

Sanford Springvale MAINE NEWS

Nonprofit newspaper produced with volunteers

Free

February 28, 2025

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Strengthening Housing Navigation in York County



L-R: Cecilia Sirianni, Jen Ouellette, Sarah Blevins, Jen Davie, Barrie-Jean Watson, Abigail Woods, Sarah McGrath Photo Credit: Jen Davie

By Jennifer Davie

Sanford is home to many dedicated individuals and organizations working tirelessly to support those who are unhoused, underhoused, or at risk of losing their housing. Recognizing the need for better collaboration, Executive Directors Carter Friend of York County Community Action Program, Diane Small of the Sanford Housing Authority and Megan Gean-Gendron of the York County Shelter Programs initiated a partnership to enhance the effectiveness of housing navigators across their organizations.

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In February of 2024, the first meeting was hosted at the Housing Authority. I didn't know what to expect when we first met and was initially skeptical. However, through the vision of the program directors, this collaboration has flourished. Over the past year, the housing navigation team has successfully housed 32 households, including individuals and families, those employed, and those regaining stability through the housing voucher system.

Since its inception, the housing navigation group has expanded to include additional key partners and

has become a strong team. It has representatives from several organizations that are strongly committed to the cause including: Opportunity Alliance; Maine State Housing; Sanford Housing Authority-

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Knots & Bolts Creating Company owner Vicki Pariyar (right) assists customer Rebecca Ames.

Photo: Kristi King

Shop Builds Community, a Stitch at a Time

By Kristi King

Knots & Bolts Creating Company at 911 Main St. – the former Bergeron's Shoes space – is the perfect place to be creative in downtown Sanford. There you'll find yarn of all colors, everything for quilting, and all your sewing needs. It also carries unique local non-fiber gifts that non-crafty people would also love to receive, including jewelry, children's gifts and art supplies. The shop also provides services such as online ordering, shipping and pick-up, long-arm quilt stitching and projects for other local businesses.

"Whatever I can do to build my connections to others is my mission," said owner Vicki Pariyar, who's knowledgeable about all things fibers and textiles. She began sewing with her mother, graduated with a textile design

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SHS Theater Company Presents

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Friday, March 28 - 7:00pm | Saturday, March 29 2:00 & 7:00pm | Sunday, March 30 2:00pm

School Budget Heads to City Council

By: Kendra Williams

Through several meetings during the past month, the Sanford School Committee has grappled with a lean 2025-26 budget affected by rising insurance costs and new wage laws.

Some challenges to maintaining current services and programming include increases in health insurance costs and a new minimum wage law for ed techs. New this year is the Family Medical Leave Act, which requires a match to the mandated employee payroll deduction.

The committee was ready to approve the budget at last Monday night's meeting, but it got an unwelcome surprise when a renewal proposal from Harvard Pilgrim, which provides health insurance for most school employees, came in with a significantly higher increase than anticipated. This has necessitated additional budget meetings to consider some negotiation options with Harvard Pilgrim and potential additional programming cuts.

The committee will now have its final vote on the proposed budget at its regular meeting on March 3 for delivery to the City Council. Beginning on March 4, the council will work on the municipal budget along with the proposed school budget throughout the month. The School Department administration will be actively involved in the budget negotiations. A public hearing will be held on March 18. The council then gives its final approval on the full budget, to be finalized by the first week in April. Voters approve only the school portion of the budget, not the entire city budget, at a June referendum.

Administrators noted that Sanford ranks last of 24 school districts in Cumberland and York counties in its per-pupil costs.

For more detailed information on the school budget and to watch past meetings, go to <https://www.sanford.org/documents> and select Fiscal YR 2026 Budget Info. ■



Photo: WSSR TV

Freemasons' philanthropy benefits Sweetser:

On Feb. 11, members of the Sanford Masonic Lodge, Preble Lodge #143, presented Sweetser with a check for \$3,000 to support mental health services in the Sanford and Springvale communities. The group raised the funds through a bowling tournament.

Brook Street home

searched by police: An armored vehicle was used to execute a search warrant at a house on Brook Street on the night of Feb. 25. Sanford Police Department requested tactical assistance from the Southern Maine Special Response Team "due to the identified risks associated with the targets of the investigation," according to Maj. Mark Dyer. An extensive number of items related to an ongoing burglary investigation were seized, he said.

Free mental health info session for York County families:

NAMI Maine is hosting a free information session on its Mental Health Conversation program on March 11, from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm, via Zoom. The session, open to parents and family members in York County, will share information on how to recognize signs of mental health challenges in youth and teens, how to navigate the various resources that are available, and how to get support for families. FMI, call Lily Barter, coordinator of

NEWS notes Compiled by Carolyn Cadigan



Sweetser receives a \$3,000 donation from members of the Sanford Masonic Lodge. Photo: Sweetser

youth education, at 800-464-5767, ext. 2308, or register for the session at <https://tinyurl.com/v6tks3th>

Nasson NP receives her credentials:

Nasson Health Care announced that Marcie Butkovic recently completed the board certification examination to receive her Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner credentials. Congratulations, Marcie!

York County EMA is seeking volunteers to help during emergencies:

The York County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) is looking for volunteers to join its Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). As one of the agency's Special Response Teams, CERT functions to prepare the community for disasters, respond to incidents, and assist with recovery. The team is trained to help others following emergencies until professional responders arrive and to assist responders by providing basic

first aid and assisting with tasks such as traffic control and emergency communications. CERT volunteers also organize and participate in preparedness education and outreach initiatives.

Training consists of a 20-hour course, lectures and hands-on activities which prepare students to understand the principles of emergency management, identify hazards, extinguish small fires, assist emergency responders, apply basic first aid techniques, and more. Training takes place Tuesdays and Thursdays from March 25 to April 15, from 6 pm to 9 pm, at York County EMA, in Alfred. FMI and to register, go to <https://tinyurl.com/2pd4xsxd>

A new month, a new

healthier you: The Sanford-Springvale YMCA is offering a 12-week class, called March to a Healthier You, on Tuesdays, from 6 pm to 7 pm, starting March 4. The class, for those ages 18 and older, aims to help participants set and pursue

personal goals to improve their health. Led by dietitian Shannon Cloran and conducted in a group setting, the class will discuss goal setting, balanced eating, physical activity, label reading, positive psychology and behavior sustainability. In addition, the group will determine topics based on collective health and wellness goals. The cost is \$75 for members, \$225 for non-members. FMI, contact Merilee Perkins, Director of Healthy Living, at mperkins@sanfordymca.org.

Program helps Mainers age 60+ manage their bills and checkbooks:

The Money Minders program, offered through the Southern Maine Agency on Aging (SMAA), helps Mainers ages 60 and up manage their finances — an essential resource for adults going through life transitions like the passing of a loved one. The program matches trained and bonded volunteers with clients who need help sorting bills, making payments, keeping checkbooks balanced, and making sure that no late payments or overdraft fees are incurred. Through this program, volunteers help people continue to live independently, without fear of losing control over their finances. Do you know someone who could use help managing their finances or has the experience to be a trusted volunteer with this program? Call an SMAA resource specialist at 800-427-7411 to learn more. ■

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Parking Ban? Stay Informed

By Jack McAdam

As the winter weather continues, the City of Sanford is reminding residents to stay updated on parking bans and overnight parking restrictions to avoid fines and towing.

To receive real-time notifications about parking bans and other city alerts, residents can sign up for email and text notifications at <https://www.sanfordmaine.org/e-notify/> Or, the latest updates can be found on the city's parking ban updates page. https://www.sanfordmaine.org/departments/parking_ban_updates.php

During an active parking ban, parking on public ways is prohibited until the ban has been lifted. Vehicles are subject to towing if parked on a public way. For those who need overnight parking options, designated public lots are available at the Benton Park parking lot on Roberts Street and the Heritage Crossing parking lot.

Parking bans are also issued after snowstorms to allow crews to clear snow from downtown sidewalks and other areas.

Regardless of whether a parking ban is declared, a seasonal overnight parking restriction is enforced between 2 am and 5 am from December 1 to April 1. Parking is prohibited on the following streets: Route 202 (Lebanon Street), Winter Street, Cottage Street, Washington Street, River Street, Twombly Road, School Street, High Street, Grammar Street, Grammar Road, Route 224, Pleasant Street, Oak Street, Jagger Mill Road, Old Mill Road, Emery Street, Main Street, Roberts Street, Beacon Street, Kimball Street, Berwick Road, Berwick Avenue, Shaw Road and Mt. Hope Road.

Violators risk fines and towing at the owner's expense. If your car is towed, call the Sanford Regional Communications Center at (207) 324-3644 for assistance.

During a winter weather emergency, the Sanford Transfer Station and Demo Debris Area may be closed. Call the transfer station at 207-324-9144 before going to confirm they are open. ■

HOUSING Cont'd from page 1

ty; Sanford School Department; Sweetser, York County Community Action and York County Shelter Programs. These collaborations have been invaluable in ensuring that all stakeholders work together in the best interest of the individuals and families they serve.

A member of the group from the Sanford Schools, Cecilia Sirianni, says, "I am honored to work with such a hardworking and compassionate team. We help families address and overcome many barriers. It is humbling to walk side by side with them in their process."

Martha Bresnahan of York County Community Action shared, "Being a part of the housing navigation team has been very advantageous. The housing crisis has created a situation where few resources and solutions exist, placing a strain on those of us in this field. Being part of a team to solve problems has been incredibly beneficial. Getting to know one another and understanding our day-to-day work has helped me grow. I have gained a much better

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SHOP BUILDS COMMUNITY Cont'd from page 1

degree and began working in the industry. After moving to Sanford, she decided to create a fabric, yarn and teaching shop last June. The result is a "community experience everyone can enjoy," said Pariyar, whose uniquely designed shop pays homage to Jagger Mill with historic storage pieces and discontinued yarn along with visual wall design including their ready-to-go monthly seasonal themed Wall Block Art kits.

Open Wednesday through Sunday, the shop is a popular gathering place for seasoned creators and those who want to try something new. Pariyar and her employees will lead a variety of classes starting March 1 with Oh Scrap!, a scrap quilting class, Crocheting a Trendy Twisted Headband and Making a Rope Bowl, while providing rooms for the Sit and Create Club.

Her monthly community event, "Midnight Madness," from 6 pm to midnight on March 22, brings creators together for a whole evening, giving patrons the space, time and assistance they need to work on or complete projects with access to the store, a 10% discount, and snacks and games to keep participants energized.

Pariyar's shop is one of the new stops for the Maine Quilt Shop Hop on April 6 that is wholly Maine-inspired. A large group from the Southern Maine Fiber Artists meet monthly "and make what they want to make within a community-building atmosphere," said Pariyar, who plans on being successful in downtown Sanford for many years, adding, "I want to be one of the steppingstones to Sanford's bright future." ■



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understanding of what is currently being done and what can be done moving forward, enhancing our chances of success."

Reflecting on the progress this past year, I wish I could go back to the first meeting and celebrate walking through the door and taking a seat at the table. Working with the housing navigation group has empowered me to be a better housing navigator. Collaborating with the members from the organizations represented at our meetings strengthens the work we're all doing in our community. There is a kinship in these meetings in a niche of work that is often hard and emotionally taxing.

The collaborative work of the housing navigation group has proven that by working together, we can achieve greater success in addressing housing challenges. With the continued dedication of its members, the group remains committed to finding solutions and supporting the most vulnerable members of our community. ■

Community CALENDAR

Compiled by Lisa Blanchette

ONGOING

- Winter Reading Program for Kids and Adults-Goodall Library, through March 3
- Bundle Up and Read @ the Springvale Library, through March 8

Saturday, Mar. 1

- Beginners' Painting Class-Children, noon, Goodall Library, 1364 Main St.
- St. Thomas School Bean Supper, 4:30 pm, 69 North Ave.
- Two of A Kind, 6:30 pm, River Junction Brewing Co., 1491 Main St.
- The StepCrew, 7 pm, Sanford Performing Arts Center, 100 Alumni Blvd.

Sunday, Mar. 2

- Eliz. DeWolfe-1841-ME Textile Workers Strike, 3 pm, Historical Society, 505 Main St. Springvale

Monday, Mar. 3

- School Dept. Policy Committee meeting, 8 am, Superintendent's Office, 917 Main St.
- Red Cross blood Drive, 9:30 am, Nason Community Center, 457 Main St., Springvale
- Baby Rhyme Time, 10 am, Springvale Library
- The MomCo @ Pleasant St. Baptist Church 10 am, 10 Pleasant St.
- Sanford Food Pantry, 10 am, 1204 Main St.
- Lego Builders Club, 3:30 pm, Springvale Library
- Sanford School Committee, 6 pm, Sanford City Hall, 919 Main St.

Tuesday, Mar. 4

- Toddle Time, 10 am, Sanford Memorial Gym, 678 Main St.
- Salvation Army Food Pantry, 10 am, 871 Main St.
- Baby/Toddler Rhyme Time, 10:30 am
- Pre-K Story Time w/Craft, 11:00 am
- York County Food Pantry, noon, YCSP, 5 Swett's Bridge Road, Alfred
- YCSP's "To-Go" Lunch @ St. George's Episcopal Church, 2 pm, 3 Emerson St.
- Cribbage, 2 pm, Springvale Library
- Knit Lits, 3 pm, Springvale Library
- Sanford Elks Bingo, 4 pm Doors Open, 6 pm Games Start, 13 Elm St.
- City Council Budget meeting, 5 pm, Sanford City Hall
- Toddle Time, 5:30 pm, Memorial Gym, 678 Main St.
- Dulcimer Group, 6 pm, Goodall Library
- City Council meeting, 6 pm, Sanford City Hall, 919 Main St.

Wednesday, Mar. 5

- Community Café, noon pm, Mayflower Place, 27 Mayflower Dr.
- It Takes A Village 207-Indoor Meal @ St. George's Church, 2 pm, 3 Emerson St.
- Lego Club, 2:30 pm, Goodall Library
- Fiber Arts Group, 5 pm, Goodall Memorial Library
- Sam's Book Club-A Love Song for Ricki Wilde-Tia Williams, 5:30 pm, Springvale Library
- Wednesday Night Bite Community Meal, 6 pm, Curtis Lake Church, 38 Westview Dr.
- Sanford Middle School Spring Sing, 6 pm, Performing Arts Center, 100 Alumni Blvd.
- Family History Library, 6:30 pm, Church of Jesus Christ, 25 Westview Dr.

Thursday, Mar. 6

- Sensory Story Time, 10:00 am, Springvale Library
- St. Therese of Lisieux Food Bank, noon, Holy Family Church, 66 North Ave.

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What's on Deck for the Sanford Mainers Season



Andrea Knight is outreach coordinator for the Sanford Mainers.
Photo: Kristi King

By Kristi King

The Sanford Mainers baseball team has announced its 2025 season and is looking forward to a successful showing following a near miss in the championship season last year. The home opener will be June 6 at Goodall Park.

The New England Collegiate Baseball League team's season will feature several special events, according to Outreach Coordinator Andrea Knight. First off, four local schools will be involved in Boomer's Bookworms, a K-8 incentive reading program announced by the Sanford Mainers' mascot, Boomer. The six-week program began after February vacation and gives participants a chance to earn two tickets to a Mainers game. "Supporting youth reading skills is vital to their future success," noted Knight. On Boomer's Bookworms Night July 26, successful readers will get their name called out as they run out onto the field through the human tunnel created by this year's Sanford Mainers players.

On College Night, June 12, patrons can engage with colleges from New England and branches of the military. June 13 will be a Trunk or Trick Halloween followed by the School's Out Celebration on June 16. First Responders Night on June 18 will let emergency service workers of all kinds reconnect, or connect for the first time, alongside recent graduates of the fire services program. For music lovers, Jimmy Buffet Night with musician Jeff Gilbert is June 19. Come celebrate Boomer's Bookworms for Boomer's older brother Broose's Birthday June 23.

Military Night, July 1, is sponsored by the American Legion and aims to support our former and present military personnel and their families. The Mainers will act as a community partner with other southern Maine organizations on Inclusion Night July 8, featuring local sign-language interpreters and volunteers from the YMCA. This free event sponsored by Kennebunk Savings Bank gives organizations a chance to connect and further strengthen community support. Finally, on July 25 it's

Country Night with Musician Mike Forgette and National Night Out sponsored by the Sanford Police Department on July 28. "We've got a full and amazing season for our Sanford community this summer," Knight said.

A successful season also depends on finding host families for the players, who come from all over the country to spend nine weeks playing 44 games and need a place to stay – "a home away from home getting important rest, meals and family connection," said Josh Ouellette, the team's host family coordinator.

The Mainers organization helps families who have room for players get set up. "Hosting a player is a meaningful experience and hosting families often say, 'We're so glad we did it!'" said Knight. Community members can also donate gift cards from grocery stores, restaurants and other retailers.

Sanford Mainers players have a history of staying with the sport, being drafted into the Major League, independent leagues or as free agents. "Sanford wins them over every time often hearing the phrase, 'This place is amazing!'" wiping away any preconceived notions of spending a summer in Maine," Ouellette said. In addition, "Players appreciate the small-town feel, the amazing support they get and the sense of family and community that is welcoming," added Knight. "They especially love interacting with their youngest fans signing after the baseball games."

The Sanford Mainers organization, a nonprofit founded in 2001, has a mission "to move the city forward and make it the special home that we all deserve and strives to be community building," stated Ouellette. "This organization is filled with passionate people from staff to volunteers to coaches and players and especially the embracing Sanford community," added Knight. Manager Nic Lops, leading the two-time league championship team, has been named manager of the year two out of the last four years. Games can be seen on NECBL, and away games are broadcast by Sanford's Seacoast Oldies 104.3. "We've got a full and amazing season for our Sanford community this summer!" Knight said.

The team will continue with its mission of community-building with a new softball tournament that it expects to become an annual fundraising event for local organizations like their official charity, Grahamtastic Connection. "Sanford should be proud of their local baseball team, which has quite a fan base," Knight said. ■

Laura Hodson Beauchesne, DPT, MS

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SCHOOL notes

Compiled by Carolyn Cadigan

Nurturing curiosity in budding inventors and innovators at MCS: Fourth grade students at Margaret Chase Smith Elementary School have begun their next unit, focusing on discovery and innovation. Through engaging stories and activities that make up the "Eureka!" unit, students are learning about famous inventions and groundbreaking ideas that have changed the world. They are also learning various problem-solving approaches and brainstorming their own creative solutions — thinking like real inventors and innovators.



Fourth graders at Margaret Chase Smith Elementary School channel their creativity while learning about discovery and innovation.
Photo: Sanford School Department

Scholarship opportunity for young women pursuing a law enforcement career: The Maine State Troopers Foundation will be awarding the Women in Law Enforcement Scholarship again this year. This scholarship opportunity for young women was created in 2021 by the women of the Maine State Police, working with the Maine State Troopers Foundation and women from across New England state police agencies. The goal is to support and encourage women in their pursuit of law enforcement careers. Any female graduating senior who will be pursuing a degree in law enforcement or criminal justice is eligible to apply. The application deadline is April 4. FMI, and to access the application, go to maine-womeninlescholarship.com.

SHS graduate named to Saint Anselm Dean's List: Audrey Cote, an art history major at Saint Anselm College in Manchester, NH, has been named to the Dean's List for the fall 2024 semester. Cote maintained a grade point average of 3.4 or better and was enrolled for a minimum of 12 credits of study which award a letter grade. ■



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SPORTS notes

Compiled by Sam Bonsey,
Sanford Schools
Communication Coordinator



Photo:Pixabay

Sanford High Girls' Basketball Loses to Gorham in Class AA South Semifinals

The Sanford High School girls' basketball season ended in heartbreak in the semifinals of the Class AA South Playoffs as they fell to the Gorham Rams, 47-36, at the Cross Insurance Arena in Portland on Wednesday, February 19.

Mollie Puffer scored 14 points to lead the Spartans, while Sadie Sevigny added seven, including a bucket early in the fourth quarter to put Sanford ahead 34-32. Gorham, however, finished the game on a 15-2 run. The Spartans finished their season 14-6.

Registration for SHS spring sports is now open:

All Sanford School Department students wishing to participate in high school athletics this spring must register online by the April 4 deadline. Each student must have a current physical on file in order to participate. Use the following link to register:
<https://tinyurl.com/yjyacney> ■

Historical Society Lecture Series

Great Turnout of
1841: Maine Textile
Workers Strike

Presented by Elizabeth DeWolfe

MARCH 2, 2025
3:00 PM

Sanford-Springvale
Historical Society
Lecture Series

FREE at the Sanford-Springvale Historical Museum, 505 Main Street, Springvale
For more information, visit SanfordHistory.org

In 1841, nearly 500 female factory workers walked out of Saco's York Manufacturing Company and paraded up Main Street, chanting and singing. They gathered in a local church, formed a committee, and sent the factory owner a document articulating their complaints about wages, housing, and paternalistic rules. In this illustrated talk, we'll explore the life of New England "factory girls" the opportunities millwork brought, and the challenges of this difficult labor. DeWolfe will examine the tense days that followed the "turn-out" and see how a strike in one Maine town connected to national agitation for women's rights including suffrage.

Sponsored by the Harry Mapes Foundation,
Maine Humanities Council, Atlantic Federal
Credit Union and Town and Country Credit Union.

Time to Prune those Apple Trees

By Matt McAdam, McDougal
Orchards

As orchardists, one of the biggest questions we get tends to be, "What do you do all winter?" Most expect answers like taxes, planning for next year, or taking a vacation. All of that is true for the most part. The other answer is maintaining our trees, more specifically, dormant pruning or winter pruning.

Pruning is the practice of trimming (a tree, shrub, or bush) by cutting away dead or overgrown branches or stems, especially to increase fruitfulness, shape, and growth. At McDougal Orchards, our pruning is focused on fruitfulness and shape. In order to accomplish this, we remove dead, diseased, and broken

branches, low-hanging branches, undesirable interior branches that go into the trunk or straight down and sucker growth around the base of the trunk. All of this opens the canopy to increase light and air circulation that helps the fruit to develop.

We start in February (sometimes January if we get antsy) to ensure dormancy of the trees. With more than 4,000 trees and 40-plus varieties of apples, pruning takes a little time to get through before we can gear up for the growing season.

A crew of about four can complete the work in a couple of months. A trained pruner will spend about 15 minutes per tree. This roughly equates to about 30 trees per day. We have trees of all sizes, from the big standards to the dwarf trees. Some take a lot longer and others go very quickly, but it all evens out.

The work is very dependent on weather and sometimes machinery. The 2025 season has started off with both being unfavorable. Our Kubota RTV had a track come off, and parts are still on order. Between snowstorms and extreme winds, the weather has also been a significant challenge. On the bright side, the plentiful snow acts as insulation for the apple tree



SRTC students learn how to prune with Matt McAdam.

Photo: McDougal Orchards

roots and we're getting some good exercise by hiking out in snowshoes!

In summary, we are out in the elements maintaining our trees for harvest in the fall all winter and facing different challenges every year.

Do you want to learn more about winter pruning to maintain your fruit trees? For the second year, McDougal Orchards is offering a series of winter pruning workshops. It's a course suited for anyone with limited or no pruning experience who wants to learn the basics of caring for apple trees.

We will walk you through the process to help make you feel more comfortable with the winter pruning of your own apple trees. You will get to prune your own tree and mark it so you can come back and look at it in the fall or during our other planned workshops throughout the season.

Workshops will be held on three Saturdays, March 1, 15 and 29, from 9 am to noon. For more information or to register, visit our website, www.mcdougalorchards.com. ■

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Film Shines Positive Light on Sanford

By Lee Burnett

The screening of a documentary film about Sanford's experience resettling asylum seekers drew rapt attention, applause and some laughs on Friday, Feb. 21.

An audience of about 75 people gathered at Nasson Little Theatre to watch "I Come from Away Part 2," a film produced by Emmy-award winner film maker Charles Stuart, which is also airing on Maine Public TV. Following the screening, a panel discussion was moderated by Moon Nguany Machar, the on-camera interviewer in the film. Joining her on the panel were City Manager Steve Buck, Jen Davie, housing coordinator for York County Community Action and Mufalo Chitam, executive director of Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition.

Some of the evening's most poignant comments were about how participants were changed by the experience of resettling new arrivals from Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Chitam said she was initially shocked to hear that 100 or so asylum seekers had descended on Sanford on a Friday afternoon in May 2023 when City Hall was closed.

"At first, I thought: Sanford? There's nothing there!" she exclaimed to laughter in the room. Chitam soon became a regular participant and trusted guide in the mobilization of resources. Through that experience, she saw disparate agencies, organizations and volunteers pull together in a coordinated response. She now holds up Sanford as the model for other communities seeking to ease newcomers' transition to life in a new country. "Your best example of what integration looks like is Sanford," she said.

Machar confessed that her initial reaction to the influx was a concern for newcomers' safety and, turning to Buck in a gentle ribbing manner, said, "And you were enemy number one." The two chuckled together. Machar said her concerns dissolved and her respect for Buck deepened as she came to see city officials in action.

Buck related that it was a young child that opened his eyes to the humanity of people at the center of the crisis. One day early on, his attention was drawn to an African child who was grooving to "Baby Shark," which made him smile and realize how similar people are across cultures.

That first year, Buck said the city's general assistance budget, the aid program of last resort for the needy, ballooned from \$150,000 to \$800,000 and more. The city postponed \$600,000 in road repairs to cover the added expense. Since then, asylum seekers have gotten work permits and jobs and moved off the relief roles. Two years ago, about 75 percent of the GA budget went to asylum seekers. Now, its "flipped" and just about a



Participating in a panel discussion Feb. 21 were, from the left, City Manager Steve Buck, Moon Nguany Machar, community wellness program coordinator for Maine Association for New Americans, Jen Davie, housing coordinator for York County Community Action, and Mufalo Chitam, executive director of Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition. Photo: Lee Burnett

third goes to them, he said.

New Mainers continue to arrive, swelling the population four-fold to about 400. Davie has managed to find housing for all of them, as well as for traditional unhoused people. And she notes, "not one eviction." Volunteers continue to provide kitchen appliances, furnishings, car repairs, and other basic needs.

"We have an ongoing and constant dialog" among all the parties involved, said Buck. ■

Public Hearing Notices

The Sanford Planning Board will hold a public hearing and receive written and oral comments at its March 5, 2025 meeting, starting at 6:30 pm, on the following:

- File # 2025-10-R15-42-SP – Application for Major Site Plan Amendment for the construction of a 14,605 sf administration and maintenance building and the associated parking and site improvements on property owned by the Sanford Sewerage District and located at 192 Gavel Road (Map R15, Lot 42).
- §280-11-9 Airport Development Zone – Proposed Ordinance revisions to §§280-11-9, 280-11-10, 280-2-2, and 280-16-6 which alters the Review Authority for projects within the AD Airport Subdistrict and aligns the regulation of all other projects in the AD Zone with §280-16-3.

The Sanford Planning Board will hold a public hearing and receive written and oral comments at its March 19, 2025 meeting, starting at 6:30 pm, on the following:

- File # 2025-06-J27-4-FS – Application for Final Subdivision and Major Site Plan for construction of a 12-unit multifamily residential building and associated parking on property owned by LSM Properties LLC and located at Stackpole Court (Tax Map J27, Lot 4).

The hearings will be held in Council Chambers at City Hall, 919 Main Street, Sanford, or via remote video and teleconference. Testimony may be provided in person, via mail or email, or via Zoom. Meeting information, including how to connect via Zoom, is provided at www.sanfordmaine.org. Questions or written comments should be directed to the Planning Office at 324-9150 or jlbabcock@sanfordmaine.org.

REAL ESTATE Transactions

Compiled by Carolyn Cadigan



550 Main St., Springvale
(2/20 closing, listed below)
Photo: Google

2/4, 76 Pioneer Ave.,

6-room New Englander, 3 bed/2 bath, primary bedroom with ensuite on first floor, laundry on first floor, sun-room, hardwood floors, many updates, attic, full basement, deck, shed, solar panel system, fenced-in backyard, intown, built in 1900, \$290,000

2/20, 550 Main St.,

Springvale, 7-room New Englander, 4 bed/2 bath, bedroom on first floor, updated kitchen, hardwood floors, walk-up

attic, unfinished basement, detached 1-car garage, patio, porch, fenced-in yard, intown, \$368,000 (pictured above)

2/21, 3 Devotion Ave.,

6-room Raised Ranch, 3 bed/1 bath, open concept kitchen and living area, all bedrooms on first floor, family room, finished basement, 1-car garage under, deck, above-ground pool, fence, \$380,000

2/21, 11 George Ave.,

7-room Cape, 3 bed/1.5 bath, bedroom and laundry on first floor, pantry, four-season sun-room, den, partially finished basement, attached 2-car garage, deck, shed, outbuilding, above-ground pool, security system, dead end street, .79 acre, \$436,500 ■



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Porcupines: Our Mostly Prickly Neighbors

Porcupines haven't always lived in Maine – their ancestors migrated north from South America some 130,000 years ago – but you can hardly say they're "from away." These familiar, slow-moving creatures are second to the beaver as the largest rodents in North America. And they love our Maine woods.

At 15 to 25 pounds, the porcupine has a stocky body about 2½ feet long, a small face, short legs, and a thick 8-inch tail. They are the only North American mammals besides wolverines and skunks with noticeable black and white coloration to advertise their defensive abilities. Our porcupine (the name is from the old French for "thorn pig") also has a patch of skin with specialized quills on its lower back called the rosette that increases the rodent's already strong odor to deter enemies. To aid their tree-foraging lifestyle, strong, curved nails fit into bark crevices, and the soles of their feet have a pebbly texture and very little fur, increasing their hold on branches. Three layers of fur protect porcupines: A dark, heavy underfur; white-tipped guard hairs, and the quills – about 30,000 of them! Usually from 3 to 12 inches long, quills also serve as insulation.

A porcupine gives a face-to-face warning by quivering and rattling quills and clattering teeth. Next, it quickly turns to show its formidable defense; the flailing tail gives the impression that it's throwing quills, but quills can't be thrown. Specialized muscles loosen the quill-skin attachment and cause the quills to become erect, allowing easier release during defense. At the tip of each quill are hundreds of barbs that aid in attachment, keep it attached, and help it penetrate deeper. After a quill is used, another one grows in its place.

Porcupines live almost everywhere in North America, preferring natural shelters in rocky ledges, tree, log, and stump cavities, even old beaver lodges (porcupines are good swimmers). They'll often return to a favorite spot yearly, sometimes "tagging" it by gnawing the bark away near an entrance. And they always leave profuse waste accumulation nearby. Females spend the night away from dens, foraging for about 10 hours. Males will sometimes spend days in a food-rich tree. Porcupines range from 18 to 160 acres, depending on food availability and snow cover. Being robust with short, stocky legs, wintertime travel results in wide snow-paths, well-marked with urine and scat.

Hemlock is their go-to tree for winter, offering cover from cold and plenty of cones, twigs, and bark to eat. "Nip twigs" can be found under porcupine-foraged trees, with the buds, cones, and tender hemlock leaves eaten. Hemlock contains low levels of nutrients but high fiber. Special enzymes help porcupines digest this fiber by fermentation. Because of this, about 26% of a porcu-



A lumbering porcupine leaves a unique trail as its stubby legs and stocky body plow through a recent snow at the McKeon Reserve to get from its den to some tasty hemlock trees.

Photo: Kevin McKeon

pine's body is its digestive tract. Summertime foods include sugar maple, basswood, aspen and beech saplings, acorns, and other plants. Oak nip twigs are found with the acorns eaten but the acorn caps still attached. Porcupines don't eat meat but will chew on bones to both sharpen their teeth and obtain salt and calcium. They're also known to eat bugs and small amphibians. They also consume nuts, tubers, seeds, grass – and apples.

Porcupines are the bane of orchardists, being avid consumers of all things apple: fruit, twigs, and bark. High in carbohydrates, apples help porcupines gain the extra weight necessary to help them survive through the winter months. But apples are relatively acidic, much more so than the rodent's summertime food. High acid intake causes porcupines to lose sodium, so they look for some salt in aquatic plants, insects, animal bones and outer bark. They're also attracted to plywood and the sweat-soaked handles of hoes, rakes, and shovels – as some of us gardeners have noticed! Residual road salt is another source and is the cause of many porcupine deaths from vehicles.

Springtime brings the birth of a single, 1½-pound, 8- to 10-inch long porcupette within its protective birth sac, with eyes open, fully alert, and soft quills that harden within hours. The family is called a prickle. Two weeks later, the baby is eating vegetation, and after about three months, it becomes independent. While the mother forages, the porcupette stays hidden in a crevice or at the base of a tree. If threatened, it instinctively tucks its

COMMUNITY CALENDAR - Cont'd from page 3

- YCSP's "To-Go" Lunch @ St. George's Episcopal Church, 2 pm, 3 Emerson St.
- Free Community Meal, 5 pm, New Beginnings Christian Church, 181 Grammar Rd.
- Game Night @ the Library, 5 pm, Goodall Library

Friday, Mar. 7

- Harvest Table Food Pantry, 9 am, Salvation Army, 871 Main St.
- Toddler Time @ SCAE, 9 am, 668 Main St.
- York County Food Pantry, noon pm, YCSP, 5 Swett's Bridge Road, Alfred
- Sanford's Got Talent, 5 pm, Sanford Middle School, 52 Spartan Dr.

Saturday, Mar. 8

- Spring Ahead Puzzle Tournament, 1 pm, Trafton Senior Center, 19 Elm St.

Sunday, Mar. 9

- ME in the Civil War-Ashley Towle, Historical Society, 3 pm, 505 Main St. Springvale

Check Sanford School Department sports schedules at <https://www.mpschedules.org/public/genie/1142/school/73/>

Visit our Events Calendar <https://sanfordspringvalenews.com/events/> for details on these events and on events to come.

head down and turns its back to the predator, vigorously flicking its tiny, two-inch tail.

Predators of porcupine include bear, bobcat, coyote, and great horned owl. The fisher's agility allows it to kill by repeatedly attacking a porcupine's head; it can do this on ground as well as in trees, making this weasel a most deadly threat. If they can evade predators and orchardists, porcupines can live 18 years.

Quill photo: <https://www.science.org/content/article/porcupine-quills-reveal-their-prickly-secrets>

Editor's note: Did you see something unusual last time you were out in the woods? Were you puzzled or surprised by something you saw? Ask our "Out in the Woods" columnist Kevin McKeon. He'll be happy to investigate and try to answer your questions. Email him directly at: kpm@metrocast.net ■

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photo of the week



The warm weather this week got sap running in maple trees. Ron Paquin of Springvale is hoping for a good season. "But I'm not in charge, Mother Nature is." Photo: Lee Burnett

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PASSAGES

Compiled by
Rev. Susan Murphy

Paul H. Langlois, 71, of Sanford, passed away peacefully with his family by his side on Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2025, at Maine Medical Center in Portland. He was born in Sanford on May 18, 1953, to the late Leo and Lorraine (Cookson) Langlois. A lifelong resident, he graduated from Sanford High School and went on to build a fulfilling life in his community. He spent most of his career at Pratt & Whitney, retiring from there in 2017. Outside of work, Paul was a devoted family man, supporter of youth sports, and a beloved coach. Survivors include his wife of 45 years Patti Langlois of Sanford; his daughters Jamie (Brian) Cloutier of Kennebunk; Robyn (Joshua) Howe of Sanford, his son Ryan (Niki) Langlois of Sanford; three grandchildren, two sisters, Elaine Bluck of Portland and Jeanne (Dan) Sullivan of Gorham, and a large extended family. A mass of Christian burial was celebrated on Thursday, Feb. 27, at St. Therese of Lisieux Parish, Holy Family Church. Burial will take place at St. Ignatius Cemetery in the spring.

Peter John Sacco, age 82, passed away on Friday, Feb. 7, 2025, following a long illness. Peter retired from General Electric in Lynn, MA. after 30-plus years of service. He was a welding instructor for many of those years. Pete was a quiet and kind man who was quick to help family members and friends whenever needed. He enjoyed camping, boating and fishing, so retiring to Maine was a dream come true for him. Peter leaves behind his beloved wife, Dian, and her devoted nephew, David Hirtle. Arrangements for Peter are private. ■

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