



People Plus supports an engaged, healthy, and independent life for older adults and youth, while joining others to build community for all ages

35 Union Street • PO Box 766, Brunswick, ME 04011 • (207) 729-0757 • www.peopleplusmaine.org January 2026 • Volume 26, No. 1

People Plus celebrates 50th birthday!



THE ROBUST FRIDAY MAH-JONGG GROUP took a break to hold a tongue-in-cheek banner (wink-wink) in honor of five decades of service, support, and connection for older adults in the Brunswick area. We've got fun things planned all year, such as poker and bingo day, trivia contest, 50th anniversary commemorative book, summer party, and more.

Get Fit & Have Fun for Free in January

(Want to try something new? It's free!)

Have you ever wanted to try out a new class or club or game, but just didn't get around to it? Now is a good time to spice up your routine because for the entire month of January we're offering members and non-members a way to enroll in something they haven't tried – for free and for as often as you want.

Come see what all the fun is about at People Plus with our Fit

How it works: if a person currently takes Yoga, they will continue to pay for Yoga. If that same person wants to try Tai Chi, or Growing Stronger, or Art Class they can take all of those classes for free all month. Also, members-only clubs and games are open to the public for the entire month of January.

& Fun for Free promotion. It's a great time to try something that you think you might enjoy. For movement classes, it can even be a way to get ready for the warmer seasons when you'll be gardening, walking the neighborhood, or going to the beach.

Beyond classes, clubs, and games, we offer lectures and discussions. Dare we say there's something for everyone? That might just be the case here.

Continued on page 8



Need assistance with your taxes? AARP volunteers are here to help!

See page 4.

'Aging Well' Lunch & Learn: "Understanding Vein Health"

Mon, Jan. 26, 12 pm. Learn about vein health, what causes vein disease, and the latest treatments with Jen Boggs, the Director of Education & Outreach at the Vein Healthcare Center. Free, open to the public. Bring lunch or grab a free bowl of soup, we'll provide drinks, chips and dessert. Registration required. FMI see advertisement on page 7.

50th Anniversary Bingo and Poker Day!

Thu, Jan. 8, 1-3:30 pm. "No Money," **Vintage Bingo and Social Poker.** As we begin a year of celebrations to honor our 50th anniversary at People Plus, we thought a "no money," game day would be a great way to start!

Please join us on Thursday, January 8, at 1 pm for a fun afternoon at the Center and choose your game, either vintage bingo or social poker! Bingo prizes will be fun surprises! Poker will be 5-card draw, 7-card stud, and

"44." Winnings (chips) will be totaled, and the three top players will receive prizes. Poker players will rotate from table to table, moving randomly by luck of the draw, making for an enjoyable social event.

Breaks will be provided for snacks and social time between the games. Players are encouraged wear their 50th Anniversary T-shirt. (Get yours at the Center!) Come and join the fun! No money involved, registration required, space is limited.



Collette Trip Talk – Costa Rica is calling

Thu, Jan. 29, 1:00 pm. Come hear about the fabulous Costa Rica trip planned with Collette Travel for Nov. 5-13, 2026. See trip highlights on page 4. Talk is free and open to the public, call to register.

Welcome, Abby!

Nutrition coordinator joins Meals on Wheels



Abigail Powers grew up in Brunswick and then studied sociology and anthropology at the University of Maine in Orono, where her senior honors thesis focused on food insecurity in the Brunswick area. Her research looked at how farmers markets could help address food insecurity and she worked with the Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust's farmers market at Crystal Springs Farm, which took on the responsibility of buying a card reader that allow SNAP recipients to purchase food at the market.

"I hadn't considered the elderly in my

Continued on page 7

Your donation makes a difference!

We all know the importance of People Plus – the programs, classes, clubs, trips, and services that improve our lives. At the heart of it is a sense of belonging, connection, and vitality that forms a lifeline for older adults. Dedicated member and volunteer Irene Gamache says, "It's marvelous here. When I retired, I was alone and this place has made such a difference. It's my home away from home." Anne Ricker says she's amazed by all that is offered at the Center. "I can't say enough about this organization," she notes. John Rich, who enjoys coming to the luncheons, says he has discovered a lot of good people through coming



Donate here

to the Center and Fay Eldred says her exercise class is wonderful. "It's a great way to start the day," she adds.

These comments emphasize how People Plus, with the support of our employees, 250 volunteers, and strong regional partnerships, offers services for over 4,000 older adults through classes, meals, transportation, medical equipment, safety calls, Medicare support and free tax prep; as well as over 7,500 youth visits from teens in grades 6-12 in Cumberland and Sagadahoc Counties.

We've been serving seniors since 1976 and continue to provide for this ever-growing population of older adults in the Mid Coast region. And we can't do it without your help! "This year's goal is \$100,000,"

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Please remember to
recycle your paper!

People Plus News
is also online!



peopleplusmaine.org/all-news-people-plus

People Plus!

Monthly publication serving the Brunswick-Topsham-Harpswell area. For comments, suggestions or news submissions, please email news@peopleplusmaine.org.

ADVERTISE WITH US!

Showcase your business with an ad in the People Plus News! With ads starting at just \$30 per month, advertising with People Plus is affordable for organizations large and small. For advertising or sponsorship queries, please contact Barbara at 729-0757 or office@peopleplusmaine.org. Submissions must be received by the 15th to be included in the next month's edition.

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Where were you 50 years ago?

As we are launching into our 50th anniversary at the People Plus Center, we are all talking about where we were in 1976 and what we were doing.

It was a very significant time for me as I was seven years old in January of 1976 and my mother died. That experience has shaped my life, and I have always wondered who I would've been if she was still with us.

I'm now 57 and have daughters of my own. I cannot imagine leaving them and I often wonder about whether my mom is looking down on us and how happy she must be that I have these beautiful girls. Yet, I imagine she is also sad that she is not here to be their grandmother. So, I'm ecstatic that I'm able to be with them as they grow into adults and launch their lives.

Of course, because I was seven when my mother died, I never really knew her; however, I have some wonderful memories of spending time with her when my older sister was off at school. During those years, it was "mommy time" for us, and most of my memories of her are from those days when I was five to seven years old.

My father's job had taken us from Wakefield, Mass., to Marietta, Ga., outside Atlanta. We moved into a newly constructed neighborhood, and I would follow along behind my mother as she deftly scattered grass seed in sweeping motions onto the red Georgia clay that made up our front yard. Wearing my jammies and slippers, my job was to tamp down the seeds into the soil so they wouldn't blow away. She liked to



STACY AND HER MOTHER PATRICIA ANN in 1968, the year Stacy Victoria Simpson was born in Wakefield, Massachusetts.

do this first thing in the morning just as the bus took my sister to school, as it wasn't too hot yet. We could get in at least an hour of yard work before we needed "suntan lotion."

I also remember having lunch together at our 1970s bar-style kitchen counter. There was a dark yellow and blue-speckled Formica countertop and orange faux-leather bar stools. And like most mothers in the 70s, she was very frugal and an expert at converting leftovers into something "new." She would wash the aluminum TV dinner trays, fill them with surprise lunches, and cover them with their original foil tops that crimped around the edges. Back into the freezer they would go with a note taped over the front detailing the new contents.

One of my favorite TV lunches was Thanksgiving leftovers. I think of it every year as the holiday approaches and well remember eating stuffing and gravy while sitting at the yellow counter. My mother would spend that time brushing out my extremely long and often very tangled hair. "Rats Nests" she would call the knots that always seemed to be there. She would often braid it after my bath to keep it from tangling again at night and I think it's one of the reasons I wear braids so often now. It was sort of my signature look back then, and after my mother died, I stopped wearing them because I couldn't braid my hair by myself.

I assume that most of you reading this have lost your mothers as well by now and I hope that you had good, long lives with them. What's been amazing for me in the last 14 years is discovering so many wonderful women at People Plus who have become like "second mothers" to me.

These replacement mothers that I've come to know at work have had such

From the Executive Director

Stacy Frizzle-Edgerton



an incredible impact on who I am as a person. They've shown me kindness, generosity, and warmth. I've sought them out for guidance, and they've given me candid feedback. Because of my People Plus mothers, I've become a better person, a better co-worker, and a better mother to my own girls as well. I imagine that their love has had an impact like my own mother's would, and I am eternally grateful that People Plus brought these women into my life.

Not surprisingly, People Plus was started by women and has survived the test of time to make it to 50 years. I know that Gladys E. Wilson, who led the charge to start a Community Center for Senior Citizens in Brunswick in 1976 would be tickled to see how far we've come today!

It all started with a small group of dedicated and organized women who had a meals on wheels-style program delivering food to those in need, organized games and gatherings, as well as some exercise classes, spaghetti suppers, and a gardening club. I know they would all be thrilled to know that everything they started 50 years ago continues today. And honestly, there are not a lot of other things about which you can say that!

So, despite growing larger and offering more programs, deeply rooted in the heart of what we do at People Plus is exactly what Gladys E. Wilson and that gang of faithful women put in place. And really, is anything the same as it was 50 years ago? You would be lucky to find a 50-year-old car that operates, no one can use a 50-year-old telephone, and I am sure that none of your jeans from 50 years ago still fit! (Although now that I think about it, we do operate out of the 150-year-old building that was one of the original schools in Brunswick!)

The programs that we offer, providing an opportunity to pursue old friendships, create new ones, and find help where needed are exactly what those ladies had in mind. So, as I reflect on where they were 50 years ago and where I was 50 years ago, I am eternally grateful for all the women who have replaced my mother and helped me grow into the woman I am.

And 50 years later, that little girl with braids in her hair now makes Thanksgiving dinner at People Plus for 100 people ... and packs up the leftovers for TV lunches.





PATRICIA ANN EHRIG SIMPSON, seen here in 1955 around 19 years old. She graduated top in her high school class and was an active member of the Beta Club. However, like many women in the 60s and 70s, being a homemaker was the only real career she ever knew.

Honoring Loss.

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Peter W. Ladner, President, circa 1980

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BRUNSWICK AREA TEEN CENTER NUTRITION COORDINATOR RENEE FOSTER is such a multitasker! She's seen here preparing the soup for Monday Munchies while also baking elements for gingerbread houses! The teens built a whole village out of these walls but didn't get to eat a single one! (They actually complained about that so Renee has to make more gingerbread in January for a "do-over" gingerbread construction session.)

Create New Year’s plan that’s realistic

The New Year is a great opportunity to make positive changes and set realistic, sustainable goals. When clients experience a life change – such as a new job, retirement, or moving, I encourage them to have a plan. This could include preparing more meals at home and increasing physical activity. Why not start the new year with a plan? Many people make New Year’s resolutions but only a small percentage achieve them, often because their goals are unrealistic. Creating a doable plan increases the likelihood of success.

Here are some ideas:

- Take an exercise class at People Plus once a week.
- Make a new soup recipe. I always say, “It takes about 5 minutes to make a pot of soup!”
- Spend 10 minutes to pre-prepare some of your meals. Most people do not want to start to prepare the dinner meal late in the afternoon. Why not do some prep earlier in the day to get dinner on the tables in minutes.
- Have an indoor exercise plan for snow days. This could include resistance bands or an online class.
- Set a limit to the number of times you dine out.
- Clean and declutter your workspace.
- Take stock of what is in your pantry.
- Cook up a lot of chicken to use in stir fry, soups, and fajitas.

Small doable goals can be modified. You may decide to increase your exercise classes to two times per week. Let’s start and finish the new year with more meals at home and being physically active!!

From Anita’s Plate

Anita Nugent
(207) 504-6439



info@nutritionforeveryday.com

Creamy Bean Soup with Asparagus

- Ingredients:**
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
 - 1 small onion, diced
 - 2 (15 oz.) cans of cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
 - 2 tsp. dried thyme
 - Freshly ground black pepper
 - 6 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
 - 1 lb. of asparagus

- Directions:**
1. Heat oil in a large stockpot. Add onions and cook, stirring occasionally. Add the beans and cook 1-2 minutes. Stir in thyme and pepper. Add broth, cover, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer 5 minutes.
 2. Trim the tips off of 6 asparagus stalks and reserve. Slice the rest of the asparagus in 1/2-inch pieces. Set aside.
 3. Use an immersion blender to puree the soup.
 4. Add sliced asparagus to the soup. Bring to a simmer over medium heat. Simmer until the asparagus is crisp-tender.
 5. Ladle into bowls and top with the reserved asparagus tips.

Our food drive hit top gear!

We broke another food drive record thanks to the People Plus community’s generous giving that just wouldn’t quit! Not only did we exceed last year’s donations of food with more than 1,200 pieces and pounds, when a couple learned we were \$666 short of a new goal of \$2,000 in cash, they wrote a check for the difference. Thank you to all who donated food to our Little Red Wheelbarrow effort and cash to the Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program coffers (each dollar they receive allows them to leverage the cash to purchase more food at far lower prices!) And, above all, thank you to Frank Connors, who masterminds the efforts and hauls donations to MCHPP to make all this happen.



Looking for a meeting, event, or party space?

We have small and large spaces available for evenings and weekends. FMI 729-0757 or programming@peopleplusmaine.org.

STORM POLICY

When Brunswick schools are closed due to weather, all People Plus activities are canceled for the day. Check www.peopleplusmaine.org or local media for closure information.

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A gathering to warm the heart and fill the belly







PEOPLE PLUS HOSTED A NOONTIME HOLIDAY LUNCH in December with plenty of great food, friendly chatter, and variations on a theme of red. Jim Burbine, Chair of the Board, played the keyboard while members dined and socialized, then orchestrated all 80 attendees for a rousing group sing of “The Twelve Days of Christmas.” Thank you to the volunteer lunch crew – who outdid themselves once again!

Program Notes for January

- Center Closed Monday, Jan. 19.
- Ukulele Club taking a winter break – will be back in April!
- No Zumba or Table Tennis on Sat, Jan. 3.
- Class/Club Time Changes:**
- Qigong now Tuesdays at 11:15 am.
- Table Tennis now Tuesdays at 12:30 pm.
- Art Class now Tues/Thurs, 9-11 am
- Loosen Up is now called Full Body Fitness – same times, same instructors, same format, with a new name!

Apple Device Tutoring

Wed, Jan. 21 and Thu, Jan. 22, 9:30-12 pm. One-on-one Apple device tutoring sessions with Bill Perry. Bring your iPhone, iPad, Macbook, etc. Members only. Call starting Jan. 2 to book your appointment.

Travel with Collette Travel and People Plus!



Visit Tropical Costa Rica!
November 5-13, 2026. Highlights include: Monteverde Cloud Forest, Hanging Bridges or Canopy Adventure, Farm tour and lunch, Coffee Plantation, Arenal Volcano, Cano Negro Refuge, Lake Arenal Cruise. Deposits due April 28, 2026. **FMI** <https://groups.gocollette.com/en-US/link/1384648>
Is there a place you've always wanted to visit? Contact Jill @729-0757 to share ideas.

The MIND Diet and Cognitive Health

Mon, Jan. 12, 1:30 pm. Join Spectrum Generations' dietitian Kirsten Solomon, MS, RDN for a hands-on class exploring the MIND diet – a blend of Mediterranean & DASH eating patterns to nourish & protect the brain. Open to public, registration required, class size limited.

Let's go to the movies!

Eveningstar Cinema has a deal for People Plus! For only \$10, members can see any movie, any showing, and enjoy a \$1 discount on a bag of popcorn! FMI see page 3 or visit www.eveningstarcinema.com.



Destinations for January
Please note meeting time each week – walks start at 1 pm for the colder and darker months. Call 729-0757 to let staff know if you will need or can give a ride. ****Walks begin once carpool arrives.** Watch the weather: micro spikes or snow shoes may be needed. In case of inclement weather meet at Bruns. Recreation Center at 1 pm (with indoor shoes.) FMI check the Friday People Plus “Peek at the week” emails.
Jan. 7. Planning meeting and a walk. Meet @ PP at 12:30 pm to share ideas and help plan the walks for February! Then we'll walk at Bowdoin College and the Arctic Museum.
Jan. 14. Thorne Head, Bath. Carpool: meet @ PP by 12:30 pm or at site by 1.
Jan. 21. Bradbury Mt. State Park East. Carpool: meet @PP by 12:30 pm or at site by 1.
Jan. 28. Cathance River Trail, Topsham. Carpool: meet @PP by 12:30 pm or at site by 1.

Register for activities at 729-0757

Good Eats–Good Friends! Monday Munchies

Mondays, 11:30 - 12:30 pm. Join us for free soup for members on Mondays donated by Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program! Soups will be listed in the Friday “Peek at the week” email.

Women's Breakfast
1st Thursday of the month, 8:30 am – none in January, see you in Feb!

Men's Breakfast
Thu, Jan. 8, 8:30 am. Enjoy breakfast while socializing with the gents. Members only, call to register. \$5 suggested donation.

Medicare 101

Tue, Jan. 13, 12:30 pm. Spectrum Generations provides information regarding Medicare, drug coverage, and Advantage plans. Free, open to the public (\$15 suggested donation appreciated).



People Plus hosts free tax prep help

Need help with your taxes? Tuesday and Thursday AARP tax prep appointments at the Center start Feb. 3. Call 729-0757 after Jan. 19 to schedule. Must pick up paperwork to fill out ahead of time. Open to the public – membership not required.

Lunch and Connections Come to lunch and celebrate the new year with friends!

Join us **Thursday, Jan. 15**, for lunch featuring baked chicken and root vegetables, brown rice, green beans, salad, and bread – with blueberry surprise and vanilla ice cream for dessert!
Lunch & Connections is underwritten by Spectrum Generations and focuses on nutrition, useful information, socialization, and fun. Dining room opens at 11:15 am, and buffet service starts at noon. Come pick up your 50/50 raffle ticket, claim your favorite seat, and chat with your friends. Members only, \$7.00, registration required.

There's so much to do at the Center!

Art and exercise classes (\$7/class for members, \$12 non-members), interest clubs, card/tile/board games – we've got it all! And it's all free for new participants for the month of January! See times and descriptions on page 8.



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Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Calendar sponsored by 			 1 Center Closed	2 9:00 Mah-Jongg 9:00 Haircuts with Margarita 9:00 Full Body Fitness 10:15 Qigong 11:00 World Affairs 11:45 Chair Yoga 6:30pm Folk Dance Brunswick	3 Casca Bay Sangha
5 9:00 Mah-Jongg 9:00 Full Body Fitness 10:00 Fiber Arts Club 10:00 Zumba 11:00 Table Tennis 11:30 Monday Munchies 1:00pm Int/Adv Duplicate Bridge 6:00pm Djembe Drumming	6 9:00 Int/Adv. Bridge 9:00 Art Class 9:00 Chair Yoga 10:00 Yoga 11:15 Qigong 12:30pm Table Tennis 1:00pm Game Day 2:30pm Spanish Club 6:30pm Toastmasters	7 8:45 Cribbage 9:00 Mah-Jongg 9:00 Full Body Fitness 10:15 Tai Chi 12:00pm Growing Stronger 12:30pm Wednesday Walkers 1:00pm Write On Writers 6:30pm Int. English Country Dance	8 8:30 Men's Breakfast 9:00 Table Tennis 9:00 Art Class 9:00 Beg/Int. Bridge 11:00 Yoga 12:00pm Footcare Services 1:00pm 50th Anniversary Bingo and Poker Party 6:00pm Int./Adv. Belly Dancing	9 9:00 Mah-Jongg 9:00 Haircuts with Margarita 9:00 Full Body Fitness 10:00 Fiber Spinning Club 10:15 Qigong 11:45 Chair Yoga 6:30pm Folk Dance Brunswick	10 8:30 The Skinny Chasers 9:00 Zumba 10:15 Table Tennis
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26 9:00 Mah-Jongg 9:00 Full Body Fitness 10:00 Fiber Arts Club 10:00 Zumba 11:30 Monday Munchies 12:00pm Lunch and Learn: Understanding Vein Health 1:30pm Int/Adv Duplicate Bridge 6:00pm Djembe Drumming	27 9:00 Int/Adv. Bridge 9:00 Art Class 9:00 Chair Yoga 10:00 Yoga 11:15 Qigong 12:30pm Table Tennis 1:00pm Game Day 2:30pm French Club	28 8:45 Cribbage 9:00 Mah-Jongg 9:00 Full Body Fitness 10:15 Tai Chi 12:00pm Growing Stronger 1:00pm Write On Writers 1:00pm Wednesday Walkers 6:30pm Bruns. Coin/Stamp	29 9:00 Table Tennis 9:00 Art Class 9:00 Beg/Int. Bridge 11:00 Yoga 1:00pm Collette Trip Talk Costa Rica is Calling! 6:00pm Int./Adv. Belly Dancing	30 9:00 Mah-Jongg 9:00 Haircuts with Margarita 9:00 Full Body Fitness 10:15 Qigong 11:45 Chair Yoga 6:30pm Folk Dance Brunswick	31 9:00 Zumba 10:15 Table Tennis

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Learn more:





Pebbles & Nuggets, Rocks & Stones ...

You need to accept that I'm just a bit more than your average Maine rockhound. More times than I can count, I've bumped thumbs and banged knees, picking through slag piles looking for pocket rocks, gemstones, garden treasures and fossils.* Accepting this bit of trivia, you'd know the family trip to the Maine Mineral & Gem Museum (MMGM) in Bethel is like a trip to Mecca.

Think of MMGM as the world-class museum that it is. From moon rocks to meteorites to exhibits on the details of feldspar mining in Maine, this place tells a unique and fascinating story. Five different levels walk you through space rocks, Maine mining, precious gemstones and interactive exhibits. Grandboy Zander liked the exhibit where he got to push the plunger and trigger an explosion in a feldspar quarry!

My walk through the Perham's Store display reminded me of my childhood, visiting the old "Perham's Rock Store" that I visited years ago with my grandparents. The museum has the old glass cases,

everything but the dust. You'll even find a life-sized figurine of old Mr. Perham, who years ago used to wander his little trinket store hawking pretty stones for a buck or two, making us all believe we could go to a neighboring quarry, turn a pick or a shovel, and find a fistful of our own tourmaline treasures.

Superlatives abound in this place: "30,000 different specimens ...world's foremost collection of meteorites largest known pieces of moon stones ... rock samples from Mars ... finest known samples of topaz in the United States." On a good day, the friendly staff will likely let you hold a piece of the moon or a stone from the planet Mars in your hands.

I was surprised and delighted to find several displays dedicated to the work and collections of Bowdoin College's own Parker Cleaveland (1780-1858). Recognized as "Maine's first mineralogist," Cleaveland was the first professor of mathematics and natural philosophy at Bowdoin College and a self-taught mineralogist. His world-famous collection of stone specimens at Bowdoin, commonly referred to as the Cleaveland Cabinet, are referenced and sampled in several displays at the museum. The museum also dedicates whole sections to the mica, tourmaline, and feldspar mines that once dotted the Topsham area.

The quartz, topaz, and tourmaline gem displays are a central feature of the museum. The many interactive exhibits repeatedly single out Maine for its almost



The Peary Necklace, commissioned by Arctic explorer Robert Peary for his wife on her 50th birthday, is a "completely native-Maine jewel" of nine gems set in gold panned from the Swift River in Byron.

unique place in the world as a provider of these colorful, semi-precious gems, and the museum presents two examples. The Newry Necklace, commissioned after the largest single find of American gem-quality tourmaline was unearthed at Newry in 1972, encases 18 gems and has a total weight of 88 carats.

The Peary Necklace, commissioned by Arctic explorer Robert Peary for his wife, Josephine, on her 50th Birthday (1913), is a "completely, native-Maine jewel." It contains nine gems, from one to eight carats, set in gold panned in the Swift River in Byron. You need to see them to believe them; both are unforgettable.

You don't need to be a rockhound to enjoy the MMGM. Exhibits there will captivate your imagination, give you a new appreciation for something else that's unique about Maine, and yes, probably inspire you next spring to take a poke around a quarry hole or a slag pile, down a back road in Maine.

* You can read more about my adventures in "Picking Pretty Rocks," a story in my book *Stones & Stories* published by People Plus.

MAINE & me

by Frank Connors



Directions: If you go: Bethel is just 65 miles from Brunswick and is considered by many to be the heart of Maine's western mountain region. Take Interstate 95 to Yarmouth, connect to Route 115 through North Yarmouth and Gray, where you join Maine Route 26. Scenic Route 26 wanders by Sabbathday Shaker village, Poland Springs, Norway, South Paris, Bryant Pond, and Locke Mills. It's good road and a scenic ride. The Maine Mineral & Gem Museum (mainemineralmuseum.org) is located at 99 Main Street on your left coming into town. You can't miss it. Admission is charged.



The Maine Mineral and Gem Museum is on Main Street as you come into Bethel.



This display shows a spectacular example of a Maine tourmaline variety called elbaite.



FRANK'S FACT

The largest single piece of gold ever discovered in Maine is a nugget pulled from the Swift River in Byron, Maine, in 1992. Weighing nearly 40 grams, you can see it (but can't touch it) in Bethel's Maine Mineral & Gem Museum.

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Welcome, Abby!

continued from page 1

research and though I had heard of Meals on Wheels, I didn't know much about the Spectrum Generations program – which is run out of the People Plus Center," she says, noting that she is very happy to be here and learn about the needs of older people.

In her role Abby is managing volunteers, meeting the organization's consumers,

handling initial assessments, ordering, and deliveries, as well as anything else logistical. "I'm basically the local point of contact for the program in Sagadahoc County, Brunswick, and Harpswell," adding that "This is a super welcoming place to work and I enjoy the people."



MEMBERS OF THE BRUNSWICK HIGH SCHOOL BAND AND CHOIRS deliver poinsettias for Meals on Wheels recipients as part of Spectrum Generations' work with community partners.



BARBARA PECCI, CAROLYN MORSE, AND LINDA TETREAULT stuff 2,200 letters for our Annual Fund appeal, an important part of People Plus funding. It's just one example of how our much-appreciated volunteers help to make what we do possible.

Your donation makes a difference!

continued from page 1

according to Office Administrator Barbara Quinn, "The appeal letters went out in December, and we hope to see the income grow every day as we can't meet the community needs without meeting the goal!"

Donations vary in size, from \$5 to \$5,000. "You might feel like it's not worth making a small donation, however even the smallest amounts (and the largest!) have an enormous impact," says Executive Director Stacy Frizzle-Edgerton. "We are so grateful to each and every one of you who have already donated and to those of you who are just about to!" she adds.

The Annual Fund total as of Dec. 19 is

\$48,339 This fund is specifically slated for our Center programming: supporting homebound elders, as well as the Volunteer Transportation Network (VTN), keeping the classes in the Center at low cost, and offering free lectures, games, language clubs, cultural events, and much more.

As Stacy emphasizes, "Between the support of the area businesses and folks like yourselves, we can provide older adults with vital services, necessary health and wellness programs, socialization events, and nutritious meals – which they will lose without your support!"

SAVE THE DATES!



Saturday, April 11, 5-9 pm



Wednesday, April 29, 11 am-11 pm!

Medical equipment loan helps everyone!

Do you have need of a little support? A wheelchair, crutches, a walker, shower and toileting devices? The People Plus Center maintains a "lending inventory" and it's ready when you are.

"It started almost by accident," explained Frank Connors, the retired Center staffer

who in the past usually hauled the surplus equipment up and down the stairs to a basement storage area. "We had members who'd used this equipment and no longer needed it, they offered it to us, we saw the need and the opportunity, and away it went!"

Now, on a regular basis, community members

needing equipment to keep them safe and secure at home have a new source of access. "Everyone wins," Connors said. "We ask people to bring it in clean and in working condition," he noted. "We take care of the rest." If you have a specific need, or equipment to loan to the program, call or come by the Center.

You do not need to be a member to borrow equipment.



Dr. Cindy Asbjornsen, DO, FAVLS, RPhS, DABVLM



At the Vein Healthcare Center in South Portland, Dr. Cindy Asbjornsen and her team offer minimally invasive treatments for varicose veins, spider veins, leg ulcers, and other vein issues.

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HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT VEINS? ASK DR.CINDY!

WHAT ARE VARICOSE VEINS?

Varicose veins are visible veins in the leg that may bulge on the surface of the skin. They are the result of venous insufficiency, which is when blood pools in the vein because of a faulty valve. Untreated, varicose veins can lead to increased symptoms.

HOW CAN I TELL IF I HAVE A PROBLEM WITH MY VEINS?

If you can see varicose veins on your legs, you likely have some form of venous disease. However, it's important to note that faulty veins are not always visible—sometimes symptoms feel like heavy or achy legs.

CAN VENOUS INSUFFICIENCY BE TREATED?

Yes! There are a variety of approaches to treatment that are minimally invasive and overwhelmingly successful over the long term when performed by an experienced phlebologist (vein doctor).

AM I TOO OLD FOR VEIN TREATMENT?

Seniors have sometimes been told that aching, heavy legs are a normal part of aging, and that they should "deal with it." But at VHC, we believe that helping people feel better is worth the effort at any age.

HOW DO I KNOW IF VEIN TREATMENT IS RIGHT FOR ME?

An evaluation and ultrasound will best show if someone is a good candidate for treatment. At VHC, we listen closely to our patients to understand their health history and their goals for health and quality of life.

Follow us! @veinhealthcarecenter

www.veinhealthcare.com

Get Fit and have FUN for free in January!

“The goal is quite simple: Try new things for fun and health! We want folks to stay positive and active,” says Executive Director Stacy Frizzle-Edgerton. “That can be anything from Mah-Jongg to strength training to art class.”

Staying active is important both physically and mentally. Our bodies were designed to move. The more we move, the more our brain and body connect, which improves safety, balance, and cognitive abilities. A fit and active lifestyle can also boost our mood and energy, while lowering stress. All of that can keep you motivated through the darker, chillier winter months with more of a confident spring in your step.

Need we say more? Come get active and have fun for free at People Plus. To find out what you’d like to enroll in, please check out the complete calendar in this newspaper or go online at peopleplusmaine.org and click on the Calendar button at the top right. Call the Center at 729-0757 for more information or any questions. We hope you join us!



Books a la Carte
3rd Tue, 2 pm. Share what you’ve been reading in this unique book club. No assigned reading!

Bridge
Mon, 1pm. Duplicate Bridge. Tues & Thurs, 9 am. Casual Bridge, all levels welcome.

French Club
2nd & 4th Tue, 2:30 pm. Spend a lively hour with good company as you *parles Francais*.

Cribbage
Wed, 8:45 am. Play cribbage with different partners.

Fiber Arts Club
Mon, 10 am. Bring your current project and enjoy friendly conversation while you work.

Fiber Spinning Club
2nd & 4th Fri, 10 am. Bring your spinning wheel or spindle to chat with friends while you transform fiber into yarn.

Game Day
Tue, 1 pm. Game with friends. Use our games or bring your own. We even have a puzzle table!

German Club
2nd Tue, 2:30 pm. Spend a lively hour

with good company as you *sprechen Deutsch*.

History Book Club
2nd Mon, 7 pm. Meet to discuss and debate historical books pertaining to Revolutionary War though WW II eras.

Mah-Jongg
Mon/Wed/Fri, 9 am. Chinese multi-player tile game. All skill levels welcome. We’ll teach you!

Spanish Club
1st Tue, 2:30 pm. Spend a lively hour with good company as you *hablas Español*.

Table Tennis
Meet to play ping pong multiple times per week – check calendar for days and times.

Wednesday Walkers
Wed, 1 pm (9:30 in warmer months). Meet for a hike each week at a local or offsite location. See destinations on page 4.

World Affairs Conversation Group
1st and 3rd Fri, 11 am. Meet to discuss topics of the week.

Write on Writers
Wed, 1 pm. Meet to read and share your works of poetry and prose, and to improve writing skills.



Art Class
Tue & Thu, 9-11 am. Instructor Ed Higgins will explore different mediums. All skill levels welcome. Topics will include tools and materials, importance of keeping a sketchbook, and planning and composing your drawing.

Chair Yoga
Tue, 9 am & Fri, 11:45 am. Instructor Bea Blakemore. A wonderful blend of breathing and stretching to improve balance, stability and peace-of-mind. Offers poses and helpful techniques to be your most comfortable self. Activities occur seated in a chair.

Full Body Fitness
Mon/Wed/Fri, 9 am. Instructors Bea Blakemore (M) and Suzanne Neveux (W, F). Stretching, cardio, resistance/weight training and fun! Most of the exercises are done while seated in a chair so you can focus on proper form. Movement is intended for toning and keeping fit. Come join the class and wake up your muscles.

Growing Stronger!
Wed, 12 pm. Instructor Bea Blakemore. Don’t just grow older - GROW STRONGER! Using light weights and resistance bands, this class will help you improve your strength and resilience.

Qigong
Fri, 10:15 am and Tues, 11:15 am. Instructor Suzanne Neveux. Related to Tai Chi with simpler movements. Helps improve balance and enhance personal energy. Performed standing (can be modified for chair).

Tai Chi
Wed, 10:15 am. Instructor Suzanne Neveux. Exercises mind and body. Series of slow, gentle motions performed while standing (can be modified for chair). Moving slowly to keep your feet underneath you and enhance the power of movements.

Yoga
Tue, 10 am & Thu, 11 am. Instructors Ann Kimmage (T) and Maya Rook (Th). Stretch, flex, breathe and relax for optimum well-being. Utilizes blocks and straps. Please bring your own mat.

Zumba
Mon, 10 am (Zumba Lite) and Sat, 9 am. Instructor Bea Blakemore. Aerobic and dance moves set to popular music. Low-impact for seniors.

VOLUNTEERS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE - GIVE BACK IN 2026!

Help with Volunteer Transportation Network (VTN), lunch crew, front desk, & more!

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TEEN CENTER COUNCIL OFFICERS PROUDLY DISPLAY THEIR SWEATSHIRTS. The Council is operating with confidence and taking on responsibility, as well as seeking input from other students.



Bring diaper donations to People Plus in January!

Please bring donations to People Plus for a baby diaper drive sponsored by Midcoast Community Action in Bath. Studies show that diapers cost approximately \$1,000 a year per child for a family. And children can often be in diapers until age five. So with that in mind we ask all members to buy a pack or two of diapers through the course of the month and bring them to the Center! We will get them where they need to go to be distributed to families in our area who could use a little help.

Hats off to CEO Claire Berkowitz of MCA for launching the drive!

Membership Benefits

Ashley Richards, Certified Aging in Place Specialist free home walk-through with tips to help you age in place. 712-3042, ashleyr151@gmail.com

Autometrics, Free Maine State Inspection for People Plus members 121 Bath Road, Bruns., 729-0842

Berrie's Hearing & Optical Center, 10% off complete eye-wear, up to \$500 off hearing aids 86 Maine St, Bruns., 725-5111 www.berriesopticians.com

Big Top Deli, 10% off, anytime 70 Maine St, Bruns., 721-8900 www.bigtopdeli.com

Bill Dodge Auto Group, 10% off parts/service 118 Pleasant St, Bruns., 729-6653 www.billdodgeautogroup.com

Carpe Diem Tech Support, John Fischer Help with PC & Mac. \$30/hour (40% off regular rate), 522-1238, john@carpediem-me.net, www.carpediem-me.net

Darling's Ford, 10% off up to \$50, parts/service 262 Bath Road, Bruns., 725-1228 www.darlingsbrunswickford.com

Double Bubble Laundromat, free drop off/pick up for seniors (15 lb. min.), \$1.80 for wash, dry & fold Topsham Fair Mall, 406-2361

Eveningstar Cinema, Members pay \$10 for any showing and save \$1 on a bag of popcorn! 149 Maine St, Bruns., 729-5486, www.eveningstarcinema.com

Fairground Café, 10% off, anytime Topsham Fair Mall, 729-5366

Hand Therapy Treatment and Education Center, LLP, 20% off HandBasics: Self-Care Education class 114 Maine Street Suite 4, Bruns., 607-5800 www.therapyandeducation.com

Hearts & Hands Reiki, 10% off first visit 751-5339, heartsnhands207@gmail.com

Lee's Tire & Service, 10% off parts (not tires) 35 Gurnet Road, Bruns., 729-4131 27 Monument Pl., Topsh. 729-1676

Maine Optometry, 30% off complete glasses, some restrictions apply. 242 Bath Rd, Bruns., 729-8474 www.maineoptometry.com

Maine State Music Theatre, senior discount (60+) on matinee tickets for Main Stage performances 22 Elm Street, Bruns., 725-8769 www.msmt.org

Pauline's Bloomers, 10% off in-store purchase (in person only) 153 Park Row, Bruns., 725-5952 www.paulinesbloomers.com

Reflections (Salon), 10% off, Mon & Fri 12 Center St, Bruns., 729-8028 www.reflectionsbylucie.com

Hair Styles & Attitudes, discount for age 60+ 370-9410

Tire Warehouse, 20% off labor Topsham Fair Mall, 725-7020 www.tirewarehouse.net

Wilbur's of Maine, 10% off, anytime 43 Maine St, Bruns., 729-4462

Wild Oats Bakery & Cafe, 10% off Mondays 166 Admiral Fitch Ave, Bruns., 725-6287 wildoatsbakery.com

Businesses offering discounts for PP members:

PEOPLE PLUS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Date _____ PO Box 766 / 35 Union Street, Brunswick, Maine 04011 • (207) 729-0757 • www.peopleplusmaine.org

Name (1) _____ Phone _____ Birthdate _____ ☐ Female ☐ Male
Email _____ Emergency Contact _____
(name) (phone) (relationship)

Name (2) _____ Phone _____ Birthdate _____ ☐ Female ☐ Male
Email _____ Emergency Contact _____
(name) (phone) (relationship)

Mailing Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Yearly Dues (Scholarships Available)

Cash/Credit/Check (Payable to People Plus)

Membership Dues: \$ _____

Additional Donation*: \$ _____
(*donations are tax deductible)

Total: \$ _____

☐ Single ___New___Renewal: \$50

☐ Couple ___New___Renewal: \$95
(Round up to \$100 for our 50th Anniversary!!)

☐ Lifetime Member (70 or over): \$500

Volunteer Opportunities at People Plus

I'm interested in:

☐ **Lunch Crew:** prep, cook, setup, cleanup

☐ **Reception:** check-in, answer phones

☐ **Teen Center:** meals/snacks, share skills

☐ **Volunteer driving:** give rides to appts/shopping

☐ **Committee work:** finance, development, programming, etc.

Hear from our Families

“ I don’t have the words to express the gratitude I have for the care that Avita of Brunswick has provided for my loved one! The associates and community are nothing less than amazing! ”

- Terri M., resident family member

Could your loved one benefit from dedicated memory care?

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Poems & Prose

Toes

Remembering the 1950s winter storms
With clothes lacking warmth when wind blows.
And the little white cheap sneakers
That covers my toes when it snows.
It was the shoe style that brought pain
So thin was the canvas it was all airflow.
The bottoms were soft bendable plastic
That didn't leak from my melting woes.
White shoe polish was applied often
As white was best one knows
But the pink toes, the pain, the cold,
And those feet in white shoes froze.
—Nonie Moody

Apple Picking-up Time

There were apples galore but they were all on the floor
Of the orchard
We were told that the reason wasn't the cold
But the dryness of the season
So we strolled along each passage of trees
Enjoying aroma of fallen fruit, sunshine and gentle breeze
And retrieving some fruit yet unblemished by nature's cycle
We called it a day
One of great enjoyment and accomplishment.
—Robert Mulligan

We Are the Music

For several decades, I was a professional musician – teaching, performing and writing music. Thinking about the transformational power of music, about how it can literally transport us into realms of joy and sheer bliss, I realized that many of our People Plus groups are like a song where each one of us plays a part. When I attended a rehearsal before a concert and noticed an empty chair, my ears also noticed that something was missing from the whole piece when we played. Each and every note is needed to create a complete performance.
Likewise, each one of us is needed to play our part for our People Plus groups to remain vibrant. People Plus is about sharing our talents, learning new skills, exercising our bodies, community, caring and more. For many, it feels like "coming home" when we step into the building.
As we begin 2026, embracing new possibilities means trusting that we can develop and implement changes that will serve us (and those who come after

us) in ways that both honor our organization and expand our base of operation. Embracing change means moving forward into a future crafted by our board members – those individuals whom we elect to be our up-and-coming thinkers. Our leaders need to be visionary personalities who are filled with carefully honed ideas about what they envision for our future.
There is no end to what we can achieve. We must plan to prosper and we must each do our part. When we embrace change together, there is an excitement – a vitality of newness – that enters. When people are willing to work together, brainstorming free-flowing thoughts and ideas, amazing progress can occur. We become the force that guides our transformation. Each one of our groups is like a musical symphony; we can add more chairs to fill. Decide what particular part you will play.
—Laura Lee Perkins

2026, An Even-Number Year and Resolutions

Do you ever think of odd and even numbers and wonder if one or the other affects your life? I prefer even numbers as many notable life experiences have happened in even years. I was born in 1932, graduated high school in 1950, college in 1954 and earned a master's degree in 1962. Other special years are married in 1956, birth of children 1962 & 1966, plus major trips, occasions, and celebrations. I am looking forward to 2026, maybe with a unique event. Time will tell. Many people make resolutions for New Year's. Have you thought about any? A recent article inspired me about 'vision advice': Look Down, Look Up, Look Back, Look Forward. Our world is experiencing a turbulent chaos, creating a frightening Look Down emotion. We need to Look Up in trust with anticipation and expectation; Look Back with gratitude and thanks for our past accomplishments and the things we have; Look Forward with strength, hope, love and peace. These might be thoughts and guidelines for you through 2026. Pray for world peace. Happy New Year.
—Betty Bavor

First Winter Snow

All the cars are parked in a row, exactly right.
Never happened before. What's up?
Will the snow be wet or dry?
Looking dry, it could be icy.
Not good for snowballs, could be good sledding.
Snow forts and snowmen will require patience.
Cozy quiet, a gift of early winter.
Trees look frosted but not fully decorated.
Time will bring gigantic snowbanks,
And record-breaking blizzards,
And sand and salt, and soggy mittens, and lost gloves,
And starlight, and moonlight, and deep dark cold nights.
May the peace of winter bless us all.
—Alene Staley

Old and New

Old Year moved wearily toward the end. He was proud of some things that had occurred during his time. But ashamed of others. He turned as he heard a lot of noise and commotion behind him. It was New Year, rapidly catching up.
New Year rushed in, full of hope and expectations. He couldn't wait for Old Year to be out of the way. He'd show em'. He'd be one of the best new ones ever.
New Year had a lot to learn.
—Vince McDermott

Sweetie

My cat's missing?! I searched all around my house on Green Street, Monroe Street, Hancock Street, Madison and Perry. Where was my Sweetie?? I looked yesterday morning and afternoon for two hours and again today.
After several more days of looking, I went to the animal pound way down at the end of Perry. No Sweetie, my white cat. Where was my white cat? So I prayed. I prayed and looked for her for two whole weeks.
Every day I got home from work nursing at 5p and asked my family if they had seen her at all. My elderly parents, my husband, Rodney, and my brother, John said, "No." But one day when I got home, my mother said "Your cat is back."
I looked under the front porch, Sweetie's favorite hiding place. And guess who was there, none other but Sweetie. I got her to come out for a bite of food. God had my prayers.
—Lucy Derbyshire

People Plus!

THE CENTER THAT BUILDS COMMUNITY SINCE 1976

WRITE ON WRITERS

Join us!

Wed. at 1 pm

Timeless Wishes for Every New Year

I wish for the promise of peace instead of war, and for those who have less, I wish for much more.
I wish for the promise to end hunger and disease, and for those who are afflicted, I wish their suffering to ease.
I wish for a country not divided but one, where differences can be settled without the use of a gun.
I wish for a world where all people are free to live, worship, and prosper in peace and harmony.
—P.K. Allen

Memory Care at The Highlands

When memories begin to fade, what matters most is a place that feels like home. At The Highlands, our Village Program® provides compassionate memory care built around each individual's unique story, routines, and interests.
Residents enjoy private apartments, thoughtfully designed surroundings, and engaging programs like iN2L™ technology with thousands of activities. Here, memory care isn't just about support — it's about celebrating each person, creating joyful moments today, and peace of mind for tomorrow.

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Thanks from over 50 teens!



THE TEEN CENTER HOLIDAY PARTY WAS A BLAST! The shrink-wrap game returns! We bundled over 40 prizes in the wrap, ranging from a banana to Bluetooth headphones. Apparently, last year we learned to shrink-wrap well because by the end the kids had to pair up and ditch the gloves in order to rip apart the bundle and get the prizes.

Next year we might designate one of our teens to be the village planner. Our island fortress quickly became a hodgepodge of half-baked ideas, collapsing houses, and shouts of “Don’t eat that part, it’s mine!” We expected nothing less.

A few girls pick out their construction material for our gingerbread village.

The chocolate fountain makes a triumphant return as our intrepid volunteer Linda makes sure there’s plenty of chocolate to keep it flowing all afternoon.

Encouraged to share ideas, Teen Center students gain sense of ownership

First, I want to sincerely thank everyone who donated items for the 75 gift bags that we gave the teens. They were thrilled to get them! It’s hard to believe we’re rounding the corner of another year already! It’s the perfect time to reflect on a quote from author Gretchen Rubin: “The days are long, but the years are short.” I don’t think there’s a better phrase to sum up what it’s like to spend time at the Teen Center. Sometimes the afternoons can feel like a continuous cacophony of activity as the teens flow in and out. As soon as one thing is behind you, there’s almost always something else that immediately requires your attention. In all that day-to-day chaos it’s easy to forget a few of the more than 200 activities we’ve planned, dozens of field trips we’ve taken, hundreds of meals we’ve cooked up, and the over 7,000 student visits we’ve nurtured in the last 12 months.

Personally, it’s hard to rank my favorite memories from the year. I can’t help but favor things like Help a Horse Day, retro day, or just about any time we get to go to a park. That being said, I’ll put my focus on a trend that I’ve loved seeing this past year. One of the most important things we try to do here is instill a sense of ownership at the Center for every teen. We welcome them to provide feedback and take the helm on just about everything from the layout of the furniture to the rules of the Center – and over the last year we’ve seen that sense of ownership become second nature to most of our teens. We have a regular cadre of activity leaders, rule enforcers, and head chefs, as well as plenty of Teen Center clubs popping up each month now.

A perfect example of this was when I created a flyer to advertise our recent holiday party. I barely had one flyer printed off before our kids were providing recommendations and launching a discussion about the benefits of using a neon green color over evergreen. That discussion soon moved to the activities

for the afternoon and the menu – and soon enough we had dozens of kids all letting me know just how to fix my poster and what to do for a perfect party. It might require almost endless levels of flexibility on the part of the staff, but it’s exactly the kind of atmosphere we want to encourage here.

Nothing encapsulates this approach better than our first Teen Center Council though. When they first ran for election, they were all very eager to get their names and faces on posters and to bribe their way into office, but after the election ended, they were a little lost. It took a little convincing to get them to believe they could actually change our rules and have a real impact on how things run. Fast forward to the present and they’ve had a hand in just about everything from how we share our video games, improvements to the space, planning our activities, and how to help advertise our program to more youth.

In their most recent meeting, they’ve made it their priority to bring in more teen center members to join discussions, help shape the

Brunswick Teen Center News



Taylor Carter



council’s responsibilities, and they’ve even assigned teens to different roles supporting the council. To my surprise, they’ve even started discussing how to set term limits for council members to encourage new faces and new ideas. Have no fear though! They made sure to set it up so they have the opportunity for a triumphant return to power before they finish high school.

As we round the corner to 2026, I can hardly wait to see what the year has in store for us! We’ve already seen over a hundred new faces since September and that means there will be plenty of potential for new and creative ideas in the coming year. Beyond that, a lot of students we’ve been seeing

almost every day since our move to the new location will be heading off to high school in 2026, and even though they keep telling us how busy they’ll be, they’re adamant that they’ll still be coming to the Center as often as they can. We’ll do everything we can to keep them at their word!




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"Brunswick Area Student Aid Fund, along with a lot of hard work, allowed me to go to the University of Maine which then led to a legal career, ten years as Maine Attorney General and a position now as a teacher at both Columbia and Harvard Law Schools. BASAF changed my life and it will change the life of others."

– James Tierney, BHS Class of 1965

Visit www.studentaidfund.org
Donations may be sent to:





BRUNSWICK AREA STUDENT AID FUND
P.O. Box 867, Brunswick, ME 04011

Donate to the Teen Center!

- \$30 – year of membership
- \$50 – 25 meals
- \$100 – gardening supplies
- \$500 – driver’s ed
- \$1,000 – educational trips

3rd Tues. 2 pm



We talk about books of all types with no assigned list. FMI and our complete list of recommendations visit peopleplusmaine.org/books-la-carte.

MYSTERIES

The Mapping of Love and Death by *Jacqueline Winspear*. A Maisie Dobbs mystery set in 1932. Maisie helps clients who discover their son, listed as MIA in WWI, was a murder victim.

Copper River by *William Kent Krueger*. Wounded River Sheriff Cork O’Conner hides from hit men, but ends up tracking a ring of killers who prey on children. **FICTION**

Time of the Child by *Niall Williams*. A newborn foundingling transforms a small Irish village during Advent in 1962.

The Secret of Secrets by *Dan Brown*. Gripping, entertaining, thought-provoking adventure that includes fascinating historical lore and futuristic mind research.

Irish Linen by *Andrew Greeley*. Set in Chicago. A man goes missing in Iraq and the U.S. government denies any knowledge of his whereabouts. A woman tries to find him. Many secrets are discovered.

SCIENCE FICTION

Do Androids Dream of Electric Sleep? by *Philip K. Dick*. This classic 1968 book inspired the movie “Blade Runner.” It is set in the distant future of 2021, where life has been changed greatly by the recent World War Terminus.

NONFICTION

Hollywood: The Oral History by *Jeanine Basinger and Sam Wasson*. Fifty years of American Film Institute seminars presented by people both in front of and behind the camera.

Mailman by *Stephen Starring Grant*. A layoff during COVID leads an office worker to a job as a rural mail carrier. The author finds himself in a new way.

Benjamin Banneker and Us: Eleven Generations of an American Family by *Rachel Jamison Webster*. Written by a white descendant of the free-born black Benjamin Banneker, renowned as a scientist, writer, and thinker.

History Matters by *David McCullough*. Collected essays and speeches by the famous author McCullough. It includes subjects such as Washington, Truman, Harriet Beecher Stowe, writing, and books.



DR. CHRIS BOWE, PRESIDENT, MaineHealth Mid Coast Hospital in Brunswick, joined the Teen Center kids to learn how to make maki rolls. The hospital's Community Health Improvement Fund donated funds targeting nutrition to the teen programs.

Do you get our weekly email?

Jill sends a weekly email with all the events happening the following week at People Plus. It's the quickest way to get updated news about the Center! The email also includes a weekly wrap-up article written by Stacy, a Teen Center update from Taylor and of course, Frank's weekly Two-Cents article. If you aren't getting it, just email programming@peopleplusmaine.org or call 729-0757 to be added to the list!

Gone but not forgotten

Joyce Lyons	Russell Banton	Natalie Arbuckle
Dec. 29, 1931 – Nov. 22, 2025	Mar. 31, 1948 – Nov. 28, 2025	Dec. 29, 1937 – Dec. 4, 2025

Winter art show viewers will enjoy summertime scenes at Café Gallery

Frances Duckett has been drawing and exhibiting her art since the age of 4. Since she was not yet old enough for kindergarten, her mother took her along while doing the wartime grocery shopping. Food rationing at the time meant there were long lines, so the meat store passed out butcher paper and stubby pencils to the kids to keep them busy during the wait. Frances and the other children got down on the sawdusted floor and started to draw. After that she never stopped. In a sense, her very first art exhibit hung from meat hooks the butcher used to display the kids' art.

After that she started to use crayons and watercolors at home to make pieces of art. "When I brought them in, the butcher would give me a slice of bologna," Frances recalls of his encouragement. One day when she brought in an oil painting that he especially liked, he gave her two steaks to take home.

Eventually, Frances studied art in college. At Brown University, she took Rhode Island School of Design courses and went to the University of Paris for her junior year to study art history. She sold several pieces on the streets of Paris. She then went on to earn a master's degree in creative art education at Rutgers University, which led to teaching art for many years.

After college, she also got married and raised three children. Later, after she and her husband separated, she did many types of jobs to pay the bills. After the kids were grown, she even did a Peace Corps stint teaching ceramics in Jamaica.

She has also painted sets and done scenic design for plays, as well as greeting cards and a series of whimsical frog drawings doing human-like activities, like raking leaves or doing tai chi. Her family made those drawings into a book called *Life of Frog* and gave it to her on her 80th birthday.

Frances remembers that her elementary school art teacher encouraged her to draw from life, introducing her to painting outside. That continues to be her favorite way to paint, and, as she says, "There's a lot to paint here in Maine." In the winter she does photorealism based on photos she took during the other seasons. Many of her acrylic works are scenes of nature, though the Café Gallery show will feature still life scenes and self-portraits as well.



"The Windy Beach," painted at Sandy Hook State Park in New Jersey. Note: 10% of all artwork sales goes to People Plus.

Frances moved to Brunswick in 2025 with her daughter and her daughter's partner after spending many years in central New Jersey, where she sometimes exhibited her work. She now takes tai chi at People Plus and is considering joining a language club or Write On Writers. Despite these other interests, Frances, now 88, states, "I'm fond of art. I'm not giving it up."

If only that wartime butcher could know what he started.

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www.spectrumgenerations.org


Central Maine Area Agency on Aging
Southern Midcoast Aging and Disability Resource Center

Monthly Update

January 2026

All Spectrum Generations locations will be closed on Thursday, January 1, in observance of New Year’s Day, and Monday, January 19, in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Happy NEW YEAR




FROM SPECTRUM GENERATIONS!

As an Area Agency on Aging, we strive to be a community partner that provides information, resources, programs, and activities to help you live a longer, more active and independent life.

Whether you've taken a nutrition counseling class, gained valuable Medicare guidance at one of our 101 workshops, felt more confident about avoiding falls after attending a health & wellness course, or received a home delivered meal from our Meals on Wheels program, *we've got you covered!*

As you reflect on what you would like to accomplish this new year, remember to call us at **(800) 639-1553**, or visit us online at spectrumgenerations.org, to discover the full array of programs and services we offer, and help you reach your personal goals.



Handling Holiday Challenges as a Caregiver

Caring for someone with Alzheimer’s or another form of dementia often requires difficult decisions, especially during the holidays when expectations to travel or gather with family and friends can feel overwhelming. It’s important to remember that prioritizing the well-being of the person you care for is not only responsible; it’s compassionate. Travel can be disorienting, exhausting, and even frightening for someone experiencing memory loss or confusion. **Choosing to limit or eliminate holiday travel is not a sign of giving up traditions; it is an act of love** that protects the comfort and stability your loved one needs.

You know your loved one’s rhythms, stress points, and safety needs better than anyone else. Maintaining a predictable environment can make an



enormous difference in their emotional state and overall functioning. By staying home or simplifying celebrations, you are creating conditions that reduce anxiety, limit overstimulation, and help prevent behavioral distress. Your decision supports both their dignity and their sense of security; gifts far more valuable than any holiday trip.

It’s also okay to acknowledge your own needs in this process. Caregiving is demanding, and removing the pressure of travel can ease physical and emotional

strain on you as well. **Setting boundaries around holiday plans is not selfish; it’s wise, sustainable, and deeply caring.** By honoring what is best for you and the person you support, you are modeling strength, compassion, and resilience; qualities that truly embody the spirit of the season.

If you have any questions on how to support those you’re caring for over the holiday season, please call our Family Caregiver Specialist at **(800) 639-1553** to brainstorm a plan that will work for you.



28TH ANNUAL
Gene & Lucille Letourneau
ICE FISHING Derby

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15
Muskie Community Center | 38 Gold Street | Waterville
(8 a.m. – 5 p.m. | weigh-in between 2 – 5 p.m.)



Win a YETI Tundra 65 Cooler Package
Door prize tickets will be sold until 5 p.m.

\$600 VALUE!

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Catch your fish in any legal waters in the state, then bring it to the Muskie Center for judging!

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For sponsorship information, contact Sandra MacDonald at (207) 873-4745

Benefitting Spectrum Generations’ Programs & Services including Meals on Wheels.



Weather Closings & Delays

In the event of inclement weather, please call **1-800-639-1553** before heading to Spectrum Generations.

You can also watch or listen to:

TV channels 2, 5, 6, 8, or 13

FM radio stations 92.3, 93.5, 96.7, 97.1, 97.5, 98.5, 101.3, 102.5, 103.3, 104.3, 105.1, 107.9

AM radio station 1160





Lunch Out!

January 13th, 11:30 am.



49 Topsham Fair Mall Rd, Topsham

“CLYNK” is solid fundraiser, one nickel at a time

The “CLYNK” returnable program, sponsored by Hannaford Supermarkets and endorsed by the Center, is one of those “under the radar things we do,” that benefits both the Center and our community.

Green “CLYNK” bags, pre-barcoded with the Center’s unit numbers, are always available at our information desk. You need only to fill the bag with your returnables, scan and drop it at the store when you next shop, and the Center receives credit for the accumulated deposits. Thank you for recycling, and thank you for supporting your Center.

Winnie-the-Pooh: Winter’s honey for me and you

It’s cold, gray, and January. I could use some inspiration, with an eye toward doing something besides binging murder mysteries online. Out of the blue, a friend sends me an article about a 1970s children’s book with two hippos, *George and Martha*. There’s no note with the email, just a link to an article about how the George and Martha stories speak to the joys and trials of adult friendship. Reading that article got me to thinking about how much I have always loved Winnie the Pooh and his dear collection of friends in the Hundred Acre Wood.

The Pooh stories charm in part because of how human the characters appear. Piglet is anxious, Eeyore is gloomy, Tigger is joyful, Owl and Rabbit overthink everything. Pooh, a “Bear of Little Brain” is simple-minded but heartfelt. And, just like me, he thinks a lot about lunch (“I’m so rumbling in my tummy”). This is not a bunch of high-minded know-it-alls! These are friends with foibles and flaws.


In one scene, Piglet and Pooh hunt for a ‘woozle,’ whatever that is. Imagining a hostile animal, Piglet gets quite frightened and suddenly makes up an excuse about why he must go home right away. Haven’t we all spun a little white lie? In another scene, Piglet wants to go wish Eeyore a happy birthday but runs too fast and bursts the birthday balloon he’s carrying, all because he wants to get there ahead of everyone else. Haven’t we all wanted to be first at something and goofed up because we rushed? After that, Pooh decides to give Eeyore honey for his birthday, but eats all the honey in the pot first and is forced to give Eeyore just the empty pot. I know I could do that with a box of chocolates.

At any rate, in the hopes of boosting your spirit during this coldest month of the year, here are some of my favorite Pooh sayings:

- Did you ever stop to think, and forget to start again?
 - Nobody can be uncheered with a balloon.
 - It’s much more Friendly with two.
 - Some people talk to animals. Not many listen though. That’s the problem.
 - It’s the best way to write poetry, letting things come.
-
- It is more fun to talk with someone who doesn’t use long, difficult words but rather short, easy words like, ‘What about lunch?’
 - Sometimes I sit and think and sometimes I just sit.
 - Doing nothing often leads to the very best of something.
 - When all else fails, take a nap.
 - A day without a friend is like a pot without a single drop of honey left inside.
-
- My favorite thing is me coming to visit you, and then you ask, “How about a small smackerel of honey?”
 - People say nothing is impossible, but I do nothing every day.
 - What’s wrong with knowing what you know now and not knowing what you don’t know until later?
 - Life is a journey to be experienced, not a problem to be solved.
 - A hug is always the right size.
- Pooh might admit to doing nothing every day, but that allows him to be in the present moment. Talk about mindfulness! For many of us, in our darkest moments we are striving to improve or escape. Often, we are judging ourselves or preaching to ourselves to do more, do better. Pooh just is. In a stirred-up world, his self-acceptance is uplifting and

Thinking out loud

Charmaine Daniels




news@peopleplusmaine.org

his attitude relaxing. By the end of any given Pooh story, I feel as if I’m wearing a smile.

A key thing I like about these stories is that Pooh is not painted as a hero. He’s simple, a little slow, and authentically anchored in being exactly who he is. He is not striving toward bear greatness. Overall, the residents of the Hundred Acre Wood are simply humble beings who need each other and help each other get out of predicaments.

Interestingly, the author of a popular murder mystery says that young people who read *The Thursday Murder Club* like the fact that the septuagenarian sleuths are the heroes. But the author notes that older people say the opposite: They are glad the four retirement village residents who solve the murders are not depicted as heroes, but rather as real people with human shortcomings.

In the end, after countless stories published over the last 100 years, Pooh is just Pooh. Label him what you will. An anti-hero? A Zen sage? As Maya Angelou once noted, it’s not what you say or do that people remember, it’s how you make them feel. Pooh makes me feel comforted, like a warm blanket. And he makes me hopeful that things can turn out okay even if you get your head stuck in a honey pot. Oh, bother!




50 Years!
People Plus!
Building Community Since 1976
VOLUNTEER TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

WILL YOU JOIN OUR TEAM? Last year, People Plus coordinated over 31,000 miles of FREE rides for homebound residents of Brunswick, Topsham, Harpswell, and beyond. We can’t do it alone – we need your help with the driving and shopping! Become a driver today! It is a rewarding and selfless gift to help your neighbors in need.

Sign Up Now!

The Good Morning program is a FREE daily safety check-in call *providing peace of mind.*

In partnership with Brunswick PD.



GOOD MORNING PROGRAM



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That’s all it takes! Just say YES! Yes to trying something new. Yes to helping us maintain our garden. Yes to watching it grow. Yes to bringing the garden to the table with organic wholesome cooking! All it takes is springing into action and saying yes. YOU will be filled with remembering simple joys and the moments that really matter. **Spring Into the Action** and take a tour of our one bedroom unit and stay for dinner. Say “YES!” to **Living Better** at the McLellan.

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- December 18th 2024 2-3:30 pm.
- January 15th 2025 2-3:30 pm.

Single Session Cost \$40



Includes hand/arm screening and benefit of heat and cold treatment.


Merry and bright on the garden trip!



ANOTHER GRAND TRIP TO GARDENS AGLOW lit up the spirits of People Plus members taking the bus to Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens last month, followed by a pizza party afterward at the Center. Thanks to Rusty Lantern Market for donating dinner and Maine Community Bank for sponsoring the bus! With Frank Connors and Sarah Deck at the helm of our group, the spectacular lighting display delighted all who came.

UUCB Concerts for a Cause presents Pejepsco Station


The Concerts for a Cause series presents a local bluegrass band, Pejepsco Station, on Saturday, Jan.17, at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Brunswick. The concert will raise money for Oasis Free Clinics and the Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project. Based in Topsham, Pejepsco Station’s repertoire is a mix of traditional and contemporary bluegrass, Americana, and some “bluegrassified” folk and country songs. Wide vocal harmonies and a relaxed stage presence make for an enjoyable and fun show appropriate for all. Tickets: \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door, \$10 for students/children. Available at the church office (729-8515), Gulf of Maine Books, or online at <https://ticketstripe.bluegrass>.





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