

What's Up



DOWNTOWN



Quarterly

A quarterly publication featuring local Downtown Alliances, Main Street Programs and other Downtown Organizations within our communities

Special Advertising Supplement to the Kennebec Journal and Morning Sentinel | Wednesday, April 17, 2019



Walk around Maine's downtowns for a colorful and interesting day

BY MAINE DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION
Special to *What's Up Downtown*

MAine's 10 National Main Street communities have joined together to develop the new *mainstreetmaine.org* website. If you are traveling around Maine and looking for things to see and do consider using this new website to see what is happening in Biddeford, Saco, Westbrook, Brunswick, Bath, Belfast, Rockland, Skowhegan, Augusta and Gardiner. It's a great resource. Whether you want to listen to live music, watch a parade or attend a specialty food or drink event, this web site and accompanying Facebook page will let you know what is happening.

Also since spring has arrived and the snow has melted consider taking advantage of the



The Harbor Walk in Rockland and Belfast provides a view into the working waterfront.

many downtown walking trails, harbor walks and other trail systems that are connected to downtowns. The Harbor Walk in Rockland and Belfast provides a view into the working waterfronts in those two communities. If you want to see a sturgeon jump or an eagle fly,

take a walk on the Kennebec River Rail Trail that is located right near the downtowns of Augusta, Hallowell and Gardiner and don't forget the Kennebec Riverwalk in Skowhegan. Look for trail maps or way-finding signs to access these wonderful trail systems.

It's all about the experience!
Maine's Main Street Communities

Augusta
Bath
Belfast
Biddeford
Brunswick



Gardiner
Rockland
Saco
Skowhegan
Westbrook



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addresses & events:

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Welcome to Downtown Waterville

Waterville blossoms this spring and summer with arts and cultural activities

BY WATERVILLE CREATES!

Special to *What's Up Downtown*

Sun. Snow. Rain. Mud. Why, it must be spring in Waterville, Maine! While you're never quite sure what Mother Nature will offer on any given day in April or May, one thing is for sure – our spring weather is a herald of greener days to come. Now that spring has sprung, exciting activities and outdoor events are blossoming once more in downtown Waterville. We can only hope that the flowers are soon to follow . . . and that Castonguay Square will once again be home to a welcome riot of yellows, purples and greens as spring daffodils and crocus emerge.

This year, spring isn't the only thing beautifying our historic downtown greenspace, Castonguay Square. After three public workshops with community members, the final design for Waterville's central greenspace has been revealed. A prominent feature in the reimagined Castonguay Square is the Waterville Heritage Walk – a path to feature the Arthur L. Castonguay Memorial, information about Waterville's past and room for future memorials.

The redesigned Castonguay Square will also include lush gardens surrounding the central lawn for hosting large events while still maintaining the beautiful greenery, including "Ellie," the iconic 150-year-old elm tree.

Changes on Common Street adjacent to the Square will create a pedestrian plaza when the street is closed for events, making future Waterville Rocks! summer concerts more enjoyable than ever as there will be more space to dance. To view the final Castonguay Square designs, visit the Waterville Creates! offices at the Hathaway Creative Center.

Speaking of Waterville Rocks!, the city's only free summer concert series returns for its 4th year on Friday, June 28. Each free and family-friendly concert will have an opening act and a fantastic headliner, with concerts beginning at 6 p.m. at Castonguay Square. As in past years, the Waterville Rocks! beer garden will open at 5:30 p.m. for those at least 21 years old. The Waterville Opera House will announce



the concert lineup soon, but for now save these dates for the Friday night concerts: June 28, July 5, July 26 and August 2. If you liked last year's lineup, we KNOW you're going to love the bands scheduled to come to Waterville Rocks! in 2019.

Continuing on the theme of live music, the Waterville Opera House has been aggressive in scheduling some incredible live musical acts throughout the year. Upcoming concerts include The David Bromberg Quintet on April 26 and An Evening with Bruce Cockburn on May 11. Comedian Juston McKinney will also perform at the Opera House on April 27. For a full schedule of events or to reserve your spot at an upcoming show, visit OperaHouse.org.

Now that the weather is warming up and the snow is melting away, the Downtown Waterville Farmers Market will move from its winter location of the Bill & Joan Alford Main Street Commons to their new summer spot – Head of Falls. As of May 2, you can adventure down to Head of Falls each Thursday from 2 – 6 p.m. to shop for fresh and local goods. Don't have cash? That's okay. The Farmers' Market accepts cards too. While picking up great local produce and other goodies, be sure to stroll along the RiverWalk with an ice cream or bouquet of flowers in hand. It has been many years since such a thing was possible in Waterville, how very nice!

However, the Farmers Market isn't the only community happening moving to Head of Falls

The redesigned Castonguay Square will also include lush gardens surrounding the central lawn for hosting large events while still maintaining the beautiful greenery, including "Ellie," the iconic 150-year-old elm tree. Changes on Common Street adjacent to the Square will create a pedestrian plaza when the street is closed for events, making future Waterville Rocks! summer concerts more enjoyable than ever as there will be more space to dance.

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More WATERVILLE, PAGE 4

Waterville

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

this sunny season. Our free weekly outdoor art event, Art in the Park, will follow the Market to that lovely spot along the river. Each Thursday from June 6 through August 29, Art in the Park will explore different crafts to spark your imagination, led by the team at Common Street Arts. Art in the Park will be held from 4 - 6 p.m., so come shop local and make art to take home.



Throughout downtown, the flowers are blooming and so are the arts. On May 18, Waterville's creative non-profit organizations will once again band together to host a free community day

of celebration of all-things spring: Arts in Bloom. This year the event features an early morning bird walk at the RiverWalk, rock painting, a free movie about bees at Railroad Square Cinema, a cool amphibian art walk at Quarry Road Trails, art exhibitions and fun craft making too. There really is something for all ages at this day-long collaborative event. Bring the family to as many of the activities as you'd like.

If you are prone to allergies and prefer to explore your spring imagination through a good book instead of a hike outside, then you're in luck. Whether you need to grow your book collection or just want to get lost in a new story, the Waterville Public Library has you covered with its popular annual event - the Spring Book Sale. Mark your calendars, the Spring Book Sale will be held from April 17 through April 19.



So you enjoy a good story? Storytelling gets taken to another level during the popular community storytelling event, PechaKucha Night Waterville. Now celebrating its thirty-first event in Waterville, PechaKucha Volume 31 will again feature a variety of presenters sharing their stories and passions with our community - you never know what to expect. Each presenter will only have 20 seconds for each of their 20 slides. This free creative networking event is on Friday, May 3 at Colby College in the Ostrove Auditorium, and is always an enjoyable evening. If you've never attended a PechaKucha before, this is your chance.

This is just a taste of the many exciting happenings coming to downtown Waterville this spring and summer. There is much more information on these and other events at [WatervilleCreates.org!](http://WatervilleCreates.org/)



Welcome to Downtown Gardiner

Get out and MIX! in Gardiner

BY GARDINER MAIN STREET

Special to What's Up Downtown

People are beginning to leave hibernation to venture downtown regularly once again. Gardiner expects to see a handful of new businesses downtown by the time summer emerges. The excitement of what is to come is contagious and has been drawing new people to Water Street. With so many new faces in town, Gardiner Main Street's monthly MIX! gathering has become a popular way for people to connect with their community. At a time when people are overscheduled and communicate mainly through social media, text and email, MIX! offers a refreshing change of pace.

This "after hours" event is a way for business owners, community members and volunteers to come together face to face to network and learn about what's happening in Gardiner.

For Gardiner Main Street, MIX! holds a significant amount of value. The opportunity to bring business owners together to discuss their successes as well as struggles and offer the chance to collaborate enhances the business-friendly downtown Gardiner is known for. This open event also helps the organization connect with members of the community who may not be reached on other platforms.

Having a network of volunteers is vital to the organization's success; furthering connections through MIX! helps bring in new volunteers that add a fresh perspective to ongoing projects. MIX! is hosted at a different location on the first Wednesday of every month from 5 - 6:30 p.m. Are you looking for the location of the next MIX!? Follow the Gardiner Main Street Facebook page or sign up for the weekly e-blast through the Gardiner Main Street website.

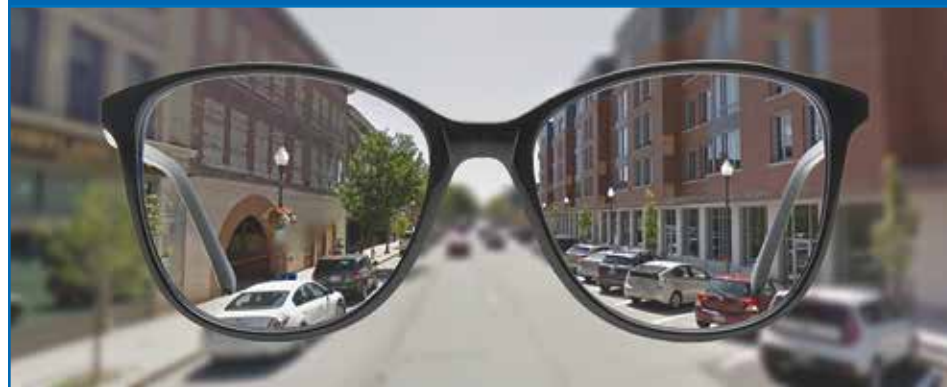
The Gardiner Main Street Streetscape Committee is deep into planning projects for the fair weather months with the goal of making Gardiner the most desirable place to visit, to work and to live. This committee is behind the 24 planters along Water Street each spring. More than a dozen volunteers (including store owners) water these planters almost every day. If you would like to help, or if you love garden-



Gardiner welcomes enthusiastic gardeners to maintain city gardens and planters.

ing, volunteers are needed to help curate our public gardens and parks. Besides taking care of the planters on the street, volunteers tend to city gardens all over town. Other projects include painting rails at the Common and maintaining the historic fountain. To find out more about volunteer opportunities, e-mail info@gardinermainstreet.org.

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SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING GARDINER EVENTS:

Saturday, April 13:

Downtown Gardiner Music Walk

Saturday, April 20: Spring Fling

Thursdays beginning in May:
Classic Car Cruise-In at Waterfront Park

Friday, May 17: ArtWalk Gardiner

**Friday nights beginning on Friday,
June 21:** Johnson Hall's Free Waterfront
Concert Series

Saturday, June 22:

Greater Gardiner River Festival

See the full community calendar at
gardinermainstreet.org



Welcome to Downtown Augusta

Augusta Art Walk set for May 17

Submission deadline is April 26

BY AUGUSTA MAIN STREET
Special to What's Up Downtown

Calling all artists! The annual Augusta Art Walk is just around the corner, so if you are an artist looking to participate, please submit your art work to the Augusta Downtown Alliance by April 26.

Details for submission can be found at mainearts.maine.gov/Postings/Blogs/Detail/Call-for-Art-Augusta-Art-Walk-1.

SAVE THE DATE!

AUGUSTA ART WALK

MAY 17, 2019

5PM-8PM



New restaurant to open on Water Street

A new restaurant is opening up later this spring at 233 Water St. The brainchild of Augusta area native, Eli Irland, a Portland-based chef, The Oak Table & Bar will feature a special rotating menu highlighting seasonal ingredients, along with a la carte fare and a full bar.

Please be sure to follow their progress by liking them on Facebook.

First Opportunity Zone project in state to occur in downtown Augusta

After months of negotiations, GenX Capital Partners of Miami has closed on financing for the redevelopment of 333 Water St. in downtown Augusta. Located in the old Odd Fellows Hall, and purchased by Dirigo Capital Partners and Capital Area Properties last summer, this new development promises to bring 30 new market-rate units to Down-

town Augusta, making it the largest project of its kind in the downtown area.

Financed through new tax incentives outlined in the Opportunity Zone program, a measure that allows reinvestment of capital gains into designated areas, this project represents a first for the state of Maine and is among one of the first in the country.



The old Odd Fellows Hall on Water Street will undergo development to provide 30 new market-rate units.

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Welcome to Downtown Skowhegan

Outdoor recreation program for all ages soon to be a reality in Skowhegan

BY MAIN STREET SKOWHEGAN
Special to What's Up Downtown

Main Street Skowhegan has been awarded grant funding from the Maine Commission for Community Service and the Corporation for National & Community Service. The funds will be used to enroll three full-time AmeriCorps members as outdoor recreation coaches for a three-year period beginning this spring.

Under Main Street's guidance, the outdoor recreation coaches will spearhead implementation of the Skowhegan AmeriCorps Outdoor Recreation Program. Developed in collaboration with the Outdoor Sport Institute and other

local stakeholders, the program is designed to get Skowhegan residents of all ages active outdoors and engaged with nature.

In addition to scheduling and executing outdoor recreation programming – from nature walks to paddling expeditions and mountain bike training – the outdoor recreation coaches will recruit local volunteers who will help sustain the program for years to come.

The coaches will also establish a gear library so residents can borrow outdoor recreation equipment such as kayaks, snowshoes, skis, and bikes free of charge.

Main Street is currently working to fill the outdoor recreation coach positions. Learn more at runofriver.org/outdoor-recreation-coaches.

New Skowhegan event to offer local food experiences

Main Street Skowhegan is teaming up with the Wesserunnett Arts Council and the Maine Grain Alliance on a new event, AgriCulture, that will take place Saturday, June 15 in Skowhegan.

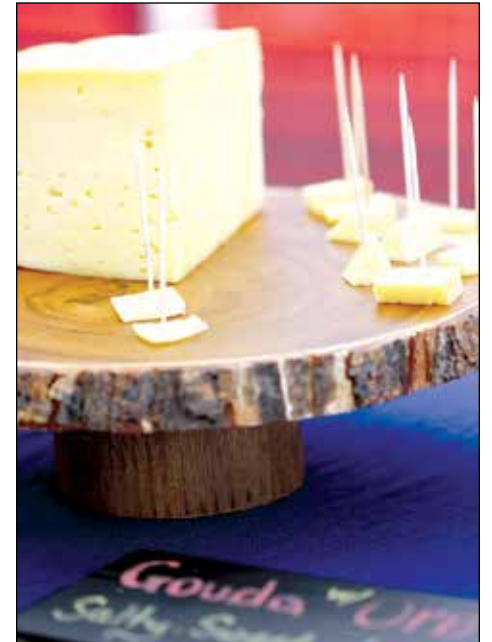
Capitalizing on Somerset County's agricultural bounty and ultra-local food products, AgriCulture will feature local food experiences, demonstrations and workshops. The event will culminate with a festival in downtown Skowhegan that will include samples from local food vendors, music, a cash bar with local beer and wine.

There will be numerous opportunities for attendees to learn more about where products come from through first-hand experiences.

More details will be available soon at agriculturemaine.org.

Karen Segler photo

Local handcrafted cheese will be one of the features of the new AgriCulture event this year.



Skowhegan Home Show returns in May

After a year off, the Skowhegan Home Show is returning to the Skowhegan State Fairgrounds on Saturday, May 11.

Coordinated by Main Street Skowhegan, the Skowhegan Home Show is an opportunity for local companies to showcase their products and services while local people have a chance to learn what the area has to offer for home building, remodeling and landscaping projects.

Learn more about the region's only home show and sign up to be a vendor at skowheganhome.show.com.



Crowds gather at many Skowhegan festivals including this one, the Skowhegan Craft Brew Festival scheduled for Aug. 31 this year.

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Anonymous \$31,000 donated to Skowhegan's Run of River Project

An anonymous donor recently gave \$31,000 for the Run of River Whitewater Recreation Area, a proposed whitewater park and expanded trails network that will be located in and around the Kennebec River Gorge in downtown Skowhegan.

The donation brings the total raised for Run of River in the last nine months to \$124,000. This includes a \$25,000 grant from the Quimby Family Foundation, a \$25,000 matching gift from a Maine Community Foundation Donor Advised Fund, \$40,000 from the Somerset County Tax Increment Financing Community Benefits Fund and \$3,000 raised via Skowhegan River Fest event proceeds.

"We're so grateful to the donor for this amazing gift," said Kristina Cannon, Run of River Committee member and Main Street Skowhegan executive director. "We can't thank them enough for believing in Skowhegan, this project and the vision for community transformation through outdoor recreation."

The committee will use the donation to help cover costs of required permits from state and federal agencies, including the

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Maine Department of Environmental Protection and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Total permitting costs are expected to be \$180,000. The committee has submitted several grant applications to raise the remaining \$149,000 and hopes to apply for permits this summer.

The committee is planning for construction of the whitewater park – three whitewater features for playboating (where the paddler performs various technical moves in one place), surfing and tubing; access trails; and terraced seating – during the summer of 2021. This timing will coincide with the installation of a fish passage apparatus at upriver Weston Dam and ensure low water levels for construction in the gorge.

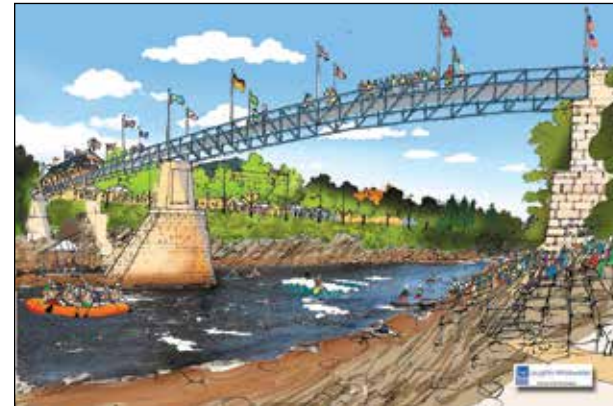
Total funds raised for the \$5.3 million whitewater park now exceed \$1.56 million. In addition to pursuing grant funding, the committee is gearing up for a major fundraising campaign to help raise the additional \$3.7 million.

For more information, please see runof-river.org or contact Kristina Cannon at kristina@mainstreetskowhegan.org or call 612-2571.



Photo courtesy of SCTC

Above, Somerset Career & Technical Center (SCTC) students are shown paddling in the Kennebec in downtown Skowhegan. AmeriCorp coaches will help more residents enjoy such activities.



At left, an artist's rendition of the Run of River Whitewater Recreation Area.

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**PECHAKUCHA NIGHT
WATERVILLE V.3 I**

Friday, May 3
Colby College Diamond Building
Reception: 6:20pm, Presentations: 7:20pm



ARTS IN BLOOM

Saturday, May 18
A community celebration of all things
spring!



THEATRE CAMP

Waterville Opera House
July 29 - August 3, August 5 - 10,
August 12 - 17



ART CAMPS

Common Street Arts
July 15 - 19, July 22 - 26,
July 29 - August 2, August 12 - 16



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WATERVILLE ROCKS!

Castonguay Square
June 28, July 5, July 26, August 2

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