded that they prioritize early intervention to the needs the students are bringing, and using social workers in the early grades saves money on special education expenses in the future. He said the disruption to classes by out-of-control students affects all the other students and requires the intervention of social workers.

Councilor Ayn Hanselmann described a detailed spreadsheet she put together for the Council on the net-to-taxation numbers, focusing on the ESSER funding. She said she couldn't reconcile the School Department's figures and wanted to see the impact to net-to-taxation if all positions previously funded through ESSER were eliminated. Nelson replied that his numbers show the bottom-line impact to local taxpayers and that decisions were not based on which funding stream was used. They had a lengthy back and forth, with her arguing that bringing formerly ESSER-funded positions into the local budget is not fair to taxpayers, and with him responding that other locally funded positions were being eliminated or reorganized to balance that impact.

Deputy Mayor Maura Herlihy questioned why social workers are being hired through the school budget, rather than using outside services like Sweetser, which might be covered by the students' health insurance. Nelson explained that those agencies have staffing shortages and are unable to provide enough social workers to meet the need.

When they began talking about a percent-

age increase they would feel comfortable with, Hanselmann said she wanted to see further reductions to bring the net-to-taxation increase down from 8.4% to 7%. Councilor Pete Tranchemontagne said he would like to see it end up at 7.5%, while Mayor Becky Brink said she would like it closer to 8%. Councilor Nate Hitchcock asked to see the scenarios of what else would be cut from the budget to get to 7, 7.5 or 8%. Herlihy said she wanted to see the municipal budget and the new assessment before deciding on a number. (Councilor Bob Stackpole was not present.)

On March 19 at 4 pm, the Council will hear a detailed presentation on the municipal side of the budget from City Manager Steve Buck. At the regular Council meeting which follows, there will be a public hearing on both the city and school budgets. The Council will then have a couple of weeks for reflection and discussion before voting on the budgets April 9. ■

**THANK YOU SPONSORS**



**Mainers March Merch Giveaway**

By Sam Bonsey



The Sanford Mainers are offering a chance for fans to win its Mainers March Merch Giveaway. The merch includes a bottle of maple syrup, two maple moose pops by Hilltop Boilers Maple Syrup, and a four-pack of single-game tickets to any game this season. To enter, like the Sanford Mainers' Facebook and Instagram pages and tag three friends you'd take to a game. No purchase is necessary.

**Connor Curcio Joins Sanford Mainers Staff**

Connor Curcio has joined the Sanford Mainers' staff as part of its game-day operations for the 2024 season. Curcio is studying Sports & Recreation Management and Business Administration and is also a member of UNE's Men's Basketball team. ■

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## Sanford's Got Talent 2024

By Sam Bonsey, Sanford Schools Communications Coordinator

Sanford Middle School's cafeteria was buzzing with excitement and anticipation on Thursday, March 7, as students, teachers, and families gathered for the Sanford's Got Talent 2024 show.

Organized by the school's JMG program, the event showcased the talents of the school's students in a variety of performances, including dance routines, vocal showcases, drum solos, ventriloquist acts, keyboard solos, and more.

The evening kicked off with an impressive array of performances, each demonstrating the creativity and skill of Sanford Middle School's student body.

Congratulations to the following students who performed: Anthony Flayhan, Ziva Green, Shaneece Liscombe, Jaslinn Johnson, Kelsey Howard, Lyrie Westgate, Emma Higgins, Anna Held, Zoie Kraus, Kayleb McKinlay, Chloe Griffin, Madison Causer, Kaylee Kivlin, Arella Burnell, Aubrey Janosek, Natalie Nadeau, Claire Davie, Emma Beers, Kaelyn Gallant, Violet Kirven, Jeanna Robicheau, Kenna Robinson, and Ariana Young.

Volunteer judges Ms. Allen, Mr. Sanborn, Mrs. Brown, Ms. Farley, and Ms. Scarano lent their expertise to the event, providing valuable feedback and helping to select the evening's performers.



*Anthony Flayhan performed a spectacular drum solo at Sanford's Got Talent*

Photo: Sanford Middle School

An awards ceremony was held to recognize the outstanding performances of several students. In fourth place with a killer drum solo - Anthony Flayhan; in third place, with a self-choreographed dance to "Timber" - Natalie Nadeau and Aubrey Janousek; in second place, singing "Never Enough," Claire Davie and, Sanford's Got Talent 2024 winners, Ariana Young and Kenna Robinson performing "A Cover is Not a Book!" ■

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NEWS**

Nonprofit newsletter  
produced with volunteers

*The Mission of the Sanford Springvale News is to produce a free weekly publication that provides current and factual information about what is happening in Sanford and Springvale.*

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## SCHOOL NOTES

Compiled By Carolyn Cadigan

**Sneaker donations sought to help keep kids active:** During the month of March each year, Sanford elementary schools participate in a sneaker drive to help ensure children have the proper footwear needed to be active and comfortable. New or very gently used sneakers, child size 10 to youth size 7, can be dropped off at any of the three elementary schools. (No sandals or dress shoes are needed.)

**Lenten Food Drive is seeking donations:** St. Thomas School is holding a Lenten Food Drive to support the St. Therése Food Closet, which serves many families in need within the community. Items are due by March 26.

**Kindergarten early registration dates are nearly here:** The early registration schedule for new kindergarten students has been announced: Carl J. Lamb on April 3, 5 pm - 6:30 pm; Margaret Chase Smith on March 27, 3:30 pm to 6:30 pm; and Sanford Pride on March 27, 5:30 pm to 7 pm. Children who are age 5 on or before Oct. 15 are eligible to register. FMI, go here <https://tinyurl.com/2td5xmmb>.



**Add a little green at home:** The horticulture students at the Sanford Regional Technical Center (SRTC) are running their House Plant Sale until the end of the school year. They are open most days, 8:30 am - 1:30 pm, and offer a large variety of house plants, including succulents, shade plants and even air plants. Prices range from \$5 to \$25. Succulents are priced 2 for \$6. To order ahead for pick-up, go here <https://tinyurl.com/3xnuke45>. SRTC's Pansy Sale will run April 8 - 12.



*Spring Sing featured chorus singers from Sanford High, Middle, and Elementary schools*  
Photo: Sanford School Department

## Spring Sing at the Sanford Performing Arts Center

By Sam Bonsey, Sanford Schools Communications Coordinator

The Sanford school community shined brightly at the school department's annual Spring Sing Choral Showcase at the Performing Arts Center on Wednesday, March 6.

The showcase, which featured chorus singers from Sanford High, Middle, and Elementary schools, brought together students grade 4-12 as families and friends filled the seats to witness a special performance.

Sanford Middle School's 5th Grade Choir started the evening off singing "The Banana Boat Song" by Roger Emerson.

The 6th, 7th, and 8th Grade Choir followed with their rendition of "The Lion Sleeps Tonight," with 8th grader Josh Fogarty providing the drums.

Sanford High School's Honors Chamber Singers then took to the stage performing the

song "Time" by Jennifer Lucy Cook followed by the chorus singing "What Do I Know?" by Ed Sheeran.

Following the High School, Carl J. Lamb, Margaret Chase Smith, and Sanford Pride Elementary's singers combined to sing "Every Season" by Karl Hitzemann.

The finale of the night was a combination of all Sanford school choirs singing "Count on Me" by Andy Beck.

Congratulations to all of the performers who made Spring Sing a special night.

Many people deserve thanks for making this concert possible, including choral directors Hattie Skvorak, Katie Spagnolo, Justin Pietruch, and Ryan Geary. ■

**Your spring clean-out can benefit others:** St. Thomas School is looking for yard sale donations to support its Spring Fever Fair in April. Drop-off dates for donations are March 23 and April 6, 10 am to 2 pm, at St. Thomas School. FMI on items they will accept, go here <https://tinyurl.com/372vymkz>.

**Local student receives Maine Principals' Association award:** Olivia Kenney, a senior at Traip Academy and part of the Health Occupa-

tions program at Sanford Regional Technical Center, has been selected to receive the 2024 Principal's Award, sponsored by the Maine Principals' Association. The award recognizes a high school senior who has demonstrated academic excellence, outstanding school citizenship and leadership. Kenney has exhibited strong academic performance and has achieved notable accomplishments, including induction into both the National Honor Society and the National Technical Honor Society. ■

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# NEWS NOTES

Compiled By Carolyn Cadigan

**Read and root for the home team:** The Sanford Mainers are launching a new reading program, Boomer's Bookworms. From March 11 through May 31, students in kindergarten through grade eight are eligible to read books and earn free tickets to a Sanford Mainers home game. Stop by the Mainers offices at 917 Main St., the Springvale Library at 443 Main St. or Zippy Copy Ctr at 1725 Main St. to learn more.

**Smoke alarms save lives:** Working smoke alarms can cut the risk of death from home fires in half. The Sanford Fire Department, partnering with the American Red Cross, is installing free smoke alarms in Sanford on April 27. Request a smoke alarm installation today by emailing Maryellen Tarling at maryellen.tarling@redcross.org or call the Red Cross office at 207-874-1192 and leave a message. They are also looking for volunteers. No experience necessary. FMI: <https://tinyurl.com/54mxss9m>.

**Donation keeps summer food distributions possible:** When the Sanford Backpack Program (SBP) announced it was scaling back due to financial strains, the Ending Hunger Crew at Atlantic Federal Credit Union (AFCU) responded swiftly with a \$10,000 aid package. This donation will allow the SBP to continue their summer community food distributions. AFCU raised \$147,799 in 2023 to help the Campaign for Ending Hunger in Maine.

**Many hands make light work:** The second annual Earth Day Cleanup will take place April 22, 8 am - 1pm. Join a group of Great Bay Services participants, staff and community members to clean up litter and debris from streets and trails around the organization's location at 61 Washington St. FMI on volunteering, donating or supporting the event, go to <https://tinyurl.com/2px4yd5m>




Photo: YCCAC Transportation

**CDL driver shortage impacts local trolley service:** YCCAC Transportation announced they are discontinuing the Blue Line Trolley service between Kennebunk Lower Village and the Wells/Ogunquit town line for the 2024 summer season. They struggle with recruiting and hiring the number of licensed CDL drivers needed to operate the trolley service. Unfortunately, this has become the norm across the country for many businesses that rely on an increasingly scarce number of licensed CDL drivers.

**A creative program helps with high housing costs:** A new pilot program from MaineHousing pairs elderly homeowners and empty nesters with young adults looking to rent. Rents are an estimated 20% to 30% lower than market prices, and, in some cases, homeowners will barter some household tasks for a reduced rent. Background checks are conducted on both parties to ensure safety. For the first few months, the program, which uses a digital platform from Nesterly to make home matches, will focus on signing up Maine hosts. Then they will begin to recruit renters. At the end of 2024, MaineHousing will review the program's results.

**New trustee fills vacant seat at the water district:** The Sanford Water District welcomes its newest trustee, Brian Samia, an active real estate agent in the community for 22 years. Samia has also been involved with the Sanford Trails Committee, Kiwanis Club of Sanford, Sanford Soccer Association and Sanford-Springvale Little League. He fills the vacant seat left by the late John Cochin, who served as a trustee from 1980 until his passing on Dec. 18, 2023. Cochin's background in chemistry and understanding of water treatment was very helpful to the district over the years.

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