

The Cape Courier

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In the Spirit of Community

Wark twins work to support new music program at Boys & Girls Club

By Kevin St. Jarre



Contributed photo

Twins Bella and Jack Wark are seniors at CEHS, and are putting on a fundraiser for a youth music program at the Boys & Girls Club. The show, 'Bella June & Friends,' will take place on May 20 at One Longfellow Square in Portland.

Bella and Jack Wark are twins, members of the Cape Elizabeth High School Class of 2026, and they are putting on a benefit concert to support the new youth music program at the Boys and Girls Club of Southern Maine

The event will also celebrate the upcoming release of the album that Bella Wark has written and recorded over the past year through her Extended Learning Opportunity class at CEHS.

The show, "Bella June & Friends," will take place on May 20 at One Longfellow Square in Portland, and will last about an hour. "I plan to play a mix of my original songs and covers with the help of some talented fellow CEHS students," Bella Wark said.

She said, "This project is a culmination of the most wonderful parts of our Cape Elizabeth education, our world class musical education environment, our incredible Extended Learning Opportunities program, our community of creative and talented classmates, our supportive teaching staff, and our culture of service

-see FUNDRAISER page 7

News from April 27 Town Council meeting

By Hanna Gilley

Citizen Comments on Non-Agenda Items

Patti Smith, Cumberland County Commissioner and previous Town Councilor and Mayor for South Portland, stood before the council to "publicly thank someone from Cape Elizabeth." Smith recognized Councilor Thompson for taking an extra [committee] assignment which she said should be "celebrated and acknowledged." Thompson was present over Zoom and responded that Smith is "one of the best commissioners."

Town Council Reports and Correspondence

Councilor Sahrbeck shared that the next meeting for the 1934 Building Committee would be held on April 28 when the members would be receiving infor-

mation from Town Manager Patrick Fox regarding "municipal" needs which will dictate where the committee "might be taking the next agenda after that." Sahrbeck mentioned that there is a Councilor Corner update on the town's website and that he hopes "people in the public will read it to stay engaged with what the committee is doing."

Councilor Jordan shared that the Greater Portland Council of Governments and the property tax committee will give a presentation discussing the local option tax at the next regular Town Council meeting on May 4, 2026. Jordan said the presentation is meant to bring "everyone up to speed" and that will have a "positive impact on property taxes in town."

-see TOWN COUNCIL page 6

Committee meets to discuss future of 1934 building portion of CEMS

By Kevin St. Jarre



Photo by Kevin St. Jarre

The Cape Elizabeth Town Council has created the 1934 Building Committee with Councilor Jonathan Sahrbeck as Chair and Councilor Penny Jordan as Vice Chair. The committee is tasked with examining and discussing options for what will happen to the 1934 building when the rest of Cape Elizabeth Middle School is removed.

The Cape Elizabeth Town Council created the "1934 Building Committee" with Councilor Jonathan Sahrbeck as Chair and Councilor Penny Jordan as Vice Chair.

Their task is to explore and discuss what will happen to the 1934 building portion of

-see COMMITTEE page 3

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 Debbie Butterworth, Jerry Harkavy, James Wagner, Ed Pfueller and Peter Carignan

Publisher: Tara Simopoulos
info@capecourier.com

Editor: Marta Girouard
editor@capecourier.com

Community Reporter: Kevin St. Jarre
community@capecourier.com

Advertising Manager: Tara Simopoulos
 (Display and classified ads)
advertising@capecourier.com/207-939-9766

Bookkeeper:
billing@capecourier.com

Photo finishing: Ann Kaplan

Distribution: William Alexander
 For general information:
info@capecourier.com/207-939-9766
 For Advertising:
advertising@capecourier.com

Writers: Debbie Butterworth, Wendy Derzawiec, Erika Carlson Rhile, Kevin St. Jarre, Marta Girouard, E. Brooks Bornhoff, Hanna Gilley, Stephen T. Lyons (Garda)

Photographers: Martha Agan, Joanne Lee

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 Letters should not exceed 250 words. We reserve the right to refuse letters and to edit for length, accuracy, clarity and civility. We do not withhold names and writers may be limited to one letter per month. Petition-style letters will be declined. Letters reflect the opinion of the author, not The Cape Courier. Email letters to: editor@capecourier.com or mail to P.O. Box 6242, Cape Elizabeth, ME 04107. Please note: Letters will be acknowledged by email.

NEXT ISSUE: May 20
DEADLINE: Noon, May 8

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Let us hear from you!



We love feedback!

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Thank you to Cape Elizabeth's Municipal Clerks

May 3-9 was Professional Municipal Clerks Week so I want to take this opportunity to thank our wonderful Town Clerk Angela Frawley and Deputy Town Clerk Melissa Newsome for their hard work administering our elections, assisting voters with registration, recording and maintaining our council meeting records, issuing marriage licenses and dealing with Riverside Memorial Cemetery lots. Their dedication and work ethic help

our town in a myriad of ways and promote confidence in our elections throughout the year.

Next time you're in Town Hall, make sure to stop by and thank them for their tireless commitment to their civic duty and as well as all the other great staff who serve us all.

Rebecca Millett

Maine State funding formula for education changing

By Kevin St. Jarre

Governor Janet Mills signed LD 2226, "An Act to Amend the Essential Programs and Services School Funding Formula," into law on April 16.

While most districts will receive higher state subsidies, local districts are among the few statewide who will receive less. It was Rep. Kelly Murphy, D-Scarborough, who introduced LD 2226 before the Legislature's Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, and that district may lose more than \$1 million in state funding for their schools, and Falmouth may lose just as much.

As for Cape Elizabeth, School Department Superintendent Chris Record said of the changes in the state's school funding formula, "Future school budgets will be impacted by the recently passed bill LD 2226 by the Maine legislature. This bill makes significant changes to the way public schools are funded through the Essential Programs and Services (EPS) formula. It is important for our community to be aware of the potential funding impact of this legislation. We strongly support

the central aim of LD 2226 to improve equity in school funding across the state. Ensuring that every student in Maine has access to high-quality educational opportunities is essential to our state's future success. However, we are keeping a close eye on the funding impact of this bill on us here in Cape Elizabeth. This bill incorporates income levels (as measured by eligibility for free and reduced price lunch) into a community's ability to pay and could reduce the state allocation to us further going forward. We are pleased this legislation is holding all districts harmless for three years, ensuring no district will lose funding because of the changes in LD 2226 for three years. The measure then gradually phases in any negative impacts over three more years."

Record does point out that CESD has faced its own challenges, saying, "Unfortunately, we have lost nearly \$1,000,000 in state funding over the past two years. Therefore, we will be watching the impact of this legislation closely. It is possible, if not likely, that Cape Elizabeth will lose even more state funding as a result."

Dean's list announcements

The following students were named to the dean's list for the fall 2025 semester at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts:

Ella Bromage
Owen Bromage

Caden Lee
Joseph McDonald
William Picarillo
Andrew Trachimowicz
Camden Woods

2026 Publication schedule		
Issue No	Ad/Copy Due/Issue	Published
01	Jan 2	Jan 14
02	Jan 23	Feb 4
03	Feb 6	Feb 18
04	Feb 27	March 11
05	March 13	March 25
06	March 27	April 8
07	April 10	April 22
08	April 24	May 6
09	May 8	May 20
10	May 22	June 3
11	June 5	June 17
12	June 19	July 1
13	July 3	July 15
14	July 24	August 5
15	Aug 7	August 19
16	Aug 21	Sept 2
17	Sept 4	Sept 16
18	Sept 18	Sept 30
19	Oct 9	Oct 21
20	Oct 30	Nov 11
21	Nov 13	Nov 25
22	Dec 4	Dec 16

Committee

Continued from page 1

the current Cape Elizabeth Middle School when all but the oldest part is torn down.

The other members of the committee are Andy Patten, the Cape Elizabeth School Board representative, and six members of the Cape Elizabeth Community. They are: Laura Briggs, Cam Brown, Kevin Guimond, Brian Harris, Amit Oza and Jim Rowe.

The first meeting was on March 30, followed by a site visit and tour of the 1934 building. Although the work of this committee is extremely important, the final decision of what takes place will be made by the town council after receiving public input.

According to Chair Sahrbeck, "During the first meeting of the committee, the three 'buckets' that the group decided will be the main work of the committee at the start are, first, changing the building for municipal use, second, sale or lease of the building, or third, removal of the building."

According to the Sahrbeck, there was unanimous consent that the third bucket involving possible removal would occur only after the other buckets are well-vetted, since all committee members acknowledge the building's historic and architectural uniqueness to the community.

"The group's early work is an assessment of the building's current condition, which will help guide the next steps. Structural integrity or prohibitive repair costs are two of the first assessments that need to be discussed. The use of previous studies/assessments and repairs to the existing conditions, or deferred maintenance documentation, available for the building is being gathered and examined. Issues such as physical and structural layout, building systems, and mechanical needs are important discussion points," Sahrbeck said.

On April 7, the committee took a site walk of the 1934 building along with Town Manager Pat Fox, Facility Director Dave Bagdasarian, Public Communications Coordinator Susana Hubbs and Community Services Director Kathy Raftice. Sahrbeck said, "This was a great opportunity to see the current conditions as well as learn about the structural makeup and opportunities that will come with a transition of the building. Based on the building's impressions, the committee agrees that the repurposing of the building should be continued for discussion. As many observed, 'The building has good bones.'"

The next steps will take place at the committee's April 28 meeting, when they will be hearing from town staff about municipal needs within the town. "An understanding of whether a municipal need or opportunity exists, what costs will be included and how that will affect other town facilities. As the building transitions from a functioning learning environment as a school, any change of use will have corresponding zoning and code enforce-

ment considerations that need to be explored," Sahrbeck explained.

The work of the committee is extremely fluid, he said. "All meetings have an agenda, but the discussion at each meeting will have a direct impact on the next meeting's agenda. This means that the specific direction and work of the committee is unpredictable at this point, even though we know the charge and believe we have the direction that we will take. Public engagement is always welcome," Sahrbeck said.

As the work proceeds, the committee will be reaching out for public input once they have more information about the possible directions, use and costs that will come as the 1934 building transitions from its current state. Consideration of the economic impact of the building's reuse, including comparing use as additional municipal space versus the potential long-term tax role benefits of relocation and private redevelopment are also key areas of discussion. According to Sahrbeck, this analysis will be a key criterion for evaluating the alternatives.

As stated, all meetings are open to the public. If you have specific questions about the work or the building, please contact Chair Sahrbeck at jonathan.sahrbeck@capeelizabeth.gov or Vice Chair Jordan at penny.jordan@capeelizabeth.gov.

Bank deposit scam reported

Reported by Debbie Butterworth

PUBLIC INFORMATION

- 4-11 An officer met with a resident of the Ocean House Road area regarding obtaining a protection order.
- 4-11 An officer met with a resident of the Broad Cove area regarding suspicious text messages.
- 4-17 An officer met with a resident of the Scott Dyer Road area who received a call from her bank regarding two withdrawals the victim had not made. The caller then instructed the victim to deposit a large sum of money into a different account. The victim then realized she had been scammed after making the deposit.
- 4-18 An officer responded to a residence in the Ocean House Road area for a well-being check.

SUMMONSES

- 4-16 Portland resident, failure to stop at stop sign, Ocean House Road, \$146

FIRE CALLS

- Fire calls: 3
- EMS calls: 21

Scam alert bulletin board

By Jessica D. Simpson

Helpline Alert: "Free Trial" Offers That Aren't Free

The AARP Fraud Watch Network™ Helpline (877-908-3360) is hearing from more people about misleading "free trial" offers. These schemes make cancellation difficult, if not impossible. In many cases, someone signs up for what appears to be a free trial and then cancels before having to pay for the subscription. However, the charges continue to appear each month, and the companies make it hard to cancel them. Before you sign up for a free trial offer, review all the terms and conditions to understand exactly what you're agreeing to, how and when to cancel, and what happens if you don't.

Research the company online. See what other people are saying about the company's free trials, but make sure to compare reviews from a wide variety of review and retailer websites, search engines, and other sources. Real user reviews can tell you more about the offer you're considering. Search for the company's name with the words "scam" or "complaint." Complaints from other customers might be a sign that there are "catches" with the trial.

If you don't cancel on time, you'll probably be charged, so mark your calendar.

Usually, you have to give your credit card number for a "free trial." That way, the company can charge you if you don't cancel before the trial ends. Dishonest

businesses make it tough to cancel and will keep charging you — even if you don't want the product or subscription anymore.

Watch for pre-checked boxes. If you sign up for a free trial, look for boxes that are already checked for you. That checkmark might give the company permission to keep charging you after the free trial, sign you up for more products that you must pay for, or share your information with others. Make sure to uncheck a box if you don't agree with what it says.

Also, review your bank and credit card statements carefully and watch for recurring charges you didn't authorize—even after you've canceled. If a company charged you extra or won't stop charging your account after you told them to cancel your subscription, file a dispute for chargeback with your credit or debit card.

Online: Log onto your credit or debit card online account and go through the dispute process. If you haven't set up an account with your credit or debit card company, check out the company's website to find out how to file a dispute. By phone: Call the phone number on the back of your card and tell the company why you're filing a dispute.

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

Post grad plans deadline is May 31

If you would like to announce your post graduate plans: The Cape Courier traditionally publishes post-graduate plans, college, travel or work plans for Cape Elizabeth graduating seniors, either from CEHS or another high school. This information must be submitted by stu-

dents or parents.

Please submit plans, including student and parent's names, and the college or activity, and location, to Debbie Butterworth at dbutterw72@gmail.com by May 31, 2026.



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CELT earns its third national accreditation

By Kevin Jordan
Member CELT Board of Directors

The Cape Elizabeth Land Trust (CELT) has recently received accreditation for a third time from the Land Trust Accreditation Commission (LTAC).

The LTAC is an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance (LTA), a Washington, D.C. based organization. CELT earned its first national accreditation in February of 2015 for an initial term of five years, and it was re-accredited in August of 2020.

With the term of that second five-year accreditation period expiring, CELT applied for re-accreditation again and earned its third national accreditation in December of 2025.

The LTA establishes national standards and practices for legal, ethical, and effective land conservation, and the LTAC manages the national accreditation process.

The LTAC creates the formal accreditation application, it evaluates applications submitted to it, and it decides whether a submission shows that a land trust measures up to the standards and practices defined by the LTA. The process is lengthy and rigorous. It is designed to build public confidence in accredited land trusts.

According to the LTA's estimates, nearly 1,300 land trusts exist in the U.S. Of those, 950 are registered as members of the Land Trust Alliance, and 480 across 46 states and territories have earned full accreditation from the LTAC. Maine has around 80 land trusts, 31 of which are nationally accredited, and the Cape Elizabeth Land Trust is one of them.

CELT's Governance Committee has led each of CELT's accreditation application projects. In the case of the most recent project, the committee began preparing early in June of 2024, eighteen months before re-accreditation was finally awarded. In October of 2024, the LTAC provided a "pre-application" consisting of eighteen high-level questions covering general areas such as land holdings, land stewardship, governance, conflict of interest management and finance.

The committee completed the pre-application and submitted it to the LTAC in December of 2024. By early February of 2025, the LTAC notified CELT that it had

completed its review of the pre-application and that work on the main application could begin.

The main application consisted of more than fifty detailed questions. In addition, based upon responses in the pre-application, the LTAC selected three recent real estate transactions for which it was requesting very specific additional information. The main application probed four main areas in depth:

1. Governance

The application requested details about CELT's practices for defining and maintaining its strategic plan, recruiting and training board members, defining and maintaining formal operational policies, retaining and protecting records, guarding against conflicts of interest, etc. The application requested supporting evidence such as copies of board meeting agenda, meeting pre-read materials and meeting minutes.

2. Finance

The application requested details about CELT's finances and financial record-keeping, fundraising practices, insurance policies, annual audits, etc. It requested supporting evidence such as financial spreadsheets and copies of professional audits.

3. Stewardship

The application requested details about CELT's policies and practices for monitoring and managing its land holdings, handling encroachments and property disputes, etc. It requested supporting evidence to prove that CELT monitors each of its land holdings on a regular basis and that it maintains them well.

4. Land Transactions

The application requested general information about all land transactions occurring during the previous five years. In addition, the LTAC requested CELT to provide detailed evidence to show that three specially selected transactions conformed to LTA's high standards.[1.1] This included in-depth information such as the following in each case:

"Evidence that your land trust reviewed the project against its project selection criteria"

"Independent appraisal (or letter of opinion) used to substantiate the purchase price"

"Evidence justifying the purchase price and documenting that there was no private inurement or impermissible private benefit"

[2.1]In addition, CELT's previous

-see CELT page 15

Spring CELT program listings

Please visit <https://www.capelandtrust.org/> events for registration and more information

CELT's Little Explorers (ages 3-5 with an adult)

Children and caregivers will spend an hour exploring the natural wonders of the Maine woods in spring during this Cape Elizabeth Land Trust event. Join CELT educator Lisa Gent on a gentle hike through Robinson Woods where we will explore the habitat around us while we search for birds, reptiles, amphibians, mammals and plant life. Lots of hands-on explorations and games included. Please dress in comfortable clothes and bring a water bottle. All participants must register at least at least 48 hours in advance of the program to receive notification of changes or cancellation.

**** (Date Change!): Wednesday, May 20****

Time: 9:00 -10:00 a.m.

Location: Meet at Robinson Woods parking lot, Shore Road

Cost: \$6/family

Min 3/Max 5

Medicinal Herb Walk

Join Mischa Schuler, herbalist and owner of Wild Carrot Herbs, on a walk through Robinson Woods. As the plants reawaken to spring, we will visit with these extraordinary beings in their young stages of growth - learning to recognize their patterns across the refreshed landscape. Our evening will be rich with herbal folklore and inspired by our curiosity and imagination. All participants must register at least at least 48 hours in advance of the program to receive notification of changes or cancellation.

Date: Thursday, May 7

Time: 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Location: Meet at Robinson Woods Kiosk

Cost: \$6 per person

Max 10/Min 3

Spring Wildflower Walk at Robinson Woods

May 13, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Join Wild Seed Project at Cape Elizabeth Land Trust's Robinson Woods Preserve property to explore the ethereal beauty of the forest understory covered in spring ephemeral wildflowers. Robinson Woods is known locally as the place to see impressive populations of spring wildflowers, and we will be walking the short loop trail to explore and identify these stunning flowers. We will meet at the preserve's entrance, in the small parking lot on Shore Road. Additional neighborhood parking is available on Olde Colony Road, about a 5 to 10 minute walk up Shore Road. If you're coming with a friend, consider carpooling!

Notes on access: The walk will cover about a 1/2 mile at a leisurely pace, over dirt trails. There are some roots and uneven ground to navigate, including some small, rocky steps.

For more information and to register, visit: <https://www.capelandtrust.org/events/>

Nature Walk//Book Talk with Mechanics' Hall and Momentum Conservation

May 18, 5:30 p.m.

A dreamy evening walk through forest and meadow with Maine writer Brandon Keim. We'll reflect on nature, place and writing.

As Mechanics' Hall continues their NEA Big Read series "On Nature," we invite you to join us IN nature for a reflective walk in Robinson Woods Preserve.

As we walk together, nature writer Brandon Keim will share conversation and reflections from both Daniel Mason's "North Woods" and his own nature writing, which ranges from the "Mice Who Make the Forest" (New York Times) to "What if animals find beauty in the world, just like we do?" (psyche). Perhaps we'll ponder wildflowers and the daydreams of honeybees.

You do not need to have read "North Woods" to attend. Water bottles and comfortable shoes are recommended.

Monday, May 18, at 5:30 p.m., approximately 75 minutes, and 3+ miles. Free to the public. Please register in advance. For more information and to register visit: <https://www.capelandtrust.org/events/>.

CELT Presents Within the Whale

Step inside one of the ocean's most important animals! Join Within the Whale for an immersive experience where participants explore the 3D anatomy of a life-size inflatable humpback whale named "Chunk." As seen on ABC news, Within the Whale is an engaging educational program designed and conducted by award-winning wildlife educator Jessica Woodend. Discover how whales support healthy oceans and a thriving planet. Chunk brings the ocean to life with hands-on learning, engaging activities, and inspiration about marine mammals and environmental conservation. You'll learn how the survival of whales is connected to Earth's ecosystems, and what we can all do to protect them. Perfect for curious learners of all ages.

Date: June 6, 1:00 -3:00 p.m.

Location: Cape Elizabeth High School Gym

No registration necessary

Please visit <https://www.capelandtrust.org/> events for registration and more information

Spring Cross Town Walk

Join Cape Elizabeth Land Trust staff and educators for the annual Spring Cross Town Walk. Beginning at Portland Head Light, located at Fort Williams, this walk will traverse 8.2 miles of trails highlighting Cape's great places; including Spurwink Marsh, Robinson Woods, and Great Pond. The walk takes approximately four hours and includes a BYO lunch stop. Hikers will meet at the Portland Head Light and will carpool (arranged prior to walk) back to Fort Williams. Snacks, drinks and lunch should be brought by each participant. Interested in joining but concerned about the length of the walk? Consider signing up for the "Second Half" option, which is listed as a separate event. All participants must register at least at least 48 hours in advance of the program to receive notification of changes or cancellation.

Date: Saturday, June 20

Time: 8:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Location: Meet at Portland Headlight near the lighthouse.

Cost: \$10 per person

-see PROGRAMS page 15

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News from the Superintendent

By Dr. Chris Record

As we return from April vacation, our staff and students are excitedly diving into the final stretch of the school year and are surely looking forward to the last school day on June 18th.

We have had a wonderful school year so far and I appreciate all the school highlights the Courier shares with our community.

Please be sure to visit our school website(<https://www.cape.k12.me.us/>) to see regular updates as well.

The District Leadership Team and the School Board collaborated over several workshops to both meet our budget goals and to also reduce expenditures from the original budget request presented to the Board in February.

Unfortunately, due to a 17% valuation increase of Cape Elizabeth by the Maine Revenue Service, our state aid was reduced by \$162,000 for next year. In the last two years we have lost nearly \$1,000,000 in state aid.

This abrupt loss of state aid is very challenging; however, we have tried to offset some of this loss with the utilization of fund balance.

Despite this, we believe we are still coming forward with a budget that continues to provide our students with an excellent education. It is worth noting, even including new school construction debt costs, we remain among the lowest expenditure increases of any school district in Cumberland County.

We ask for your support of the School Budget in the upcoming June election for the following reasons:

- Maintains our excellent educational standards that our community supports and expects
- There are no educational program cuts
- There are no teacher or staff cuts to any currently filled positions
- Maintains facilities funding for C.I.P./Maintenance/Repairs
- Fiscally responsible w/ a 6.53% expenditure increase, resulting in a projected town/school/county 6.93% tax increase

Future school budgets will be impacted by the recently passed bill LD 2226 by the Maine legislature. This bill makes significant changes to the way public schools are funded through the Essential Programs and Services (EPS) formula. It is important for our community to be aware of the potential funding impact of this legislation.

We strongly support the central aim of LD 2226 to improve equity in school funding across the state. Ensuring that every student in Maine has access to high-quality educational opportunities is essential to our state's future success.

However, we are keeping a close eye on the funding impact of this bill on us here in Cape Elizabeth. This bill incorporates income levels (as measured by eligibility for free and reduced price lunch) into a community's ability to pay and could reduce the state allocation to us further going forward.

We are pleased this legislation is holding all districts harmless for three years, ensuring no district will lose funding because of the changes in LD 2226 for three years. The measure then gradually phases in any negative impacts over three more years.

As for the school building project (<https://www.cape.k12.me.us/o/cesd/page/buildingproject>), we are excited to be going out to bid in mid-May and to begin construction in July.

More information regarding site impacts and traffic implications will be shared soon.

In the meantime, we have continued to utilize CIP/Repair/Maintenance funds on Pond Cove and CEHS. At Pond Cove, the 3rd grade roof replacement will be completed this summer and the 1st and 2nd grade window replacements are nearing completion. Additionally, a recently awarded SRRF grant will provide a new emergency intercom/clock system at Pond Cove.

At CEHS, in the near future the cafeteria/auditorium roof will be replaced and the world language wing will be retiled with new flooring.

In closing, we can all celebrate! For the eleventh consecutive year, the Cape Elizabeth School Department has been honored with the Best Communities for Music Education designation from the NAMM Foundation for its outstanding commitment to music education.

The Best Communities Music Education designation is awarded to districts that demonstrate outstanding achievement in efforts to provide music access and education to all students.

Districts that have been recognized by the NAMM Foundation are often held up as models for other school districts and educators looking to improve their own music education programs.

Thanks again for your support of our schools and we look forward to seeing you at our various student events, games, and activities during the last weeks of the school year.

News from April 21 Planning Board meeting

By Hanna Gilley

Cape Elizabeth Middle School Project Site Plan

The town of Cape Elizabeth requested site plan review of the school project located on the school campus at 12 and 14 Scott Dyer Road. Doug Reynolds, of Gorrill Palmer, represented the applicant to present changes to the site plan since the last planning board review in March.

Those changes include the increased size of the main parking lot in front of the middle school and the reduced size of the parking lot located to the west of the middle school known as the reserved parking lot. This parking lot is included on the site plan and as part of the application for the potential future use of the 1934 building.

Additional changes to the site plan include the reduction of tree clearing by 20% dropping the affected land area to .084 acres; enhanced pedestrian access behind the softball field; and the inclusion of an educational amphitheater area with pavers and landscaping. For safety reasons, the temporary pedestrian

access around the construction zone and to the softball field has been removed and temporary fencing will be installed to prevent pedestrians from crossing through the construction area.

During the public hearing, Kevin Justh, resident of 9 Spruce Lane in Cape Elizabeth, encouraged the approval of the project adding that "this is the plan the community spoke for and voted on" and is a testament to how the process works.

Chair Gilbert clarified with Reynolds that a "steep slope" exists on the west side of the campus due to the lack of flattening and "disturbing trees" and confirmed that the fencing along the entry road and soccer field will be installed and made of black vinyl coating chainlink and not fabric.

The application for the site plan was deemed complete by the planning board in February with a site walk and public hearing in March. The planning board unanimously voted to approve the site plan application with Chair Gilbert adding, "Congratulations, we've got a school."

CEHS Theatre proudly presents 'The Three Sisters'

The Cape Elizabeth High School Theatre Program proudly announces upcoming performances of "The Three Sisters," written by Anton Chekhov in 1901.

Directed by CEHS Theatre Director Christine Marshall, with Technical Director Chris Gebhart, "The Three Sisters" runs from Thursday, May 28 to Sunday, May 31 at the CEHS auditorium.

Performances are Thursday - Saturday at 7:00 p.m., with matinees on Saturday and Sunday at 1:00 p.m. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$5 for students and seniors. Tickets can be purchased through: <https://givebutter.com/Tickets-Three-Sisters-CEHS>.

Set in the Russian countryside in the years just before the Russian Revolution, "The Three Sisters" tells the story of the Prozorov family. The sisters and their brother all chafe at the constraints of life in their small provincial town, once a bustling army garrison where their late father served as a general. They each dream of returning to Moscow, where they imagine life would be better in every way.

With sly humor and lyrical honesty, Chekhov's play shows us the timelessness of our capacity as humans to hope and to dream. The

dreams we are willing to fight for, as well as the ones we must set aside, and the ones that are taken from us. It is a deeply human play, which, like all of Anton Chekhov's work, has had a profound impact on the art of modern playwrighting.


"The Three Sisters" is still as relevant today as it was when Chekhov wrote it," said Director Marshall. "As they rehearse, the students get to have these wonderful 'Aha' moments. The language, location, and time may be unfamiliar, but what the characters are feeling and experiencing are very familiar. The tech students, with Mr. Gebhart's guidance, are creating a lovely environment in which to set this beautiful, important piece of theatre. They are all doing terrific work, and we're excited to share it with the community."

Don't miss your chance to experience Chekhov's "The Three Sisters" at the Cape Elizabeth High School Auditorium.

For more details on the production and to purchase tickets, visit www.cehstheaterboosters.com or contact the Cape Elizabeth High School Theater Boosters at cehstheater@gmail.com. Join us for a night of fantastic theatre!

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Town Council

Continued from page 1

Finance Committee Report

Christy Bradbury, Cape Elizabeth Finance Director, provided a brief, quarterly update on revenues and expenses. At this point in the fiscal year, revenues and expenses should be at 75% of the town's budget. Currently, property taxes are at a 96% collection rate, rescue/ambulance billing is at 76% of its budget, and the transfer station is at 84%. Passport fees, a new service, are already at 85%, while health insurance expenses are at 69% of the annual budget.

Town Manager's Report

Patrick Fox started his town manager report by saying that "spring construction is on the way." Fox shared that 50 volunteers had signed up for a town-wide effort for Earth Day in partnership with the Cape Elizabeth Land Trust and Public Works. Volunteers cleaned up trash from 50 roadways, ten trails and five public properties.

Fox also said that there is a lot of clean up at Fort Williams Park including the start of the new children's playground and the annual "wake the park up" after winter clean up activities. This clean up will continue through Memorial Day weekend when efforts will "wrap up or pause until September" so there's no impact to the summer season. Cape Elizabeth Resident Only Day will be on May 17 and the season opening of the headlight will be on May 23.

School Budget Presentation

Leigh Schroder, Chair of Finance Committee and member of the school board, along with Dr. Christopher Record, Superintendent of Cape Elizabeth schools, and Marci Abbott, School Business Manager, presented to the council the school

budget for the 2026-2027 school year.

Schroder said that she is "positive that this budget is going to meet the fundamental needs of the community and students, and continue to provide excellent education for the students of Cape Elizabeth."

Schroder shared that the budget process starts in October, soon after the school term starts, and continues reviewing and refining through December before presenting to the school board in January. A joint workshop also takes place in January with the Town Council with further review and refinement through April. Several figures are not available at the start of the budget process including health insurance prices and state aid numbers.

The Cape Elizabeth school district lost over \$800,000 in funding last year, for the current school year, which caused uncertainty for the 2026-2027 budget. The decrease in state funding was said to be due to the recent revaluation in Cape Elizabeth. Ultimately, the school district lost another \$162,000 in funding for the '26-'27 school year resulting in almost \$1 million dollar reduction in state funding over the last two years. This led to "very hard decisions" when it came to the budget that could "still meet needs" while also being aware of and balancing the fiscal impact on residents.

Dr. Record said that 84% of the budget is for salaries and benefits for the "people working with students each and every day." Record said that balancing health insurance costs, collective bargaining discussions, and facility maintenance costs are "really tough to budget around" adding that "we think highly of our schools and want to offer the best education we can." Compared to neighboring communities, Cape Elizabeth remains at the "lower end of Cumberland County" for the '26-'27 school year budget.

Record said that Cape Elizabeth schools offer a "unique array of services, programs, courses and extracurriculars" that are all maintained in the upcoming school year's budget. He also added that there have been no cuts to staff which are "the difference makers to our students."

Councilor Anderson asked about a line item listed at \$700,000 that was previously communicated to be \$1,200,000 each year and asked if cuts were made. This particular line item was combined with CIP maintenance and repair to address "very important needs" at the high school and Pond Cove Elementary. Planned improvements include replacing the roof over the third grade area of Pond Cove along with window replacements, and a roof replacement over the high school's cafeteria and gymnasium, the oldest part of the building.

Councilor Jordan asked the presenters to explain the Dean of Students position. Abbot shared that the position is a part time administrative position "that focuses on building programming in the middle and high school and bridges the gap from middle to high school. This position helps both middle and high school administrators, bringing students over successfully."

Councilor Sahrbeck noted that the budget seemed as "pared down as possible" without compromising the students or the schools, adding that he appreciates "it's amazing to me the work you've done on this budget." Chair Scifres added that there was "immense thoughtful and difficult work" that was done on the budget and that she appreciated "the care you put into it, and willingness to talk with us and answer our questions."

Opportunity for Public Comment on the Proposed FY 2027 Municipal Budget

Kevin Jordan, a member of board of directors for Cape Elizabeth Land Trust, shared the long term plans for improving public access to the trails at Robinson Woods. The key features would be widening the trails, minimizing average grade of trails, installing a boardwalk and resting areas, improving ADA parking, and redesigning the parking at Pond Cove to improve pedestrian safety. Jordan said that these features will make the trails more accessible to older residents, people with strollers, or those with limited

mobility.

The cost for the upgrades are \$411,000. Jordan asked the Council to consider contributing \$50,000 to the project which would "demonstrate the town's support" and successful fundraising for the remainder of the funds. He also said that this project would also fulfill Town Council goals for a community-driven project, transportation safety, health and wellness objectives, and accessibility and inclusion goals.

Schedule Public Hearing on the Proposed FY27 Municipal Budget

Councilor Swayze made the motion to schedule a public hearing for the fiscal year 2027 municipal budget. The public hearing will take place on Monday, May 4, during the next Town Council meeting, with a vote on May 6, 2026.

Public Hearing: Porch and Ramps Zoning Ordinance Amendments

Councilor Sahrbeck summarized the porch and ramps zoning ordinance amendments sharing that the amendments were before the planning board, then to town council, and then unanimously approved by the ordinance committee. The changes to the zoning ordinance will allow for handicap ramps to be exempt from setbacks, and an amendment from 20 feet to 10 feet for a front porch setback. These will apply to all residential zoning districts in town.

The council voted to approve the amendments, with Swayze adding that this will be a "tremendous stress relief" for lots of people in non-compliant neighborhoods.

Tostones On-Premises: Beer, Wine, & Spirits Renewal Application

Tostones submitted a beer, wine and spirits renewal application on April 6, 2026. They had obtained a temporary liquor license from the state for the interim. The Cape Elizabeth fire department, police department, and code enforcement expressed no questions or concerns about a renewal. The council voted unanimously in support of approving the renewal application.

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Spring clean-up at Maxwell's Farm community garden



Photo by Jeff Mandell

Members of the Cape Elizabeth Community Gardens group gathered on April 25 at the Maxwell's Farm location for a spring clean-up. Garden plots are open to Cape Elizabeth residents.

This is one of the two gardens that are part of the program. Gardeners use organic methods, and according to the group's web site, "We pitch together to grow food for our families and for community members in need," including Judy's Pantry and the Maine Harvest for Hunger program.

For information about availability of plots or about the gardens in general, please contact smok77@maine.rr.com. Plots are allocated on a first-come basis.



Photo by Jeff Mandell

Fundraiser

Continued from page 1

which we have learned through our work as a long-term volunteers and current co-presidents of the Boys & Girls Club Coalition at CEHS."

The twins say they believe that music is one of the best ways to build community, and "[It] is more important than ever in uncertain times. Our hope is that this will be a night of music, community-building, hope, and inspiration for our teachers, friends, family and CEHS community."

Funds raised will be used to support the music program at the Boys and Girls Club of Maine. "Right now, the program is small and primarily confined to the Portland Club location. Donations from our show will go towards salaries for music teachers, buying new instruments and equipment, and funding the expansion of the music program. A new music facility is already planned as part of the upcoming expansion of the Portland Boys and Girls Club, and this growth will spread to provide new music opportunities to the other clubs around Maine," Bella Wark said.

The Wark siblings first started volunteering at Boys & Girls Club during their freshman year through a CEHS club that facilitates volunteering in the South Portland branch of the Boys & Girls Club after-school program.

Bella Wark said, "We have volunteered almost every Friday since. Over the past four years, we have formed a strong connection to the kids and staff at the club, and have come to care deeply about the program. This year, we took over leadership of the Boys & Girls Club Coalition at CEHS, and as new co-heads, we knew we wanted to have an even greater impact on the Boys & Girls Club, so we decided to expand the club from its core work of facilitating volunteering, and to add fundraising for key projects. And so, when we learned from staff members at Boys & Girls Club that they were working to fund a new youth music program, we knew we had found our project. As life-long musicians ourselves, we know the impact that music can have for kids, especially kids who may not have music opportunities at home or at school and could really benefit from the outlet and connection it can

bring."

Their first fundraising event last summer raised over \$600, so they decided to organize a larger benefit event with in-kind musical instrument donation. "We thought this concert would be the perfect opportunity to combine much of the work we had been doing through our time at CEHS into a musical celebration that could bring together our whole community and really have an impact!" according to Bella Wark.

The Warks have a website where people can buy tickets and/or donate directly. It will have more information about the show and about in-kind donations once they have worked out with the club directors what their needs are. Those interested can go to:

<https://tinyurl.com/ycxrea36>

They have also set up a QR code, which can be found below.

Bella Wark has a website featuring some of her music:

<https://bellajunemusic.com>

It will also have information about the show, and lead people to the ticketing page.

Bella Wark said, "The High School Parents' Association, the ELO program and early donors have graciously supported our show so that we are able to raise as much money as possible for the program. We are so grateful for their support, and excited to pay it forward and by supporting music better music opportunities for the whole community."



Go to the websites mentioned in the story, or scan this QR code for more information about tickets, or to donate to help out.

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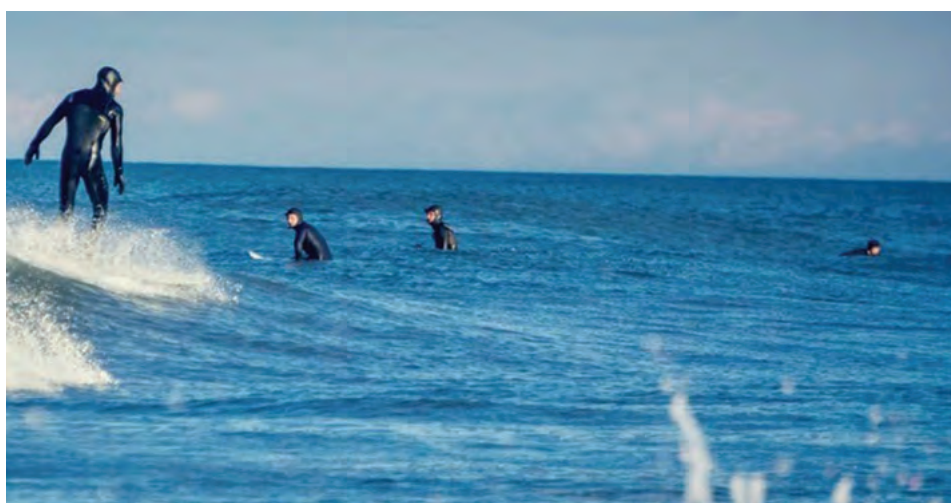


Photo by Kevin St. Jarre

Signs which limit parking have gone up in the Cape Elizabeth neighborhoods off Shore Road near Cliff House Beach.

Dancing with the rocks in Pond Cove

By Stephen Lyons (Garda)



Web photo

Surfers waiting to catch a wave.

Walking the trails of Robinson Woods offers a predictable kind of Maine magic: the scent of salt pine, the crunch of needles underfoot, and the sudden, dramatic reveal of the Atlantic. But for the uninitiated, the view at Pond Cove can be baffling. While most beachgoers seek out the soft sands of Crescent Beach, a dedicated tribe of local surfers wait for the exact opposite: the raw, rocky, and seemingly “terrible” conditions of the cove.

The saltwater doesn’t just mist the air at Pond Cove; it hangs heavy with the scent of crushed kelp and ancient stone. To an outsider, the shoreline looks like a jagged graveyard of granite, a “treacherous rocky bottom” designed to shred fiberglass surfboards and skin alike. But as I sat on the sun-warmed

ledge, I realized I was misreading the map. The Pond Cove shoreline isn’t your average swimming hole. It’s a stretch of rugged stone beach defined by deep tide pools at low tide and a freshwater outlet cutting through the shoreline.

One Pond Cove surfer referred to the cove as a “point break.” A point break is a type of surf break where waves encounter a headland or rocky point jutting out from the coastline, causing them to “wrap around” the land and peel in a single, consistent direction. To a casual observer, the rocky bottom and cramped quarters of surfers look like a recipe for a broken board, or worse. Yet, when a Nor’easter rolls in or a tropical storm churns offshore, this jagged corner of Robinson Woods transforms into a community gathering of surfers.

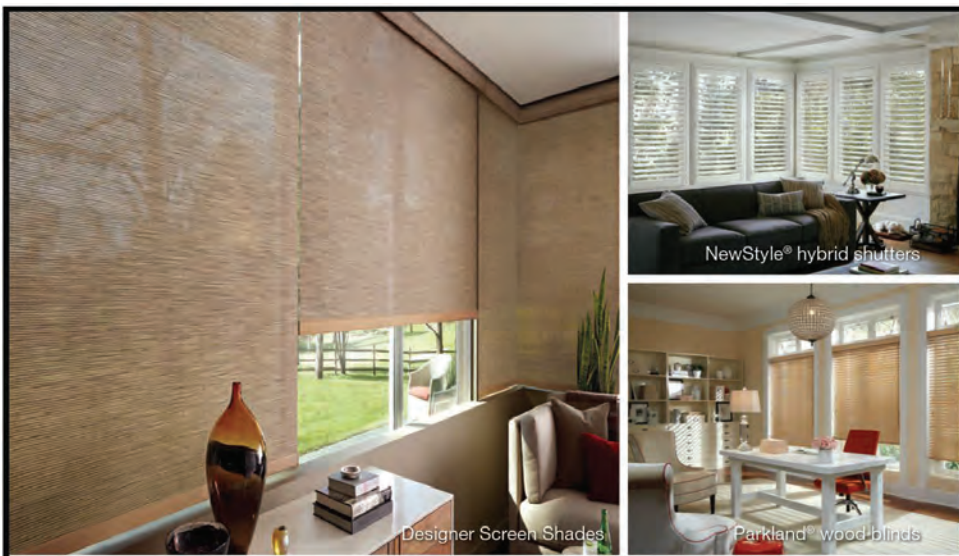
What I saw as a hazard, the local surfers see as a world-class engine. I spoke with a group of surfers as they readied their wet suits. One of the surfers commented, “You have to be willing to dance with the rocks for this ride.” The rocks weren’t the villains of this story; they were the secret architects. By forcing the Atlantic to trip and stumble over their hidden peaks, they groomed the swell into a roaring, high-stakes masterpiece. In this corner of Cape Elizabeth, the places that look like they’ll eat you for breakfast are the ones holding the most magnificent secrets.

But the “dance” requires more than just guts; it requires a script. I watched a pack of surfers move with the synchronized caution of professional cyclists sharing a narrow road. There is an “unwritten code” here—a system of etiquette and respect that keeps everyone in one piece. For the beginners, learning the rules from the veterans isn’t just about politeness; it’s mandatory for survival. You don’t drop in out of turn, and you certainly don’t ignore the hierarchy of the peak.

Through these conversations with Pond Cove surfers, I stumbled upon a code of silence. For decades, a pact held firm to not discuss or broadcast surf locations. Pond Cove was once a private sanctuary, a quiet slice of heaven known only to those who grew up in its shadow. But the secret is out.

The silence has been broken by the digital age, and the sanctuary has transformed into a crowded aquatic playground. There’s a bitersweet edge to the salt air now—a mourning for the solitude of the past, clashing with the vibrant energy of the present.

Still, as I sat enjoying the rocky shoreline, watching the silhouettes drop into a churning grey wall, the tension faded. The rocks continue their work, the veterans pass down the law and the waves break just as they always have over the years. I watched them ride, knowing the surf is up, and it is simply another day not wasted in Cape Elizabeth.



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Cape Elizabeth Soccer Club registration open through May 8

Registration for both the House League and Fall Classic Travel can be completed at capesoccer.org/registration.

The House League is designed for younger and recreational players, featuring one practice and one Saturday game each week, all held locally in Cape. The program is open to boys and girls in kindergarten through second grade, with teams organized by both grade level and gender to ensure balanced competition and development.

Beginning in second grade, families have the option to choose between House League or Travel programs. While it is encouraged that most second-grade players remain in the House League, those with more experience who are seeking additional challenge may join the travel program alongside older players.

Due to numbers, House League for grades 3-6 will be open to boys only this year. Please note that, depending on numbers, 2nd graders could play on a joint team with 3rd graders OR form an all-2nd grade team if there are sufficient players.

Soccer Maine requires that we form a

2nd Grade (U8) team if there are sufficient numbers rather than having a joint 2nd Grade/3rd Grade team. Please reach out to capesoccerclub@gmail.com with any questions.

For grades 3-8, the Fall Classic Travel program includes two practices per week and Sunday games, with occasional additional “friendly” matches scheduled throughout the season. Players will also participate in a tournament over Indigenous People’s Weekend. Grades 3-5 play in an end-of-season festival or round-robin event.

Older age groups will experience a more competitive structure. U12 teams will play in a transitional format without formal divisions during the regular season, culminating in playoffs. At the U13 and U14 levels, teams may be divided into A and B divisions depending on registration numbers, with playoffs concluding the season.

To avoid potential late fees register now at cape.soccer.org/registration. GO CAPE!

CEEF seeking nominations for annual Thompson Award

The Cape Elizabeth Education Foundation (CEEF) is seeking nominations for the 2026 Thompson Award, honoring a Cape Elizabeth School District faculty or staff member who reaches out to students in a lasting and meaningful way. The award is named in memory of Cape Elizabeth High School graduate Timmy Thompson.

As we mark Teacher Appreciation Week, it’s worth pausing to recognize the people who show up every day — not just to teach, but to connect, encourage and leave a genuine mark on students’ lives. The Thompson Award is open to anyone in the district who goes above and beyond, from classroom teachers and guidance counselors to bus drivers and beyond. Past recipients reflect just how many different people shape a child’s ex-

perience at school.

Nominations are welcome from parents, students and peers. The recipient is selected by a panel including Tim and Nancy Thompson, past winners, and CEEF Board members, and will be honored at the district wide breakfast in August ahead of the 2026-2027 school year.

Submit nominations at ceef.us/awards by June 26.

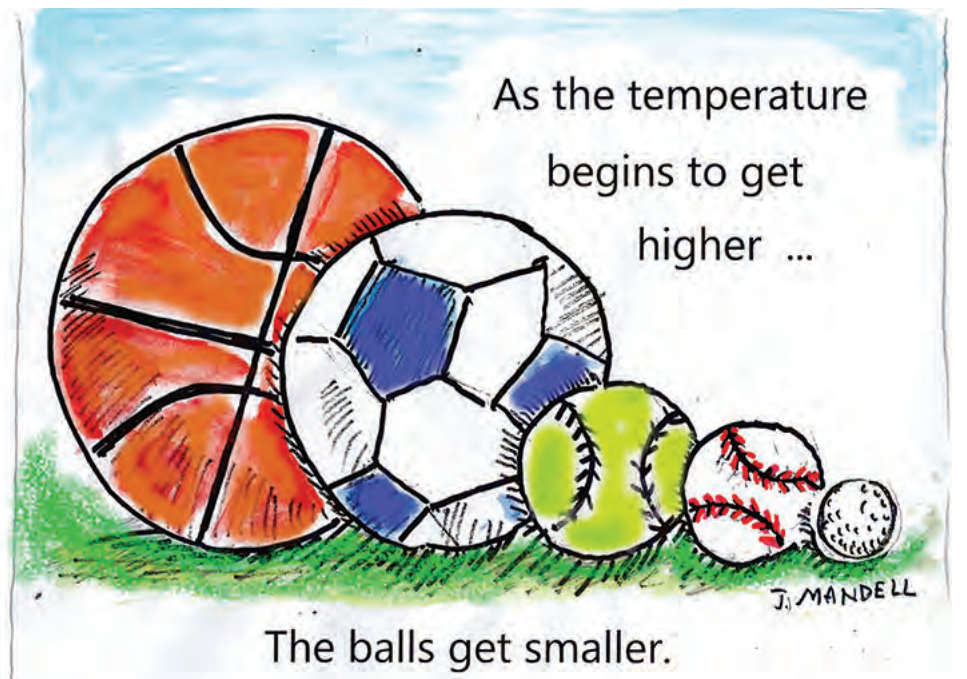
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Capetons: Signs of spring

By Jeff Mandell



Winnick Woods update

By Andrea Southworth

Our first birding walk at Winnick Woods on April 25 drew a group of nine participants. Highlights included four broad-winged hawks wheeling overhead and a hermit thrush along the trail.

Next birding walk: May 16

Join us for our next birding walk on Saturday, May 16, from 8:00 – 9:30 a.m. We’ll meet at the main trail entrance off Sawyer Road. The walk will be led by Dave Osterman and I’ll be joining as well. All experience levels are welcome. This should be prime birding for Baltimore orioles and rose-breasted grosbeaks, along with a variety of war-

blers including black-throated green, yellow-rumped, and yellow.

Volunteer work party: May 9

A reminder that we’ll be clearing invasive plants on Saturday, May 9, from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. Let’s make space for native shrubs and trees like alder, winterberry holly and birch. Meet near the Eastman Road entrance; bring gloves and hand tools if you have them.

These are simple ways to spend time outdoors, get to know Winnick Woods and take part in caring for it. For more information, contact me (alsouthworth@hotmail.com) or Jan Chapman (janchapman1966@gmail.com). Many thanks!

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EMERGENCY COVERAGE AT WARREN AVENUE LOCATION

Cape Robotics team 56S competes at VEX WORLDS



Contributed photo

Over the April break, Cape Robotics team 56S competed at the VEX WORLDS Competition in St. Louis. According to Coach Eric Huntington, "The team did well overall and competed against the highest competition in the world." Team members left to right are Jonah Chang, Noah Scott, Aiden Diamond, Finn Zwintscher.

Sign up for the Cape Challenge

Have you heard of The Cape Challenge? This is a legacy race in town that has been held each spring for over twenty years (with the exception of the Covid years)!

The event includes a Fun Run for kids 8 and under scheduled for 8:30 a.m., a 1-Mile Race for kids 12 and under scheduled for 9:00 a.m., and the 5K Cape Challenge scheduled for 9:30 a.m. This year's race, which will be held on May 31, is sponsored by Penobscot Financial Advisors, plus many other local companies. Proceeds from this fundraiser benefit the Cape Elizabeth Pond Cove, Middle School, and High School Parent Associations. Sign up to run at: <https://runinarace.com/CapeChallenge>.

Register online for the race by May 8 in order to secure your t-shirt size.

Raffle tickets can be purchased via the

QR code in this article.

Follow the Cape Challenge on Facebook/Instagram @CapeChallenge5k. For any questions, please reach out to capechallenge5k@gmail.com.



Celebrate the opening of Davis Forest on May 9



Contributed photo

Come celebrate the opening of Davis Forest on May 9.

Celebrate the opening of CELT's newest preserve — the Davis Forest on Spurwink Avenue on May 9 at 3:00 p.m. Be among the first to explore 32.5 acres of newly accessible woodlands, with a guided walk along trails built by dedicated community volunteers during monthly Stewardship Work Parties.

You'll see how these trails link into a broader 7-mile network spanning Cross Hill,

Dyer-Hutchinson, and Winnick Woods—opening up even more ways to get outside and enjoy the landscape we all share. Along the way, we'll highlight the impact of this conservation effort, from protecting the headwaters of Trout Brook to conserving an important wildlife block for years to come. Sign up for this free event at www.cape-landtrust.org/events.

May naturalist's corner

By Erika Carlson Rhile

We'll have two full moons this month: May 1 brings us the Full Flower Moon, a fitting name for a month when the landscape seems to awaken almost overnight. On May 31, we'll experience a rare treat—a Blue Moon, the second full moon in a single month. "Once in a blue moon" isn't just a saying this year; the next one won't occur until December 31, 2028!

The hummingbirds are coming, the hummingbirds are coming! Ruby-throated hummingbirds, having spent the winter in

Central America and the southern U.S., are making their remarkable journey north. In Cape Elizabeth, they typically arrive between mid-April and early May. Consider putting out a feeder now. A simple mixture of one part sugar to four parts water is all they need (no red dye required). Once they arrive, they'll stay with us through the summer before heading south again in late summer.

Another favorite bird to look out for is the piping plover. Last year, there were a record 174 piping plover nests with 251 fledged chicks in our state; this is encouraging news for a bird protected by the Endangered Species Act. Plovers have come a long way since 1981 when Maine had only 10 nesting pairs producing only 9 fledglings. Since the egg incubation period for piping plovers is about 25 days, we will likely start seeing chicks as early as late May, with peak hatching season in late June. Take a seat at Crescent Beach and look out for sweet little puffballs on stilts darting across the sand.

May is also the perfect time to wander into the woods in search of spring ephemerals. "Ephemeral" means lasting only a short time, and these delicate wildflowers make the most of the brief window of sunlight before the tree canopy fills in. Look for bluets, red trillium and wood anemone carpeting the forest floor. Robinson Woods is a great place to see impressive populations of spring wildflowers. Join the Land Trust and Wild Seed project for a wildflower walk planned there on May 13.

While our conditions improved in April, Cape Elizabeth remains in a severe drought. We need more than 8 inches of rainfall to provide significant improvements to the soil moisture, streamflow and groundwater deficits. Here's hoping the rains catch up soon—until then, there's still plenty of May magic to take in.



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Honoring the fallen: Posthumous Purple Hearts awarded at USS Eagle 56 Memorial Service

By Stephen Lyons (Garda)

On a solemn afternoon at Fort Williams Park, the community gathered on April 23 to honor the 49 sailors lost aboard the USS Eagle 56.

The annual memorial service took on a profound significance this year as five fallen crew members were posthumously awarded the Purple Heart, with the medals finally being placed into the hands of their grateful next of kin.

The USS Eagle 56 was sunk by a German U-boat just miles off the coast of Cape Elizabeth during the closing weeks of World War II.

For decades, the loss was officially classified as a boiler explosion, but a tireless re-investigation eventually confirmed the vessel was a victim of enemy action, paving the way for the recognition of its crew as casualties of war.

The ceremony was a collaborative effort by the regional veteran community, organized and attended by members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Portland, American Legion South Portland, Disabled American Veterans, U.S. Marine Corps League, U.S. Navy-Bath, and U.S. Coast Guard-South Portland. A large crowd of public spectators stood in silence as the following sailors were officially recognized for their ultimate sacrifice:

- Robert Lee Davies, U.S.N.R., Sonarman 2nd Class
- Robert Kessler, U.S.N., Seaman 2nd Class
- Zug Chesley Phelps, U.S.N.R., Signalman 1st Class
- Jasper Davis Pulley, U.S.N., Seaman 1st Class
- Leonard Jozef Surowiec, U.S.N.R., Fireman 1st Class

As the names were read and the medals presented, the salt air of the Maine coast served as a poignant reminder of the waters where these men remain on eternal patrol. The event underscored a long-overdue closure for the families, ensuring that the legacy of the USS Eagle 56 is etched into the history of Cape Elizabeth and the nation.

During World War Two, the USS Eagle 56 was ported at the U.S. Naval Frontier Base in Portland. The Eagle 56 was assigned to Navy Air Station in Brunswick.

As part of the USS Eagle's 56 mission, it was assigned patrol work and towing targets off the coast of Cape Elizabeth. The ship routinely pulled practice targets for aircraft from the Navy Air Station in Brunswick.

Portland and Casco Bay was an extremely busy port during World War II, with U.S. Naval ships, fishing vessels and ships carrying commerce. Casco Bay was protected by a loop recorder and the "Harbor Entrance Control Post" (HECP) at Fort Williams.

The HECP required captains of all vessels to wait clearance from the Fort Williams HECP before they could exit or enter the bay. Waiting ships HECP were visually identified and granted clearance based on pre-arranged challenges and responses that used simple passwords, blinking lights and code letters hoisted in signal flags.

According to U.S. Navy reports, the HECP at Fort Williams during the month of March 1945 had 1,501 vessels stood through all channels of Casco Bay, and 1,515 outbound vessels of Casco Bay. A total of 3,016 vessels were coming in and out of Casco Bay during the month of March 1945. And even though the war was coming to an end, the German Navy had an interest in attacking these vessels.

At 8:15 a.m. on Monday, April 23, 1945, the USS Eagle 56 departed Portland into Casco Bay. The USS Eagle 56 had sailed with six officers and fifty-seven men when they left Portland that morning.

The ship traveled past Portland Head Lighthouse and into the Gulf of Maine to practice towing targets. At approximately 12:14 p.m., the USS Eagle 56 was taking a break from pulling targets and stopped still in the waters about five miles from High Head, Cape Elizabeth.

While the USS Eagle 56 stood stationary in these same waters, a German submarine U-853, was lurking along the coastal waters of Cape Elizabeth. A battle was about to take place between the U.S. Navy and German Navy, five miles

-see PURPLE HEARTS page 15



Photo contributed by VFW Portland

U.S. Coast Guard-South Portland stand during a memorial honoring sailors KIA aboard USS Eagle 56 April 23, 1945.



Photo contributed by VFW Portland

Purple Heart Medal of Robert Kessler, U.S.N., Seaman 2nd Class KIA USS Eagle 56 five miles off High Head Cape Elizabeth.



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Thomas Memorial Library offers summer internship, expanded 'Library of Things,' hosts author Jane Parks Gardner

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Summer Internship Available

The Thomas Memorial Library is seeking an energetic college or graduate student with a passion for literacy and a desire to share their enthusiasm for public service to serve in the library's Family & Community Engagement Departments as a Summer Intern.

This position, which is made possible through funding from the TML Foundation, will assist with the planning, implementation, and promotion of Summer Reading programs and events, including registering children/teens for events, distributing literacy related incentives, and encouraging individuals and families to participate in library activities.

The Summer Intern will also assist with general library duties, such as shelving and assisting library users in finding and using library resources.

The deadline for applications is May 16. Please see the library's website for complete details: ThomasMemorialLibrary.org/Employment.

Expanded "Library of Things!"

You may have been aware that the library lends some unusual items, such as ukuleles, a telescope and night sky binoculars.

We have been working hard over the past few months to expand our Library of Things Collection (LoT) to include many new items (with more on the way). You can now borrow the following:

- Blu-ray player
- BRICK device (to help you limit your phone dependence)

- digital projector
- electronic stud finder
- Kil-o-Watt kits (electricity use meter)
- luggage scale
- moisture meter
- night sky binoculars and a variety of nature exploration kits
- radon detector
- telescope
- thermal imaging camera
- ukuleles
- UV floor lamp
- white noise machine

Currently, most items circulate for a three week loan period with no renewals, and cannot be reserved--first come, first served.

Stop by the main desk for more information.

It's almost the end of our Kanopy trial year

Our new Kanopy plan starts in July--but we need your help to decide which genres we should keep. British TV? World cinema? Documentaries? Family favorites? Keep exploring everything Kanopy has to offer and use up your digital tickets so our data reflects what you love best.

Thank you to the TML Foundation for bringing this free streaming service to our patrons and encouraging all ages to learn through the power of film.

Stier Family Gallery features Art Quilts Maine

Throughout the month of May, we are delighted to welcome Art Quilts Maine to our downstairs gallery.

AQM aims to support their members in the exploration of contemporary quilt art, to inspire creativity and individuality,

and to promote the understanding, appreciation, and recognition of contemporary quilters in the state of Maine.

Art Quilts Maine is a chapter of the Pine Tree Quilts Guild of Maine.

Closed May 25 for Memorial Day.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Community Book Discussion: The Jungle by Upton Sinclair

Thursday, May 7, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Join us for a conversation with Chriss Sutherland about Upton Sinclair's 1906 novel "The Jungle," a book Jack London once called "the Uncle Tom's Cabin of wage slavery."

Following our previous discussions of "1984" and "Parable of the Sower," this time we will use classic literature to bring up topics like working-class poverty, immigrant struggles, lack of social support, dangerous working conditions, and cynicism and cruelty among the powerless.

This book is most commonly remembered for its immediate impact on the labor and sanitary conditions of the American meat-packing industry, but there is so much more to talk about.

Please register in advance to let us know you are interested, and feel free to attend even if you haven't finished reading the book.

CEHPS presents: "The Wreck of the Royal Tar," with Jane Parks Gardner

Tuesday, May 12, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Based on her new book "The Wreck of the Royal Tar," author Jane Parks Gardner presents a gripping multimedia program that brings to life one of New England's most haunting maritime disasters.

The talk explores the history of the ill-fated steamship, the immigrant experience of many passengers, the colorful world of 19th-century traveling circuses, and the perils of sea travel in the 1830s. Jane recounts the events leading up to the tragic fire that claimed 33 lives and a menagerie of circus animals, offering insight into the human stories behind the headlines.

This engaging program blends historical research, dramatic storytelling, and striking visuals to shed light on a little-known piece of regional history. Books will be available for sale.

Jane Parks Gardner is the author of dozens of STEM-focused books and study guides for learners of all ages. Over the course of her career, she has worn many hats--chemistry professor, high school teacher, editor, curriculum developer, adventurer and mom. She lives in Massachusetts.

Senior Social Hour featuring Middle School Artists

Wednesday, May 20, 1-2 p.m.

We are delighted to welcome the middle school art club, Art for a Cause, back to Senior Social Hour.

This time, folks of all ages will be welcome to decorate bookmarks together--and maybe share some of your current favorite reads with each other, too!

REGULAR PROGRAMS

Senior Social Hour

Every Wednesday from 1-2 p.m.

Death Cafe, with Davinica Nemtsov

First Thursday of each month, 6:30 - 8 p.m.

Songwriting Workshop, with Jud Caswell

First Tuesday of each month, 6-8 p.m.

FE Recurring Programs - Children's

Messy Minis: Mondays @ 10:30 a.m.

Let your imagination run wild and join us for Messy Minis time in the Community Room. Let's color, cut and paste together to make magic. For budding artists ages 2-5 or anyone who enjoys creative play.

Baby Storytime: Tuesdays @ Noon

This program is designed for infants and toddlers from birth - 18 months old and their caregivers.

Join Family Engagement Assistant Sarah Gabrielson for 15 minutes of short stories, finger plays, rhymes, songs, and movements followed by 30 minutes of free time to play and chat.

Please note, capacity for this program is 25 people. No prior registration required.

Play Group: Wednesdays @ 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Join us for this drop-in play session for children and their caregivers.

The Community Room is open for exploration during this time, with special toys and stations while you visit with friends.


The capacity for this program is 25

-see LIBRARY page 13

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Library

Continued from page 12

people. Doors open at 10:25 a.m. Arrive early to secure your spot.

Toddler Story Time: Thursdays @ 10:30 a.m.

This program is for children who are not ready for a traditional story time but who love to sing songs, move their bodies, and listen to stories.

This gentle introduction to the routines and props of story time is great for curious, wandering wigglers ages 1-3 and their caregivers.

Dress Up and Dance: Fridays @ 10:30 a.m.

Join us for stretching, moving, and grooving to our favorite playlist in special dress-up costumes.

For dancing enthusiasts ages 2-5 and their caregivers.

Lego Club : First Tuesday of the month @ 3:30 p.m., May 5

Come free-build or pick up a challenge card to try something new. Masterpieces will be put on display until the next Lego Club meeting. No registration necessary.

Venture Club

Every Wednesday from 2:45 - 4:30 p.m.

Venture Club is a teen-led board/card game and D&D club for teens 13 and up, with an emphasis on board games. We'll try to play new games every week. No prior gaming experience is needed. Snacks will be provided.

Library Squad

First Friday of the month @ 2:45 p.m.

Library Squad is a group of young people who advise on library happenings. Members of the squad have a designated book recommendation shelf. They help design displays, craft children's room decor, and provide feedback and ideas on library programs.

Monthly meetings include snacks, social time, the occasional craft, and cool vibes with friends and librarians. For tweens and teens ages 11 - 13.

TLC: Teen Leadership Council, for ages 14+

Last Friday of the month @ 2:45 p.m. Help shape the future of the teen space and...

- Earn volunteer hours
- Advise on library policies
- Design new programs

The Teen Leadership Council (TLC) will meet once a month on the last Friday of the month. Among other topics meetings will include snacks, chatting, and teen-led discussions about library programs and policies.

Join us and build your leadership and advocacy skills while establishing con-

nections with your community!

Family Engagement Special Programs

Waterfall Cards with Andi Saturn[1.1]

Saturday, May 2 from 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. Learn to make a cascade of art! Waterfall cards use a pull tab to create a 5 panel "flip book," with each panel sliding away to reveal the one beneath it.

Andi will guide you through making the basic slide/pull mechanism, demonstrate a few variations on the basic technique, and then set everyone free to illustrate their panels. Register to save your spot. This workshop is intended for ages 7+.

Andi (they/them) is a teacher, performer and artist in Portland. Since starting their art journey in 2020 they've dabbled in as many art forms as possible, building an eclectic skill set with a focus on line art and printmaking.

As a self taught artist, they know how hard it can be to pick up new mediums and they're passionate about breaking skills down into simple, clear directions to allow for less frustration and more creativity.

Andi currently works as an Enrichment teacher in Breakwater School's aftercare program where they teach art, dance, and theater classes.

Agriculture 101 with 4-H: Gardening

Thursday, May 14 from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Participants ages 5-10 years old will join 4-H Youth Development Professional Allison Pollock to learn about the plant life cycle and make newspaper pots to start their own plants. Caregivers are required to be present with their child during the program.

Registration is required. Maximum of 15 children participants. Please register on the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Cumberland County Programs 4-H website with one registration per family.

Siblings and adult caregivers do not need to register separately. <https://extension.umaine.edu/cumberland/4h/mmspring/>

My First Book Club

Tuesday, May 12 from 3:30 to 4:15 p.m.

Join in My First Book Club for beginning readers ages 6-8 on various Tuesdays throughout the summer.

As a group, we will begin a read-along, and play some games. All reading happens within the program time, meaning no pre reading or homework.

Each child participant will get a copy of the book to take home. Caregivers asked to participate alongside. Registration required.

Local birding report

By Brooks Bornhoff

Returning from a family trip to a barrier island in South Carolina, I found myself still hearing the place days after we'd left it: the bright, rolling sequence of notes that drift down in pitch from Yellow throated Warblers that carries across treetops of Live Oak Trees draped with moss, and at night the eerie, looping chant of Chuck will's widows drifting across the dark. Along the beaches, huge flocks of Red Knots, Royal Terns and Black Skimmers crowded the tide line—species not often seen in Cape Elizabeth except during migration.

Speaking of which, colder than average temperatures and stubborn winds through late April may have slowed migration a bit, but spring has finally taken hold across Cape. As always, stepping outside is enough to find something new.

For me, the joy of spring birding often lies in the unexpected combinations. On April 22, while admiring the steady trill of Pine Warblers in Robinson Woods III, Hermit Thrushes slipped through the underbrush and a northbound Great Blue Heron belted somewhere overhead. In my backyard a Palm Warbler, a Red breasted Nuthatch, and a Red bellied Woodpecker fed together on suet, their colors catching the setting sun, while White throated, Chipping and Song Sparrows scratched and gave chase below.

On April 25, along the fringes of the inland Pond Brook corridor, the sweet, whistled warbles from Yellow rumped Warblers could be heard as they darted and sallied for insects. Ruby crowned Kinglets flitted among warblers, their rollicking song signaling spring has sprung. Several tail bobbing Palm Warblers were sprinkled in for good measure. The "wheet wheet" calls from Wood Ducks echoed through the forest just beyond me.

The following day, April 26, I stopped at a small cattail pond along Wells Road where two Blue winged Teals were quietly feed-

ing. Overhead, Tree Swallows chattered and circled, their clear notes cutting through the air, while the lower, buzzier calls of Northern Rough winged Swallows drifted in occasionally. Tree Swallows, shiny and blue green like gems are social acrobats; Rough winged, by contrast, are brown gray, shadowy, and solitary, flying lower and straighter.

In the moment I found myself thinking about the distances these birds had traveled to get to Cape—Blue winged Teal and Rough winged Swallows both migrate from Central or even South America, when suddenly my thoughts were interrupted by a series of soft, pig like grunts that rose from deep within the cattails. A moment later came a water plopping sound, followed by a three second look at a small brownish bird with an upturned tail. This bird was a Virginia Rail.

Found in fresh and brackish wetlands, these secretive, chicken like birds prefer dense jungles of cattails, reeds, briars and grasses, slipping through hidden passages that keep them out of sight. Slightly larger than a robin, the Virginia Rail has a thin body, long reddish orange bill, rich cinnamon underparts, gray cheeks, sharply barred flanks, and long toes adapted for pushing through thick vegetation. Their forehead feathers are specially reinforced for the same purpose. Rails have the highest ratio of leg muscle to flight muscle of any bird—perfect for walking through rugged marshes. They fly only short distances except during migration, and can even evade predators by using their wings to swim underwater.

Another rail species that I have not yet seen in Cape is the Sora Rail. This bird is equally secretive and often found in the same habitats as the Virginia Rail. I couldn't confirm one that day, though it may well have been nearby. Soras differ from Virginia Rails with their short, stubby yellow bills, black facial mask and yellow green legs. Listen for loud and boisterous whinny echoes across our wetlands from spring through summer.

Maine Dept of Transportation work in Cape Elizabeth

By Kevin St. Jarre


Maine Department of Transportation has announced that they will begin work on a paving project, with drainage improvements, in Cape Elizabeth. The work is slated to begin on May 4.

Capers should anticipate traffic limited to a single lane while the work is being done, and Maine DOT promises to place signs to warn the public in impacted areas. Drivers

should be on the lookout for flaggers on site to direct motorists through the project area.

The affected area begins at the intersection of Old Ocean House Road and Route 77 and ends at the intersection of Route 77 and Spurwink Avenue.

Maine DOT expects the work to be completed by July. The contractor on this project is Shaw Brothers of Gorham, with the contract amount of \$996,937.00.



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CAPE CALENDAR

By Wendy Derzawiec

Instructions for joining video conference meetings listed below will be posted on the town website, www.capeelizabeth.gov.

Wednesday, May 6

SB School Building Cmte, CEMS - Chorus Rm, 5 p.m.
 Conservation Committee Site Visit, 33 Cross Hill Road, 5 p.m.
 Recycling Committee, Public Works Building, 6 p.m.
 Town Council Special Meeting, Town Hall chamber, 7 p.m.

Monday, May 11

Accessibility & Inclusion Committee, Thomas Memorial Library, 5 p.m.

Tuesday, May 12

School Board Regular Business, Town Hall chambers, 6:30 p.m.
 Conservation Committee, Jordan Conference Room Town Hall, 7 p.m.

Monday, May 18

Town Council Workshop, Town Hall chamber, 6 p.m.
 Town Council Meeting, Town Hall chamber, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, May 19

Planning Board Site Walk, Cape Elizabeth Middle School, lower parking lot, 4 p.m.
 Planning Board, Town Hall chamber, 7 p.m.

Ongoing each week

Al-Anon, 7 p.m. Fridays, First Congregational Church, 301 Cottage Road, South Portland. Parking in rear.

Alcoholics Anonymous, 2 p.m. Saturdays, First Congregational Church, 301 Cottage Road, South Portland; 7 p.m. Wednesdays, St. Bartholomew Church; 7 p.m. Fridays, St. Alban's Church.

Cape Elizabeth Historical Preservation Society, 9 a.m. - noon on Thursdays and by appointment, Fort Williams, in the brick building closest to Shore Road (ring the doorbell).
 Cape Elizabeth Lions Club, 6:39 p.m., first and third Tuesdays at the Bowery Beach Schoolhouse (except July and August), Two Lights Road
 Cape Elizabeth Republican Town Committee, 6-8:30 p.m. second Tuesday of the month, Spurwink Rod & Gun Club, 1250 Sawyer Road. Contact: ccrcme.com for Cape information.

South Portland/Cape Elizabeth Rotary Club, 6:15 p.m. Wednesdays at 107 Preble Hall, Southern Maine Community College, 2 Fort Road, South Portland. sp-ce-rotary.org.

CABLE GUIDE

CETV CHANNEL 1302

Please see cetv.capeelizabeth.org for latest program guide and video on demand.

SERVICES

Cape Elizabeth Church of the Nazarene

499 Ocean House Road (Route 77)
747-1113

www.capenazarene.org

Sunday School for all ages: 9:30 a.m.
 Sunday Worship Celebration: 10:45 a.m.
 Services streamed live or on demand: watch.capenazarene.org

Cape Elizabeth United Methodist Church

280 Ocean House Road
799-8396

www.ceumc.org

Sanctuary Service: 10:00 a.m.
 In-person Sunday services 10:00 a.m. For Zoom services, call 799-8396

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

29 Ocean House Road
799-4321

Sacrament Meeting:

Sunday, 10 - 11:00 a.m.

Sunday School/Primary: 11:10 a.m.-12 p.m.

The Church of the Second Chance

Greater Portland Christian School
 1338 Broadway, South Portland

641-3253

Sunday: 10:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

Rise Church

1047 Congress Street, Portland
874-9779

<https://www.riseportland.church>

Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.

Sunday Adult Bible Study: 9:00 a.m.

Sunday School for children: 10:00 a.m.

Services streamed live on Facebook

Congregation Bet Ha'am

81 Westbrook St., South Portland
879-0028

www.bethaam.org

Worship: Friday, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, 10:30 a.m.

Family Shabbat Services:

Second Friday, 6:00 p.m.

Hope Community Church

879 Sawyer Street South Portland
799-4565

www.hopesopo.com

www.facebook.com/hopesopo

Sunday Morning Worship at 10 a.m.

Kid's Church for ages 4 through grade 5

Service videos available on our website

Promised Land World Reach Center

536 Cottage Road, South Portland

799-3152

Sunday Prayer & Intercession: 9:30 a.m.

Sunday Worship: 10 a.m.

Family Bible Studies: Wednesday, 7 p.m.

Sermon recordings available to download

Redeemer Lutheran Church - LCMS

410 Main Street, Gorham

839-7100

www.RedeemerMaine.org

Sunday Bible Class for all ages: 9:00 a.m.

Sunday Worship Service: 10:15 a.m.

Services are in person and streamed on Facebook and YouTube

Saint Alban's Episcopal Church

885 Shore Road

799-4014

www.stalbansmaine.org

Sunday Services:

Rite 1 with Holy Eucharist 8:00 a.m.

Rite 2 with Holy Eucharist 9:30 a.m.

Live Streaming on YouTube (stalbanschannel)

Children's Programs 9:30 a.m.

Celtic Eventide 5:30 p.m.

Room for all

St Bartholomew Catholic Church of Saint John Paul II Parish

8 Two Lights Road, **207-883-0334**

Website: www.JP2me.org

Sunday Mass: 9 a.m.

Daily Mass: Mon. and Wed. 8 a.m.

Sacrament of Confession: Mon. 8:30-9 a.m.

Additional Mass times in Scarborough & South Portland listed on website

First Congregational Church United Church of Christ

301 Cottage Road, South Portland

799-3361

www.fccucc.org

Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m. in person and streamed on Facebook & YouTube

First Congregational Church of Scarborough

167 Black Point Road, Scarborough

883-2342

www.fccscarborough.com

Sunday Morning Worship: 9:30 a.m.

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Piano, Voice, Guitar, Ukulele lessons for all ages. Beginner through intermediate. Carey Rasco: 232-7015

Piano Lessons. All ages, all levels. Call Ora: 207-899-3014

Drum Lessons: Any age/level. Flow technique, reading not required. Frank, 603.285.3032.

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Purple Hearts

Continued from page 11

off the coast of Cape Elizabeth, The German Submarine U-853 set its sights on its prey and fatally torpedoed the USS Eagle 56. It was a direct hit on the USS Eagle 56, splitting the ship in two. The ship sunk to the frigid cold ocean waters killing most of its crew. Only one officer and twelve men survived to return home.

U.S. Navy Ships and military observation posted along the Cape Elizabeth coast saw the explosion of the USS Eagle 56. These ships immediately went toward the explosion in an effort to rescue the survivors and counter attacked the German U-853.

A battle took place with the U.S. Navy dropping ordnance in an effort to counter attack and searched for the submarine through out the night, but were unable to make contact with the enemy that day. Had you been at High Head at Two Lights State Park you would have been able to watch this battle. The U.S. Navy continued its pursuit of the German U-853, and sunk the German submarine on May 6, 1945 off the coast of Massachusetts.

A war memorial that includes two bronze plaques of the USS Eagles 56 with the names of all the sailors aboard the ship that day is located at Fort Williams Park near Portland Head Light-house.

Judy's Pantry – a community feeding itself

Judy's Pantry operates at the Cape Elizabeth Methodist Church on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month. They will be extending their hours for April and May and will be open from 3:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Registration is available on-site for new clients.

For more information, please contact: cejudspantry@gmail.com

Please consider a non-perishable donation to the IGA drop box.

Programs

Continued from page _____

Max 15 / Min 5

Spring Cross Town Walk (Second Half Option)

Interested in the Cross Town Walk, but not ready to commit to all 8.2 miles? Join Cape Elizabeth Land Trust for a half-distance (~4.5 miles) walk highlighting some of Cape's great places, including Spurwink Marsh and Great Pond. The walk takes approximately three hours and includes a BYO lunch stop. Hikers will meet at the CELT office in Town Center and will carpool (arranged prior to walk) back to Fort Williams after lunch. Snacks, drinks and lunch should be brought by each participant.

All participants must register at least at least 48 hours in advance of the program to receive notification of changes or cancellation.

Date: Saturday, June 20

Time: 10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Location: Meet at CELT Office

Cost: \$5 per person

Max 15 / No Min

CELT Library Talks with the Thomas Memorial Library

Invasive Plants Nature Talk/Walk

Join Mike Hankes, a member of CELT's Stewardship Committee, for a talk at Thomas Memorial Library about the invasive plant species found in Cape Elizabeth. Throughout the program, Mike will teach the audience how to identify specific plants, all about eradication strategies, and why invasive species pose a threat to an ecosystem. He will bring in samples of actual invasive plants found in town for participants to touch and photograph, in order to sharpen their identification skills.

We will have a sign-up sheet at the talk, and if enough interest is garnered, Mike will host a walk at Runaway Farm the following week to see the plants in their natural environment! Participants on the walk should meet at the upper parking lot at Gull Crest field off Spurwink Avenue, and be prepared to go on a gentle hike, rain or shine. All participants must register at least at least 48 hours in advance of the program to receive notification of changes or cancellation.

Date: June 18

Time: 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Location: Thomas Memorial Library

No Registration Required

Date and Time for Follow Up Walk TBD as needed.

Marine Mammals of Maine Talk: A Seal's Journey

Join Marine Mammals of Maine (MMoME) volunteer and wildlife educator, Jessica Woodend as she takes you through a seal's journey from stranding to release, and all of the obstacles in between. She will start with important seal basics, such as whether it's normal for seals to be out of the water, and why you might see a baby seal on its own. She will then dive into when and why seals need our help, and what you as a community member should do if you encounter a seal. You will also learn about what MMoME is, what they do, and more about the animals they care for, including the famous 2023 Cape Elizabeth Gray Seals!

Date: Tuesday, June 23

Time: 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Location: Thomas Memorial Library

Community Room

No registration necessary

Have a Classified Ad, Announcement or Event?



Go to www.capecourier.com
Or contact Tara Simopoulos at: advertising@capecourier.com

CELT

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2020 re-accreditation award included a small number of specific expectations for improvement recommended by LTAC over the term of that five-year accreditation period. The 2025 re-accreditation application requested documentation demonstrating how those expectations were addressed. For example, "Document that the land trust takes action to address all potential or confirmed violations and ownership challenges in a timely manner."

The team working on the application completed the work and submitted it to the LTAC in April 2025. The LTAC notified CELT in June that it had completed its initial review. However, it also asked for further clarification and some additional evidence to support some of CELT's responses in the submission.

The team submitted its follow-up response in September 2025. In December, the LTAC contacted CELT to extend congratulations for satisfactorily completing the application and all follow-up requests. It notified CELT that it had earned re-accreditation, and the new term would run through the end of 2030.

This latest re-accreditation project

was a rigorous one, entailing eighteen months of hard work by a very dedicated team of CELT staff, board of directors and advisory council members. Terms of accreditation are limited, however, and the process will begin anew mid-2028 for re-accreditation again by end of 2030.

Why is accreditation worthwhile, and what benefits derive from it?

David Briman, CELT's Executive Director, said "The stamp of national accreditation provides CELT with a roadmap to pursue its mission with efficiency and integrity." Additionally, as a nationally accredited land trust, the public can have confidence that CELT follows well-established standards and practices for legal, ethical, and effective land conservation.

The public can be confident that CELT measures up to a very high bar. It is a well-run organization, its finances and financial transactions are sound and well-managed, and its stewardship of conserved land is exemplary. It is worthy of the philanthropy it is privileged to receive.



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Laughing gulls "laughing" at Kettle Cove.

Photo by Martha Agan



Red-tailed hawk.

Photo by Martha Agan



This trio of Double-crested Cormorants didn't seem to care that it was raining.

Photo by Martha Agan



Female Common Morganser.

Photo by Martha Agan



MARY LIBBY
LIVING

REAL ESTATE

With twenty-five years focused on Cape Elizabeth, South Portland, Greater Portland, and Maine's coast, Mary brings trusted, responsive real estate expertise.

She holds a large share of the Cape Elizabeth market and delivers smart strategy, candid advice, and personalized service to help buyers and sellers make confident, value-driven decisions.

maryelizabethlibby@mail.com

207.712.5594

marylibby.com