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APR. 6, 2000

Casco Bay Weekly

APRIL 6, 2000 • VOL XII, NO 14
GREATER PORTLAND'S WEEKLY JOURNAL OF NEWS, ARTS AND OPINION **FREE**
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Who's TO BLAME?



ILLUSTRATION / COREY PANDOLPH

Artists and city officials wrangle over what's to be done to save the Portland Arts District.

ALLEN DAMMANN'S STORY
STARTS ON PAGE 10

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"OFF THE MAP"
REVIEWED
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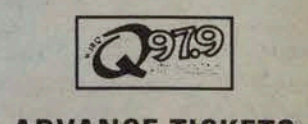
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TALK

A CONVERSATION WITH

CLAIRE MAUREY

Claire Maurey is 11 and has been dancing with the Portland School of Ballet since the age of 6. This past Christmas, Maurey appeared in "The Nutcracker" and this summer the fifth-grader, who spends four days a week in dance class, will travel to New Jersey for advanced ballet study.

Why do you like dancing?

Dancing is fun ... and my mom did it in college.

Does dancing in pointe shoes hurt your toes?

Well it does, yeah, you get blisters. And it probably hurts a lot if you're really good and you do it like all the time and you're doing all kinds of combinations with your pointe shoes on.

It does hurt a little, yeah. But it's worth it.

It's hard to stand up on my tiptoes. Is it tough to dance on them?

No, not really. There's a flat part on the tip of your pointe shoes that you can go up there and just stay. It's not hard getting on pointe because you're just on a little hard, flat surface.

What keeps you from wiping out when you're up there on your toes?

Well, we have this stuff called rosin. Like we have a wood floor in one of the studios and it's really slippery. If we put rosin on it, it doesn't make it like stick, but ... your foot won't slip out right from you.

What's the deal with ballerina feet?

They look ugly. They're kind of funky. But mine don't look ugly yet [because] they're under socks [and] I haven't been on [pointe] that long.

Do you ever come home and ask anyone in your family for a foot rub?

Well, they really don't like doing that.

In karate, students wear different colors to denote their level of expertise. Is it the same in ballet?

Yeah. Different levels mean different colors. I'm in C-5 and that's purple. My leotard is purple and my tights are pink.

Do your friends think it's weird to spend all this time dancing?

No. One of my really good friends, she plays soccer and so she does that a lot. I dance and she plays soccer.

Ever get nervous before a performance?

Um, yeah. I get nervous I'm going to do something wrong. Like I'm going to fall or collapse or I'm going to do something wrong. Like I'm afraid I'm going to mess up.

Have you ever messed up?

No. Like I think I've done something off count or by accident done something else. Then I've just said, 'Oh well, I've done something else, oh well.'

A lot of ballet is danced to classical music. Is there any music you wouldn't want to dance to?

I listen to a lot of classical. I like any type of music. But I don't really care for country. I don't know, it's kind of weird.

Interview by Connie Pacillo; photo by Luc Demers



"It's a feeling of flowing. When there's rosin on the floor it's really nice instead of just bare wood because it's more grabby and it's more soft. It feels good."

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Simple little things

Those critics of this column, who complain it lacks intellectual depth, trivializes complex matters and resorts to ridicule to disguise its author's lack of insight, are, of course, correct. Still, there's something to be said for shallowness. For one thing, shallowness never produces a sentence like this one, from an op-ed piece by state Sens. John Nutting and Peter Mills in the *Bangor Daily News* of March 30: "It is a sophistry persistently perpetuated that equity in school funding can be improved by adjusting for variations in income."

Nutting and Mills, for all the depth and insight they probably bring to their subject (we're making an assumption here because we didn't read the rest of the article), have missed an essential point about their topic (which we're assuming, perhaps incorrectly, is state education funding). Allow us to illustrate that point with an example.

A couple of years ago, we were interviewing candidates for the Legislature. Among the questions we asked them was, "Can you explain how the state school-funding formula works?" Most of them struggled to describe the bizarre mathematical process used by bureaucrats in Augusta to determine how much money to allocate to each city and town for schools. It's based on property valuation. It's based on student population. It's based on average incomes in each area. It's based on TV ratings for local high school football games. Divide by last week's Megabucks winning number, multiply by the square root of the governor's IQ and add the number of times during the current legislative session that a representative or senator will rise from his or her seat to announce, "I hadn't intended to speak on this issue, but ..."

The correct answer to our question was, of course, "No." Shallow? Perhaps, but it got points for being comprehensible. Which brings us (finally) to our latest persistent sophistry: We think the state's business community is full of crap.

Well, actually, it's a little more complicated than that. In March, the Maine Citizen Leadership Fund, a liberal, do-gooder group dedicated to investigating the terminally boring, released a report showing 21 companies in the state had discovered a loophole in the law that allowed them to get a refund on property taxes they never paid.

Here's how it works. A business asks a municipality for a tax break to help finance a new or expanded operation. The city or town agrees to give the company back most of the extra property taxes generated by the project. This is called tax increment financing or TIF, because that's a more politically acceptable name than, say, giving away the ranch.

Next, the business files an application for a state Business and Equipment Tax Reimbursement (BETR), asking for a refund of the property taxes on all the new equipment it put in its new building. Except the company never paid those taxes, because it got a TIF. Doesn't matter. The state reimburses the money anyway.

Among the companies that have used this (admittedly legal) scam are Bath Iron Works, L.L. Bean and National Semiconductor. Among the taxpayers who've gotten screwed are you and me. This "double dipping" is costing the public an estimated \$12 million this year alone. If the law isn't changed to prevent businesses from taking both refunds, the unwarranted payoff to corporations could amount to as much as \$186 million over the next 24 years.

"If you get welfare," state Sen. Chellie Pingree told us last year, "and you receive a windfall — back child-support payments or the like — the state takes that money to cover part of your welfare costs. If you get Medicaid to cover the cost of nursing-home care, when you die, the state takes your home and sells it to cover the cost. We do this with individuals, but not with businesses. It's odd public policy."

This year, the Legislature is considering a bill that would limit companies to one tax break or the other — no more getting a refund for taxes that haven't been paid. That seems so logical, so reasonable, so — dare we say it — simple that nobody could possibly object. But those who benefit from TIF and BETR aren't interested in logic.

"Political efforts to roll back economic development programs are an irresponsible attack on the state's economy," Dana Connors, the president of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce told a State House news conference on March 29.

"Such program changes or losses would do nothing less than reinforce the state's reputation as an anti-business state," said Eugene Conologue, the town manager of Millinocket.

Suddenly the argument isn't about double dipping. It's about, well, it's hard to tell what it's about. But that's the beauty of complexity. It doesn't have to make sense to boobs like us.

It just has to steal our money.

Having a TIF? E-mail ishmaelia@gwi.net, or write to CBW, 561 Congress St., Portland, ME 04101. We can make it BETR.

politics & other mistakes



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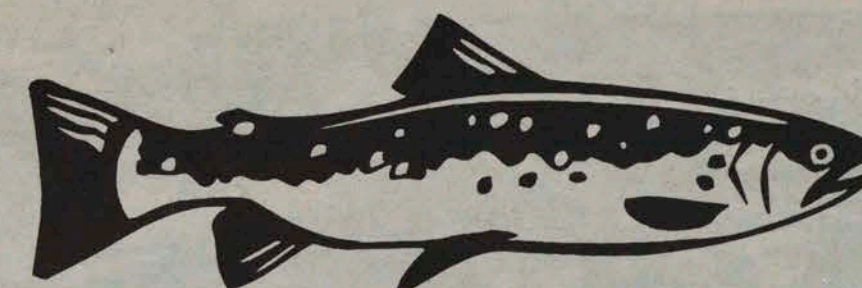
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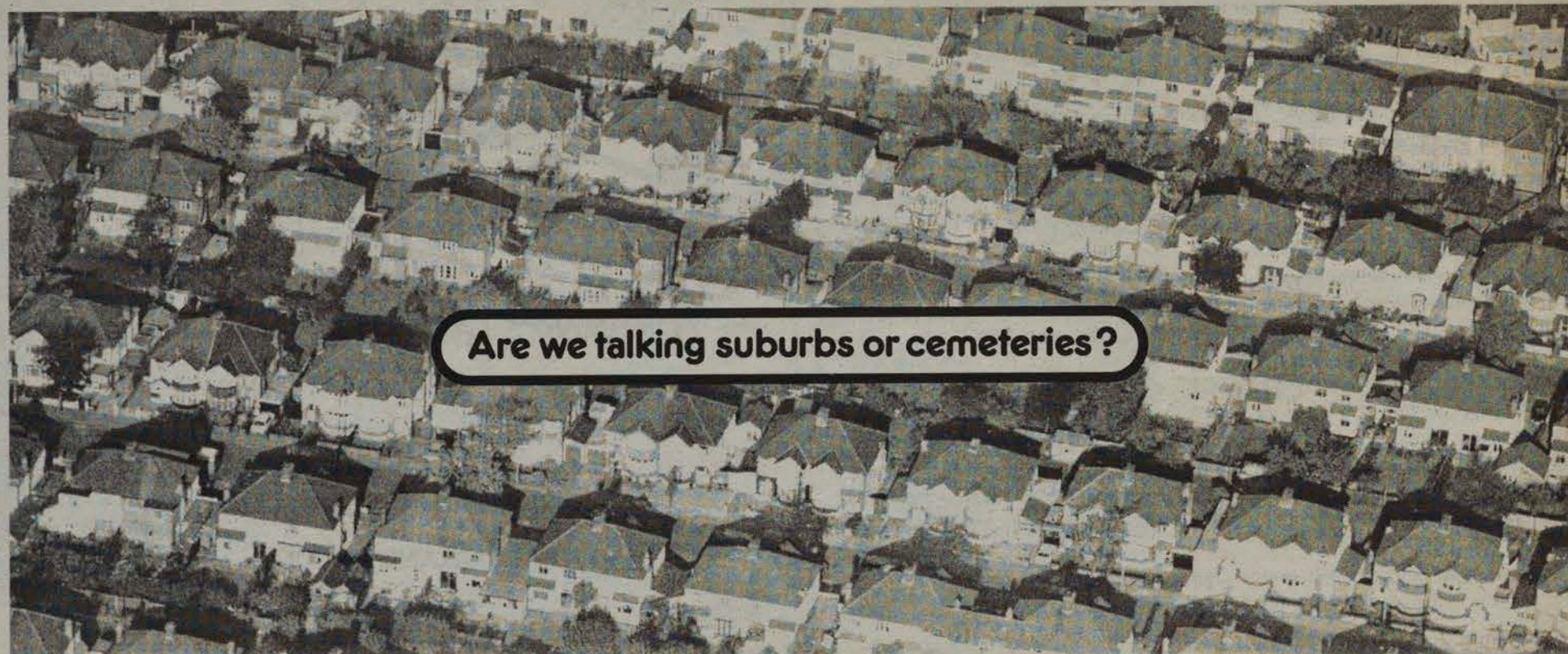
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Diamond head

I never wanted an engagement ring.

In fact, when the subject came up, I told my now-husband he could keep his four months' salary (or whatever princely sum one is supposed to cough up for a ring) stashed under his mattress, because I wasn't interested.

See, I have a bad history with jewelry — new watches croaking, earrings taking wing, stones popping out of rings, pendants slithering from my neck, bracelets catching on things and exploding into a shower of beads — and I had more or less given up on it.

Then my mom stepped in. One evening when I was visiting, she grew stern and serious. In youth this meant I had done something very bad, and I instantly got that old "uh-oh" sick feeling.

She said she had been thinking.

She wanted me to have her mother's engagement ring, which she had worn since my grandmother's death some 20 years prior. At first I protested. I thanked her but said I didn't want to wear a ring. She persisted. I thought about it. The ring was neither grand nor gaudy. The small diamond was encased in a simple boxy setting. The white gold had dulled to a steely patina. It was history. I conferred with my betrothed, and we decided to happily accept the gift.

The three of us met shortly thereafter at Springer's Jewelers to have the ring fitted to my ape-sized hand. As the jewel shone from halfway down my finger, not only did I suddenly want it — I wanted it now. I had to stop myself from stomping my foot when they said I'd have to wait a couple weeks.

The ring took some getting used to. Although the stone was small, it caught on everything, especially my underwear when I was pulling it up. I had never worn a ring on that finger. It felt foreign, weighty. Sometimes I'd look down and wonder "Whose hand is that?"

After a time, however, I grew comfortable with it. I would gently move the diamond back and forth with my thumb, as though I were switching a light on and off. I'd bounce sunlight off its surface in a spray of sparkles. It made other women's "rocks" — big, bulbous stones jutting out of Tiffany settings — look like they were just, well, trying too hard.

When it was time to shop for wedding rings, I was sure I wanted nothing but a slim band. The next thing I knew, I had rings of every sort covering my fingers. "More jewels!" I cried, my greedy eyes roving from case to case. Then I slipped a simple diamond and sapphire band beside the engagement ring, and I almost heard a click. They belonged together. They represented forever. Once they were joined, I never took them off. Wearing them pleased me. Every day.

"The ring took some getting used to. Although the stone was small, it caught on everything, especially my underwear."

And now the engagement ring is gone.

The facts surrounding its disappearance are maddeningly simple. It was lost on a recent visit to Sugarloaf. We arrived at our friends' camp in Carrabassett Valley. We went to lunch. We returned to the camp, then walked to the local store. When we got back to the camp, I took my coat and gloves off and noticed it was missing.

We combed the camp and my clothes. We retraced my steps. I talked to the owners and employees at the businesses I had visited. We crawled on floors. We rooted in corners. I took the garbage from the restaurant's bathroom out to the loading dock and went through it icky piece by icky piece. I filed a report with the police. I placed an ad in the local paper. I even recited a mini prayer to St. Anthony, finder of missing objects: "Tony, Tony, turn around, let the lost ring soon be found." All to no avail.

The day we arrived home, we received a box from friends in California — a late wedding present. Gag gifts — a hula girl, some fuzzy dice — were scattered among all the packing popcorn and real presents. And then I reached to the bottom of the box, felt something hard and hauled up a huge plastic diamond engagement ring, big enough to fit over all four fingers. It was like receiving a giant raspberry reply to my prayer.

Of course, the most difficult part was telling my mother. She was, as I expected, all grace and wit. After she consoled me and made sure I had covered all my bases to recover it, she looked at me and said, "It was only a ring, and someday you'll have another to replace it." She paused, fingered the diamond on her finger with her thumb and, before breaking into a broad smile, added, "But not from me."

To lose a beloved thing is a small death. You know it's only an object. You tell yourself, "No one is hurt. Life will go on." But you are sad and you are sorry. Your mind says it's not your fault, but your heart says you've done a very bad thing. And that gives way to grief. A small grief, yes, but a grief all the same.

I will never stop missing my ring. My thumb now absently reaches for the stone, and when I look down and see it's no longer there, I get that sick "uh-oh" feeling and wonder, "Whose hand is that?"

But the ring is still with me. I wear the weight of its absence on my finger. Forever.

Elizabeth Peavey does not recommend addressing St. Anthony as "Tony."

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The cost of living in Portland is about to go up — way up. Unless city councilors display an unusual determination to cut spending, property taxes on an average home assessed at \$100,000 will jump \$150 next fiscal year. That's the **biggest increase in more than a decade.** More than half that hike is a result of higher school spending. Much of the increase in city spending is the result of higher insurance costs, bigger fuel bills, previously negotiated worker raises and rising debt payments. Worse news: None of the extra tax burden reflects the surprisingly high price tag for fixing the city's aging elementary schools. Early estimates had put that figure at around \$40 million, but consultants hired by the city now say the amount will be double that. Depending on which schools are closed, upgraded or replaced, the cost could range from \$78 million to \$87 million. In his annual budget message to the City Council on April 3, City Manager Bob Ganley said that money will have to come from the state and federal governments. Ganley said Portland taxpayers have already spent \$43 million over the past decade fixing the city's two high schools and three middle schools, while other towns, many of them wealthier than Portland, got state aid to cover the cost of new schools.

None of those financial problems explains the rash of **bomb threats** that have plagued Portland's schools recently. On March 29, Portland High School was closed for the second time in a week after piles of used and live ammunition were found spread near doorways. Lyman Moore Middle School classes were interrupted on April 3 by a written bomb threat. Three students have been apprehended in the cases, and Portland Police Chief Mike Chitwood is urging prosecutors to seek harsh sentences to deter copycat crimes in the future.

Portland's new civil service rules have produced their first positive results. The rules now allow the police and fire departments to interview any candidate who passes the required tests. The old rules limited interviewees to the top scorers. The revised procedure allowed the city to hire **three women as new cops**, bringing the total in the department to 18 out of 156 officers. Also one of the new hires is a black woman, a first for Portland's overwhelmingly white and male force.

When the Portland City Council votes on what kind of deal to offer **Idexx Corp.** of Westbrook to induce the biotechnology company to build its new headquarters in the city, at least three members will have to excuse themselves. Councilor George Campbell is assisting Idexx in finding a new site. Councilor Nathan Smith works for a law firm that represents the company. And Councilor Tom Kane's wife is an Idexx employee. Since it will take five positive votes to approve any deal with Idexx, as few as two of the remaining six councilors could block the project.

CBW

CITY

Mysterious departure

A Deering High School teacher resigns, but nobody will say why

by CONNIE PACILLO

Students at Deering High School in Portland want to know why art teacher Diane Wiencke has agreed to resign in August 2000 after being out on a paid leave of absence since September 1999. But school officials and top administrators refuse to comment, citing the confidentiality of personnel matters.

In December 1999, the Deering High student newspaper, *Ramblings*, ran a story, "Deering administration mute on firing policy," about the mystery surrounding Wiencke's absence. According to that article, concerned students had asked Brenda Roy, Deering's principal, about Wiencke's departure, but were told Roy could not comment because state law forbids any discussion of an employee's personnel file. Roy did say talking about the issue publicly would be "opening a can of worms" that "didn't need any more attention."

The newspaper noted the administration's silence had "fed students' curiosity" and led to the circulation of "countless rumors." Roy said she hoped students and faculty would maintain a "level of trust in the administration," and understand that "we have serious grounds for the actions we take."

In March 1999, Wiencke took part in a field trip to Rome involving students, parents and teachers from Deering and other schools. Officials would not comment on whether events during this trip were connected to her departure from the classroom.

On March 8 and 9, the School Committee scheduled two closed-door hearings on the Wiencke situation. Prior to those meetings, School Committee chair Sue Clark sent board members a memo, in which she warned the committee of its legal "obligation to conduct this hearing confidentially, with the identity of the teacher kept confidential."

In that memo, Clark also instructed committee members on how to handle inquiries from constituents or the press: "If someone telephones you at home and tries to lobby you about this matter, I think you can say it's a confidential matter about which you cannot comment. If the press calls, the answer should just be no comment."

On March 15, the School Committee accepted Wiencke's resignation, effective August 31, 2000. The vote was five in favor,

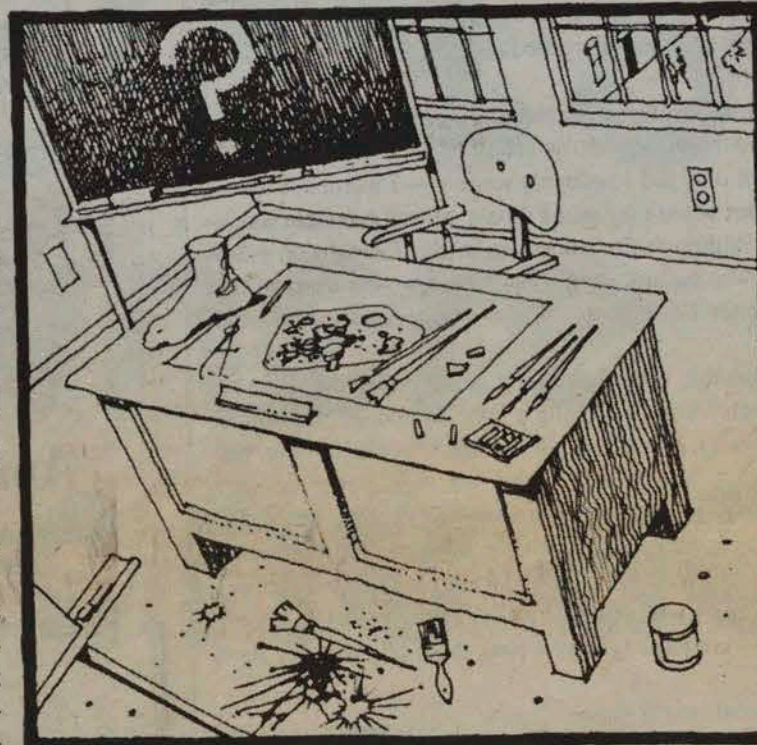


ILLUSTRATION / MARTIN SHIELDS

(RWS) incinerator, they'll eventually have to pick up the financial slack.

Portland and the other 30 cities and towns that use RWS pay the incinerator \$96 a ton to dispose of waste. A portion of that fee goes toward plant maintenance and upkeep. But in some years, that amount is insufficient to cover costs. In that case, each municipality is assessed a fee based on the amount of trash it hauled to the plant in 1995.

That year, Portlanders disposed of 22,041 tons of garbage at the incinerator. But since then, the city has instituted curbside recycling. Where residents once recycled just 5 percent of their trash, that rate has now risen to between 30 and 35 percent.

According to City Manager Bob Ganley, that means the amount of trash Portland sends to RWS has dropped. As a result, the RWS board recently agreed to update the method by which municipalities are assessed for plant maintenance. That method will now reflect the amount of trash cities and towns ship to RWS each year, as well as their disposal history over the past five years.

What that means for Portland is a reduction of about half a million dollars in the amount it owes.

Ganley said while paying less is good for Portland, other cities and towns that send their trash to RWS will eventually have to pay more. "It will be a hardship for other communities," he said. "But I think it's good ... because it encourages recycling."

City Councilor Jim Cloutier, a member of the RWS board, said the downside of Portland's windfall is that "other communities [that] don't recycle will have to pay more of the shortfall."

Freeport Town Manager Dale Olmstead, who chairs the RWS board, agreed. The problem, Olmstead said, is that some smaller towns don't yet see the benefit of pay-per-bag recycling programs like Portland's. He said smaller communities, like Freeport, that don't use color-coded trash bags and that have private trash collectors who sometimes cross town lines to pick up trash, run the risk of being charged for waste that isn't theirs.

Olmstead said it won't be long before smaller towns begin to "really feel the pain."

CONNIE PACILLO

PORTLAND SCHOOLS

Lobbyist hired

Department spends 20 grand to influence Legislature

The Portland School Department paid lobbyist Joseph Mackey \$20,000 for working the equivalent of one day a month for four months.

The department hired Mackey, who works for the Augusta lobbying firm Public Affairs Group, in November 1999. According to the terms of his contract, which ran from Dec. 1, 1999, through March 30, 2000, or the end of the 119th legislative session, Mackey assisted Superintendent Mary Jane McCalmon and the School Committee with strategic planning, legislative issues and monitoring the activities of state agencies and boards that could affect the amount of state education funding Portland receives.

Mackey said his work for the school system never amounted to more than eight hours in any given month.

Mackey, whose current client list includes L.L. Bean, the Automobile Manufacturers Association and the town of Ogunquit, said McCalmon hired him to help protect the department's interests in the Legislature. He said he hoped taxpayers wouldn't be confused about his well-paid, lightweight workload. He said he's worked hard for Portland, often staying at the State House late into the evening monitoring the Legislature.

Mackey said his activities on Portland's behalf were limited to eight hours a month because if he's employed for any more time than that, state law requires him to register as the school department's official lobbyist. McCalmon has yet to authorize that, but Mackey said he expects her to sometime in early April.

McCalmon did not return repeated phone calls seeking her comment. School Committee Chair Sue Clark said she couldn't comment on the specifics of Mackey's duties because she didn't have his contract in front of her.

School Committee member Jim Banks said this is the first time the school department has hired a lobbyist, and he supports the decision. Asked if any of McCalmon's highly paid administrators could do the job instead, Banks said, "Maybe the time has come to assign that."

Paying Mackey \$20,000 doesn't sit well with committee member Jeff Peters. "I think the money would be better spent on textbooks," Peters said.

When asked about Mackey's salary, Clark said, "I'm not in a position to comment on that." Clark said there is a line item in the School Department's fiscal year 2001 budget to pay for lobbying, but did not know how much money had been set aside.

City Manager Bob Ganley said while McCalmon has the authority to hire Mackey, city government rarely finds it necessary to employ outside lobbyists. "I'm not going to defend this," Ganley said. "That's their policy decision."

"I use my own staff for lobbyists."

CONNIE PACILLO

PORTLAND ELECTIONS

Zen Ben out

Meiklejohn fails to get enough signatures

Ben Meiklejohn, a would-be candidate in Portland's May 2 election, failed to collect enough signatures to run for the School Committee seat that represents Munjoy Hill, the Old Port and the islands.

Meiklejohn, a Green Independent Party activist who works with a variety of local youth groups, thought he had submitted the required 75 signatures on March 28, the filing deadline. But the city clerk's office determined he was three short of the minimum number of names needed to earn a place on the ballot.

With Meiklejohn out of the race, Otis Thompson of Peaks Island and Robert Griffin of Munjoy South are the remaining candidates for the seat being vacated by Bill Barron.

CONNIE PACILLO

loose change

CBW's staff has gathered these numbers from various sources too boring to be named.

Largest number of marijuana plants ever seized by police from an indoor growing operation in Maine: 1,200

Number of Portland roadways (streets, avenues, lanes, etc.) with the same name: 24 (Avalon, Avon, Bancroft, Bell, Bradley, Bramhall, Brookside, Candlewick, Clifton, Colonial, Deering, Dorothy, Femald, Forest, Hall, Hillcrest, Longwood, Ludlow, Park, Partridge, Pleasant, Ray, Riverside and Summer)

Names appearing three times: Deering (street, avenue, place), Forest (street, avenue, circle)

Number of drunk-driving convictions in 1998:

Cumberland County: 615

Maine: 3,605

Number of convictions of people with two or more previous drunk-driving convictions: Cumberland County: 102

Maine: 673

Number of convictions for operating after license suspension for people previously found guilty of drunk driving:

Cumberland County: 163

Maine: 977

Percentage of Hispanic students enrolled in public schools in Maine in 1997-98: .05

Percentage of Hispanic students in U.S. public schools: 14

Maine's ranking among all states and the District of Columbia for percentage of Hispanics in public schools: 48

"I may be old and I may be bent/But I had the money till it all got spent/I had the money till they made me pay/Then I had the sense to be on my way." — Warren Zevon. *Similar economic insights can be forwarded to this column by e-mailing editor1@maine.rr.com or writing to CBW, 561 Congress St., Portland, ME 04101.*

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WHO'S to BLAME?

Artists and city officials wrangle over what's to be done to save the Portland Arts District.

ILLUSTRATIONS/COREY RANDOLPH

BY ALLEN DAMMANN

Call it the Kenny Rogers syndrome.

Ever since the announcement in March that Portland's Oak Street Theatre would be transformed from an intimate performance venue into less intimate, but more profitable, commercial space, both bohemians and nonbohemians in the community have been speculating on the fate of the arts in the downtown area, the city's commitment to those arts and the overall usefulness of trying to nourish culture in the midst of an economic boom.

In other words, when it comes to Portland's Arts District, some people are wondering whether it's time to hold 'em — or time to fold 'em.

Artists accuse city officials of using arts and cultural organizations as a mere economic development tool to bring back the formerly depressed downtown. Theater groups and others say now that Congress Street and vicinity is prosperous, the city has abandoned them. City officials counter that the city has already poured millions into the Arts District, and that they can't impose rent control on real estate that has now become more valuable.

"We're small potatoes," said Mike Levine, director of the Acorn School for the Performing Arts and one of the founders of Oak Street Theatre. "When Oak Street closes, if it does, the local theater scene is pretty much going to disappear. I really suspect what's going to happen is, the smaller grassroots work is going to move out of the Arts District."

"I feel a personal sense of betrayal," he said.

Created in 1995, Portland's Arts District stretches loosely along Congress Street from Longfellow Square to City Hall. The district was established to help revitalize the moribund downtown while simultaneously contributing to that elusive — and magnetic — element known as quality of life.

That the first objective has succeeded can be seen in the escalating prices for

downtown property. The potential new tenants of Oak Street Theatre, for instance, are offering to cough up \$1 million for a 10-year lease.

As for quality of life, there's a growing artistic menu downtown, from shows at offbeat galleries such as Local 188 on Longfellow Square to plays performed at the recently opened Skinny to poetry readings at notoriously philistine hangouts like Geno's nightclub on Brown Street.

Granted, some might argue whether productions like "Waiting for Godot" add to or detract from one's joie de vivre, but there's no denying a cultural atmosphere has been generated along the corridor stretching from Longfellow's chair to Our Lady of Victory's pinheaded pate.

However, the Arts District is not the Field of Dreams, and creating it doesn't mean bohemians will come — or if they do, that they'll be able to afford to stay. In addition to Oak Street Theatre's actors' being replaced with cubicles, Tom Crotty, the huffy owner of the Frost Gully Gallery, recently decided to pack up and move his business to Freeport after 27 years. Other ventures, such as the newly opened art gallery Zero Station, have eschewed the Downtown District altogether to set up shop in South Portland.

Tremors such as these forecast not only a dissolving of the city's cultural bunker, but a potential threat to the city itself.

"A thriving arts community, whether it's the performing arts or galleries, is a critical piece of the downtown and a critical piece of economic development," said City Councilor Karen Geraghty, who's trying to solve the Oak Street dilemma and preserve the district's future. "I'm trying to figure out, what do other communities do to protect their arts?"

In Portland, the answer for some is hybridizing. A number of venues have established themselves as crossbreeds of retail and culture. Take Local 188, for example. In addition to housing contemporary art, the establishment is also a restaurant, guaranteeing a supplemental income. Farther down Congress Street, Coffee by Design serves up art exhibitions with its espressos.

Those organizations that stick strictly to art must depend on ticket sales, individual donations, corporate sponsorship and small handouts from groups like the Maine Community Foundation, which offers grants to nonprofits. In 1995, Mad Horse Theatre, one of the production groups that could be orphaned by the loss of Oak Street, nearly went under before a last-ditch fundraising campaign managed to keep it alive. According to Levine, the Acorn School creates some courses specifically to meet the requirements of a grant.

It's a hard-knock life, and when it comes to the fate of the Arts District, some folks are pulling another Kenny Rogers and wondering what condition its condition is in.

"I'd like to see, if you will, a review of the Arts District plan," said Chris White, who runs the C.B. White Gallery and the Arts Resource Service in Portland. "The Arts District was a creation of the city, and now we're five, six years down the line, and it appears there are some bugs in the system. It's not doing all of the things it was hoped it would do. It's time to review the original plans."

SHOWDOWN at Oak Street

The press release left little to the imagination. Issued to the media on March 20, its headline declared, "Oak Street Theatre To Close Its Doors." At a follow-up press conference that same afternoon, Harlan Baker, president of the Oak Street board of directors, announced the reason behind the ominous statement: After seven years, landlord Penelope Carson wanted to earn more from the building than the \$2,000 a month the theater paid.

And why not? The formerly forlorn building that houses the 99-seat performance space has steadily increased in value, thanks to both its downtown location and its proximity to Bell Atlantic's fiber optics network. It's hardly unique.



"The city wanted to revitalize [the downtown] and that's why they created the Arts District plan. I have to look at that plan and say, 'Was the idea to stimulate the cultural vitality of downtown Portland?' I don't think so. I think it was to stimulate the economy."

— Mike Levine, director of the Acorn School for the Performing Arts

The asking price for property up and down Congress Street has inflated with the boom, resulting in a temptation to cash in even if it threatens the art community.

In the meantime, city officials are meeting with representatives of the theater companies that were housed in Oak Street in an attempt to find a new home for these groups.

"The Arts District is turning around in terms of the landlords' ability to rent their properties for more money," said Levine. "When we looked at Oak Street [in 1993], it had been vacant for a long time, and it was not what you would call desirable property. The city wanted to revitalize that part of town and that's why they created the Arts District plan. I have to look at that plan and say, 'Was the idea to stimulate the cultural vitality of downtown Portland?' I don't think so. I think it was to stimulate the economy."

In fact, the dilemma faced by the Oak Street Theatre is a classic Old West paradox. A gunslinger moves in and cleans up the town, only to find afterward he's no longer wanted in the prosperous order he helped establish.

It's happened before. In the 1970s, real estate agent Frank Akers maintained a building in the Old Port reserved exclusively for artists, giving them a roof over their heads for \$50 a month. But as business in the area picked up, rents went up and artists began packing up.

"They don't come back here and locate because the cost of living is prohibitive," said Akers. "It's all about the dollar. The artists can't afford to live in the Old Port because the landlord can't afford to give them a reasonable rent. That's a fact of life."

"I'd be surprised if the city would rent [Portland High School Auditorium] to me for the productions I want to do. I'm doing a play now with eight gay men and full frontal nudity."

— J.D. Merritt, co-founder and producer, Flaming Productions

"I'd like to see them come back here, because they offered an awful lot of color," Akers said. "It was charming."

"It's a historical, economic phenomenon," said Barbara Hager, executive director of Portland's Downtown District and a native of the Windy City. "I've seen this happen in a number of areas in Chicago. People are drawn to where the artists are because it's cool and chic. Market forces take hold and the artists are priced out."

"There's no question," Hager said, "we want to keep artists in the Arts District. There's no question the district needs a black box theater."

Unfortunately, the Oak Street may turn out like that other kind of black box: the kind found amidst airplane wreckage, bearing a message that's too little, too late.

For his part, Levine keeps a chin-up attitude by arguing the closing of Oak Street might — at the very least — serve as a warning to protect the Arts District in the future. Nonetheless, he's clearly frustrated something wasn't done sooner to prevent his own theater's dilemma. He claims he gave the heads up twice: first to the consultant hired in 1995 to help establish the Arts District, then to the Portland Arts & Cultural Alliance (PACA) in December of 1999.

"PACA said we'll have to set up a committee, and a committee never got set up," said Levine. "That's the biggest joke of all. I said to them,

"I'm just a theater person here. You understand these things better than me. Help me out here."

"Personal disillusionment" led him to resign as the secretary of PACA a week after the announcement that Oak Street Theatre might be closing.

PACA officials, meanwhile, tell a different tale.

"We are very concerned about the whole issue," said Deborah Krichels, executive director of the group. "I've known for some time Oak Street was having these ongoing problems. I've talked to Oak Street about what they could do. We decided to convene a task force, but [Levine] said he didn't want to be involved, and we felt the energy wasn't there. And that's fairly sudden notice for what happened. The timing was last minute."

Even though PACA receives \$80,000 a year from the city, Krichels said the organization simply doesn't have the financial resources to bail out threatened venues like Oak Street. That money, she said, is needed for basic necessities ("the lights on, me here"). What little is left over goes toward supporting such ventures as the free programming in Congress Square during the summer.

As for local government, City Manager Bob Ganley said Portland's hands are tied. "The relationship between the landlord and the tenant is something we generally don't get into," Ganley said. "It's the same with the housing market. Rents go up, people who own the buildings want to make money. The Downtown Portland Corporation has provided a lot of assistance helping people move downtown. The only thing we haven't gotten into is rent assistance or rent control. You have to encourage people to invest downtown. People look at what they're going to pay and their profits."

Ganley is mildly unsympathetic to Oak Street's dilemma. He points out the city has already invested large sums of money in the arts' infrastructure, from sinking millions into the Portland Museum of Art and Merrill Auditorium to selling its Longfellow Square property to the Center for Cultural Exchange at half the market value. Plus Portland has pumped a quarter of a million dollars into the restoration of the St. Lawrence Church, he said, which is also to be used as a performance space.

"I think the city has done a huge amount to keep the arts in place," said Ganley. "We've got auditoriums that are underutilized, but [Oak Street Theatre] said, 'No, we don't want to move.' How many venues do you need or can you have? Shouldn't you maximize the ones you have before you

need more?"

From Oak Street Theatre's point of view, it's not that simple. Moving to a new space entails the challenge of letting the public know where they've relocated ("We still have people who think we're on Forest Avenue, and we moved three years ago," said Andrew Sokoloff, artistic director for Mad Horse Theatre), and some of the available venues simply aren't suitable for the acting groups, such as Flaming Productions, currently sheltered at Oak Street.

Speaking of the Portland High School Auditorium, Flaming Productions' co-founder and producer J.D. Merritt said, "It's expensive to rent and it's not ideally suited for most theatrical producers' needs. It's a big house. Most of the things I want to produce don't warrant that. And I'd be surprised if the city would rent the space to me for the productions I want to do. I'm doing a play now with eight gay men and full frontal nudity."

Then there are the intangibles. "There's a certain energy in the Oak Street Theatre, a certain history to the space," said Levine. "There's a feeling our identity is wrapped up in the place."

Levine, like the other members of Oak Street, is careful to point out there's no ill will between them and landlord Carson. It's not personal, it's business. Besides, the theater has its own business to attend to.

"Our bargain with the people of Portland is that we're going to do the best theater we can, and it's our responsibility to do that," said Sokoloff. "My hope is that it would be downtown, but I do have to look out for what's in the best interest of the theater, and if it's not downtown, it's not downtown."

The BLAME game

Tom Crotty has issues. Lots of them.

In fact, name any bone in your body and the seasoned gallery owner probably has a reason to pick it.

Take, for example, his attitude toward the Arts District: "There's nothing going on, that's what's wrong with it. It's a nothing. A nowhere. A zero."

It's exactly that belief that led Crotty to shut down his Portland operation in March and head to Freeport. Questions of finances, gentrification and rising rents aside, he accuses Portland in general, and the Maine College of Art (MECA) specifically, of chicanery.

"It's a scam," he said. "It's a reverse chicken and the egg of some kind. All these people are so infatuated with [MECA]. These kids go in there with stars in their eyes, and they hit the streets four years later and they have no idea what's waiting for them. Go look at the faculty shows, the student shows, and you see an incredibly narrow manifest



"I think the city has done a huge amount to keep the arts in place. We've got auditoriums that are underutilized, but [Oak Street Theatre] said, 'No, we don't want to move.' How many venues do you need or can you have? Shouldn't you maximize the ones you have before you need more?"

— Bob Ganley, Portland city manager

that's coming out of that place."

Though Crotty's theory weaves from point to point, he argues that because MECA students are allowed to create before they learn, the public mistakes their work for being revolutionary — when, in fact, it's just undisciplined. Over time, he said, this fascination with nouveau art has dumbed down the collective aesthetics in town, distracting people from appreciating studied, well-crafted material.

"This is the consumer attitude," he said. "Show me something new." These people are too feeble-minded to see a statement in a drawing of a figure. Not an academic drawing, something that has pathos, a heart and soul to it. They're so busy with this consumer mentality. If something appears new and novel, it must be good."

Therefore, he claims, the Arts District has been a com-

mercial zone all along, bereft of vitality, ingenuity and — except for his gallery, it seems — any real art.

Not surprisingly, MECA president Roger Gilmore takes issue with Crotty's outlook.

"He doesn't have much time of day for the kind of art that is exhibited in our galleries and that many of our students and faculties do," Gilmore said. "OK, fine. I think the art college brings, for one thing, a whole bunch of people here who wouldn't otherwise be here. Some make a good living, some struggle. They try to get their work into wherever they can, whether it's a coffee shop or a restaurant or the June Fitzpatrick Gallery. There's a lot of art activity."

While claiming the Arts District has succeeded, Gilmore conceded the area is facing some challenges. "I think the concept has done a lot for Portland in terms of the city's image, and the individual arts institutions, for the most part, are doing pretty well," he said. "The bigger ones maybe better than the smaller ones, but that's kind of par for the course."

It's also kind of what worries artists like Levine. "It's like the Portland Museum of Art," he said. "That's the place most people from out of town are going to come. If the PMA stays and all the other galleries close, you can still

say there are arts downtown. But how vital is that?" Yet the smaller cultural strongholds in town don't seem to be too worried.

"I think it's alive, and I think it's growing," said Nancy Davidson of Davidson & Daughters art gallery on High Street. "And I think the new [Eastland Park Hotel] is going to add a lot of interested people, interested arts-oriented people, to the area. A lot of new spaces are filling up. Andy Verzosa is opening up a new gallery here. It's a feeling of inclusiveness, that we'll make this work."

Not that Davidson is taking many risks. By showing six-month exhibitions from galleries such as Hole in the Wall Studioworks in Raymond, Davidson has been able to cut down on her overhead. With some luck, she'll avoid a threat like the one now facing the Oak Street Theatre.

"I'm very hopeful that things are going to do well," she said.

Of course, no amount of optimism at this point would sway Crotty.

"I've just wasted 27 years of my life on this dumb place with these dumb attitudes," he snarled. "It might sound arrogant to say I ran the best gallery in town, but it's true."

Allen Dammann is CBW's jack-of-all-trades. He can be e-mailed at editor1@maine.rr.com.

THE LAST CAMPAIGN

It was too late for April Fool's, but that doesn't mean the situation was without humor.

"It's with great pleasure I announce the 'Close With Dignity Campaign,'" joked Michael Levine, treasurer of the nonprofit group that runs the Oak Street Theatre in Portland. Levine was speaking to a group of about 60 people at a public forum at the soon-to-close theater on the evening of April 3.

Some of the theater's supporters wanted to start a campaign to save Oak Street, but Levine quickly squashed any hopes of that happening. He said Penelope Carson, the theater's landlord, had been offered a sumptuous 10-year, \$1 million deal by an unnamed telecommunications company for the space. "It's not negotiable, period, end of statement," Levine said.

Carson had offered Oak Street money to help pay off its \$10,000 in debts, but that offer was predicated on the theater's vacating the building immediately. Instead, the performance groups that use the space, which include Mad Horse Theatre and Flaming Productions, negotiated a deal to allow them to finish this season, at which time, Levine noted dryly, the building would be "gutted and turned into who knows what."

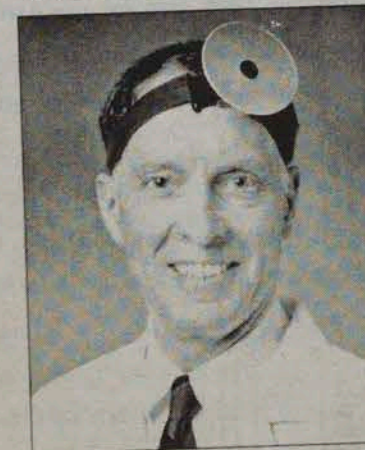
The "Close With Dignity Campaign" is an effort to mop up the theater's red ink before the nonprofit group dissolves on July 31. Oak Street owes \$10,000 to vendors, and considerably more than that to Levine and his wife, Elizabeth Buchsbaum (Levine would not say how much this debt is). Levine said he is not looking for his debt to be repaid, since he's putting the interests of the theater first. "The bottom line is that we could try to stake our claim for something, but you can't get blood from a stone. It's money that's gone, basically." By paying off the debt, Oak Street could then donate equipment it owns to another theater company.

Levine also counseled the theater groups left homeless by Oak Street's closing to take the time to find proper, respectable venues as their new sites of operations. "I don't want to end up in some place that looks like Oak Street did four years ago," he said.

ALLEN DAMMANN

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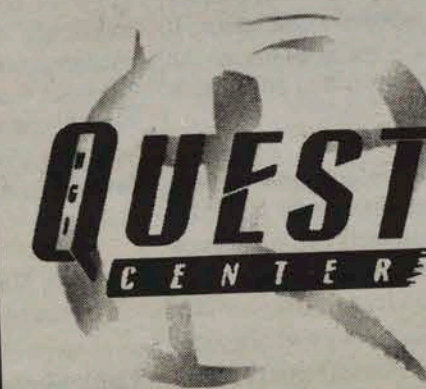
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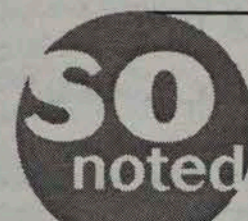
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COMMENT



Saving the Arts District

The death of the Oak Street Theatre has a lot of Portland artists predicting the demise of the city's Arts District.

The Arts District is not dead — yet. But a booming economy is starting to make downtown Portland real estate so valuable that artists and arts organizations are being forced out by businesses and shops willing to pay higher rents. For example, the Oak Street Theatre is being kicked out because an unnamed telecommunications company has told the landlord it will commit to a 10-year lease worth \$1 million. That's for a building that was virtually unrentable when the theater group moved in seven years ago.

The city created the Arts District to help revive Congress Street. Will the city step in now that the arts organizations that spurred that successful revival are getting booted out?

Artists have complained for the past year that the city is neglecting the Arts District. But it's inaccurate to say City Hall has done nothing for the district. The city played a major role in getting the Maine College of Art to locate on Congress Street. The City Council voted to sell a city-owned building to the organization that created the Center for Cultural Exchange in Longfellow Square. The city paid much of the cost of renovating Merrill Auditorium and helped the Salt program move into a new building in the Old Port.

But exactly because Portland government has played such a major role in getting the Arts District going, it makes no sense for the city to abandon that support now that the

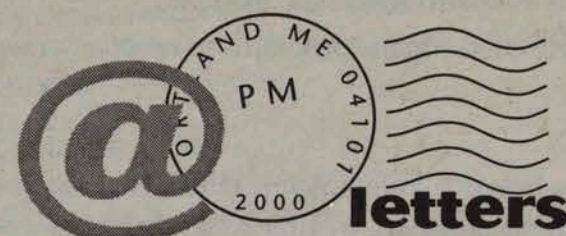
downtown has recovered. It's not just that arts organizations have made Portland a better place to live. These groups have played a direct role in the downtown's economic revival. According to the November 1995 plan for the Arts District, the economic impact of cultural organizations was \$33 million annually. In the past four years, that figure must have increased, although, significantly enough, nobody at City Hall seems to have checked.

At the very least, the city should assemble a task force, like the group that prepared the 1995 plan, and take another look at the Arts District, now that its success is threatening the arts organizations that started it. One place the city should look for volunteers for that task force is the ad hoc group that has formed to deal with the death of the Oak Street Theatre.

A task force could consider ideas to preserve the Arts District. Suggestions that came out of an April 3 meeting dealing with Oak Street's future included a percent for art program that would go to arts organizations, rather than the creation of outdoor art, setting aside a portion of new or renovated buildings for arts organizations and the creation of an umbrella organization for arts fundraising, similar to the United Way, as means of increasing business support.

The key problem that the task force would have to address is the question of real estate. Because the arts cannot continue to flourish in Portland if arts organizations can no longer afford to pay the rent.

DAVID TYLER



No compassion

I'm one of the "nice ladies" who shared my birth mother story with Eva Witt ("Teenage Liberation Cookbook," 3.30.00) in what I thought was her open-minded inquiry about adoption. Although Ms. Witt claims to mean "no offense" in expressing her moralistic opinion about birth mothers, I take great offense at her incomplete and inaccurate portrayal of birth mothers.

Ms. Witt, like many people, cannot understand the difficulties of being a teenager with a crisis pregnancy and no honest counsel about the realities of adoption. We "thirty-something women who had put a child up for grabs" were told we were doing "the right thing" and that "if we loved our babies we would place them for adoption." Young and scared, we followed this advice because, after all, we did love our babies. It's not that we "didn't want to have" them, as Ms. Witt suggests; we didn't think we could have them given the social climate of our times.

Moreover, Ms. Witt refers to adoptive parents as "the real parents," continuing that birth mothers have no right to be "part of their children's lives." She is wrong again. The reality is that adopted children have two sets of parents — adopted and biological — both of which are real. Ignoring this fact serves no one. Consequently, birth parents and adoptees have an inherent right to search out and find one another, a right many exercise without shame or guilt.

I'm deeply saddened that Ms. Witt took advantage of me by expressing compassion and interest in my story then portraying it callously. One day, I'm sure Ms. Witt will regret some of her teenage actions just as I did by relinquishing my baby.

Laura Deines
Portland

Stopping speed bumps

The whining tone of the paragraph about the city's year-old traffic calming ordinance in *CBW*'s March 23 "News-orama" obscures the truth of the situation: The ordinance actually IS a success for the city bureaucracy. The ordinance for the most part finally brings Portland into line with federal guidelines, which is all to the good.

The ordinance was enacted because of the political favoritism and controversy surrounding the Stevens Avenue Traffic Calming Project. It may seem to be a cumbersome method of getting speed humps installed on one's street, but that is as it should be. The ordinance forces a neighborhood to take a hard look at what actually is occurring on its streets, and to prove its contentions. It requires calming proponents to rally the majority of the neighborhood to support the plan, which was NOT done for the Stevens Avenue Project.

The process reduces the chances that one small group of people will be able to cram their plans down their neighborhood's throat in a misguided attempt to make the street "safer." As with the Stevens project, this sometimes backfires, and makes the situation worse.

Stevens Avenue has seen an accident increase of 25 percent since the project's installation. Most of the new accident sites are at the hump locations. Smog-producing exhaust components have increased a minimum of 46 percent, with the actual total somewhere between 5 and 15 TIMES higher than pre-hump levels, due to all the braking

that occurs at the humps. Walking and bicycling usage has actually dropped.

Fire truck and ambulance response times are now one to two minutes longer for trucks going to either end of the project across the humps.

The Stevens situation continues because of willful benign neglect on the part of the City Council. Nobody wants to do anything about the problem because nobody wants the responsibility. So: Applaud the new ordinance, not denigrate it. It helps keep us safe on our streets and in our homes, and keeps the ignorant and paranoid at bay.

Brian Peterson
Portland

Bag it

The blurb about bell hooks ("Hearing the bell," 3.9.00) was beyond graciousness or excellence in journalism, IT WAS SMUT!

These lewd comments were out of context and in a community paper. It's time you print a warning on the cover of *CBW* that the contents, which are so freely available to "everyone" for no cost, CONTAINS inappropriate material (material I would not want my 9-year-old niece to read!). Then package your RAG in a plastic wrap/bag that can double as a BARF BAG. Then you would really BE doing a community service! Thanks (even in your lack of wisdom) for the paper, now how about the "bag"?

Chris Darling
Portland

Getting to know the Constitution Party

It is obvious by Mr. Diamon's commentary "Name



game" ("Politics and other mistakes," 3.9.00) that he is not one of our biggest fans. One wonders if Diamon's commentary title was just a smoke screen to vent his lack of knowledge concerning the Constitution Party of Maine.

Simply put, the reasons for the name change from Maine Taxpayers Party was twofold. The first being to conform to the recent name change of the national party from U.S. Taxpayers Party to the Constitution Party. The second reason is to better convey to the citizens of Maine that we are not a one-issue party — taxes. I don't see how Mr. Diamon can have a problem with these reasons.

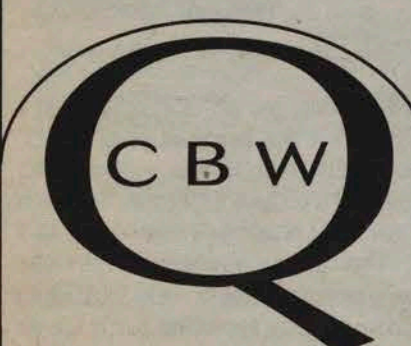
Clarifying Diamon's proclamation of our party platform, I would say we do advocate re-criminalizing sodomy as well as all aspects of any immoral and unhealthy lifestyle such as homosexuality, bestiality, etc. The Constitution Party is not opposed to parks including Acadia Park. However, we are against the federal government holding lands within any state that is outside the scope of its authority as laid out by the U.S. Constitution. Legal land ownership by Washington, D.C., is limited and parks are not on the list. The park land within Maine and the control thereof belong solely to the people of Maine.

The last issue brought up was the murder of the unborn. Those advocating infanticide do so behind the Supreme Court decision, not law, of Roe vs. Wade. This violation of Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness, and the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution should first be handled by local and county law enforcement before getting the state police involved.

As to a theocracy, it is no more found in our party documents than in the founding documents of our national Republic. I think all in all the name change does fit our party like a glove. We stole nothing from the Republican Party. Our values predate them and have long been abandoned by its leadership.

Yes, we are a small party being only four years old. However, I would say that with the help of the left-leaning Republicans our size has already outdistanced Mr. Diamon's readership.

Eric Greiner
Chairman, Constitution Party of Maine
Spruce Head



Got a burning question about life in Greater Portland? Let *CBW*'s crack investigative squad sort it out for you. Those whose questions are selected for publication will receive a complimentary SPAM® refrigerator magnet. *CBW*, 561 Congress St., Portland, ME 04101, or by e-mail at editor1@maine.rr.com or by fax: 775-1615.

Lurking tow trucks

I have been meaning to write for a long time, since Nov. 1, 1999, to be exact. On Nov. 1, my daughter and her boyfriend moved to Portland. I helped. We had three vehicles. When we arrived we pulled into the dirt parking lot beside her new apartment at 78 Danforth St.

I noticed the "private parking — cars will be towed" sign, but I knew the building had private parking so I thought we were in the right place. So did my daughter. Since there were two rows of cars facing the building, it certainly seemed so. Cars in the rest of the lot seemed to be facing another direction. This is a dirt lot with no lines or demarcations of any kind.

We worked hard unloading and had lunch in the new apartment. We hadn't unloaded my daughter's car yet. We look out the window, and her car is gone. We panic, thinking it was stolen! She looked for another tenant at home so she could use a phone. She finds a neighbor who tells her it probably was towed. By now we are outside in the parking lot and I realize a tow truck is coming for my car! I move it. The neighbors inform us that

there is an invisible line in the dirt where the two rows of cars facing 78 Danforth are. Only one row is for the building! You are supposed to be psychic to know this.

My daughter calls the company and they're about to close. We have to go immediately and it will cost \$50. Her boyfriend calls the nice woman whom they have dealt with in the rental process and she is not so nice anymore and tells them the parking lot is clearly marked! Clearly marked? Yeah, there is the private parking sign but for which building and for which row of cars?

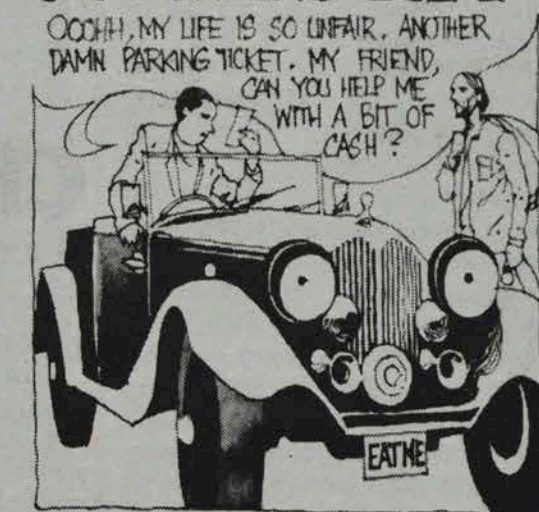
We return with my daughter's car. I tell my daughter and friend that I am just running in to the bathroom and then I'm leaving. Her boyfriend doesn't think it's a good idea because I might get towed!

While I am in the bathroom, I hear him yell. Well, something snapped in me, and I went flying out of the building and probably scared the young tow truck driver half to death. I ask what in the world is going on here? He was very nice and did explain, that yes, there is an invisible line in the dirt and you are just supposed to know! He felt it was ridiculous as well. My daughter and her friend had been given parking stickers for the building, but it didn't matter because we were in the wrong row!

Anyway, I rescued my car, good thing because I wouldn't have been able to get it back that night and I needed to be back in Massachusetts to work the next day. We also found out from the neighbors who had the same experience that at night the tow trucks sit in that dirt lot idling with their lights off! It seems to me that the owners could very simply add a sign that says 78 Danforth St. with an arrow for which row.

Karen Erikson
Auburn, Mass.

UNSTEADICAM



Casco Bay Weekly welcomes your letters. Please keep your thoughts to less than 300 words (longer letters may be edited for space reasons), and include your address and daytime phone number. Letters, Casco Bay Weekly, 561 Congress St., Portland, ME 04101 or via e-mail: editor1@maine.rr.com

live and sorta local. Listeners to local adult contemporary radio station **WMGX** may be surprised to know that half of the station's morning show team joins hosts Tim Wright and Heather McGregor from other states. Nikki Reed reads local and national news from Norfolk, Va., and Dr. Joe Sobel predicts Maine's weather from Pennsylvania.

"We found the two right people to join the team," said Cary Pahigian, general manager of 'MGX. "The four of them get along great.... It gives us more depth on the news side and the weather side as well."

Reed replaced former WMTW-TV anchorwoman Denise Keniston — who, Pahigian said, "was filling in with us for awhile on a temporary basis."

Keniston, at least, was located in Greater Portland. Reed joins Tim and Heather after her voice bounces off a satellite. Pahigian said she's due to arrive in person in mid-April, although it could be a brief visit. It seems she has a family in Virginia she's attached to.

Sobel comes to Portland via global weather behemoth Accu-Weather. He may not be familiar with the pronunciation of such regional tongue twisters as "Saco" (while on the air, he's occasionally had to ask the local hosts for help with pronunciations), but he's part of a company Pahigian described as "the AOL or Microsoft of weather."

"He's no 'Altitude Lou,'" Pahigian conceded, "but who is?"

We wonder if he's even heard of Altitude Lou.

Unnatural selection. **Maine Well-Being**, which describes itself as "a monthly holistic publication honoring our community of healers, encouraging stewardship of the Earth, and supporting the evolution of human consciousness," still has a little evolving to do when it comes to sexism. A headline in the April issue reads, "Vigil on Peaks Island — honoring the spirits of our slain deer brothers." For the record, most of the 200-plus deer shot on Peaks earlier this year by a hired sharpshooter were does.

Eat this. According to Abby Shepard, a franchise representative for Rock Bottom Restaurants, **Old Chicago**, a new eatery located in the vacated Seamen's Club Restaurant space on Exchange Street in Portland's Old Port, plans to open May 2.

Skinny selection. The tall red-haired man in the expensive top coat and suit looked a little out of place. He was standing in the doorway of the **Skinny** on Portland's Congress Street, staring at the still-unfinished lobby. Undeterred by the signs of construction, he stepped smartly into the club's lounge, where a small happy-hour crowd was hanging out. He paused and his gaze swept the room, carefully avoiding eye contact. He then strode quickly across the bar area to the Skinny's dance floor. Another pause, another rapid survey of the area. Plainly dissatisfied, he turned on his heels and marched out the door, looking neither left nor right.

Bar patrons watched this brief appearance with mild curiosity. Was the guy a city inspector? A lawyer? Somebody who expected a place called the **Skinny** to offer low-fat meals?

None of the above in all likelihood. "He was looking for porn," explained John Lomb, co-owner of the club located on the site of a former adult movie theater. "It happens all the time." **CBW**

Arts, Entertainment, Weirdness

EDGE

Children of the corn

Once you pop, you can't stop

PAT SIMS

Why do we go to the movies? For some, it's an anesthetizing escape from the daily nine to five, punctuated by jolts of excitement that jazz life into numb psyches. For others, it's a primordial sensory experience: a soothing trip back to the womb, enveloped by darkness, mouth affixed to the straw of a supersized Mountain Dew.

I love the stories being played out on screen, the ritual of paying to be transported, but feel it would all be strangely empty were it not for popcorn.

Light, white and captivating, popcorn is the essential companion of the discerning filmgoer, a salty friend ready close at hand for every plot twist. Is the evil stockbroker about to kill his unsuspecting secretary? Stuff in a mouthful of popcorn. Are the two young lovers from different sides of the tracks finally about to kiss? Who cares?! Your own oral gratification is only a red-and-white box away.

Mother's milk to Orville Redenbacher, it's also a snack food with a history. Long before Christopher Columbus ravaged the New World (and the Native Americans who first gave Europeans popcorn), the puffy treat was being grown in India, China and Sumatra, according to the Popcorn Board of Chicago. Now, centuries later, Americans consume it at the rate of 59 quarts yearly per man, woman and child.

That agency also furnished this odd tidbit: "The oldest ears of popcorn ever found were discovered in the Bat Cave of west central New Mexico in 1948 and 1950. Ranging from smaller than a penny to about 2 inches, the oldest Bat Cave ears are about 5,600 years old."

What you'll find at your local movie theater is usually not that elderly. But navigating the rocky road to popcorn ecstasy may require assistance. And so **CBW** sent out a SWAT team of knowledgeable, highly trained popcorn testers (me) to provide a guide for your popcorn pleasure.

Hoys Clark's Pond — 333 Clark's Pond Rd., South Portland kiddie/\$2.99 • medium/\$5.49 small/\$4.49 • large/\$5.99

If it's dry and bland you want, it's dry and bland you'll get, dispensed by the good people at Hoys Clark's Pond. Extremely expensive and virtually devoid of bouquet, the popcorn here is a close cousin to salted

Styrofoam peanuts. Like those tasty morsels, it responds in a disturbing manner to being bitten. Unlike the graceful shatter of a premium popcorn, this stuff merely flattens in a dispirited sort of way, occasionally adhering to the teeth. At its worst it even squeaks slightly.

For those oblivious enough to make their way through the large size, there are free refills for the asking, and the Hoys crew even happily obliged with a substitute bag on one occasion when the popcorn tasted exceptionally lifeless. But, like water drawn from a tainted well, the result was predictable.

Still, there's no accounting for tastes: During a recent Hoys surveillance, a popcorn-eating movie-goer in another row was spotted methodically licking each of the fingers on his left hand after he'd finished, as if to relish every last iota of flavor.

Hoys Falmouth 10 — 206 U.S. Route 1, Falmouth kiddie/\$2.99 • medium/\$5.49 small/\$4.49 • large/\$5.99

Like Hoys Clark's Pond, Hoys Falmouth 10 serves a product that's overpriced and underflavored. But Falmouth's corn is slightly superior in taste and texture to that sold by its evil SoPo twin. Toward the bottom of the bag, it even seems to hint tantalizingly at what might have been. Still, considering even matinee tickets go for \$6 each, shouldn't there be more of a reward at the concession stand?

The Nickelodeon — Temple and Middle streets, Portland small/\$2.25 • large/\$4.00 medium/\$3.25 • supersize/\$5.00

In the past, the product at the Nickelodeon has been good, even exemplary. A viewing some months back of a movie much anticipated but greatly disappointing was actually salvaged by deep contemplation of the Nick's popcorn.

But a recent sampling of this theater's wares was something of a letdown. Though it seems only fair to cut the Nick some slack — tickets do, after all, go for a highly reasonable \$1.50 at all times — it has to be said that the customarily crunchy delight was a little rough around the edges. Perhaps it was the end of a batch, perhaps there was an emergency, perhaps a rival theater owner indulged in a little petty sabotage. Whatever the reason, this was an undistinguished product with plenty of salt but little depth, putting new pressure on the current attraction to succeed all on its own with no help from the popcorn gallery.

The Keystone — 504 Congress St., Portland one size/\$1.95

At the Keystone, you sit back, relaxing at a table as you view the movie of your choice, and your treats come to you — something unique among Portland's cinemas — which makes for an event both luxurious and homey. Though on a recent night the Keystone's popcorn was a little lacking in heat, it proved highly appealing partly for its unusual, festive presentation — nestled fried shrimp-like in a plastic basket. It also scored

high marks for its but-tery taste, dense, multi-crunch texture and impressive old-maid count.

Maine Mall Cinema — Maine Mall Road, South Portland small/\$2.75 • large/\$4.75 medium/\$3.50 • bucket/\$5.50

The people in charge of popcorn at the Maine Mall Cinema aren't taking any chances. "Free same-day refill on bucket," a sign specifies, presumably to deter those shift customers who plot to return to the theater, grease-stained container in hand, weeks after they made their original purchase. But never mind. Maybe they've got a little trust problem.

The good news is they've also got a way with corn — and with serving it. Step up and place your order and a friendly guy behind the counter says, "Do you want the real imitation butter on your popcorn?" Follow Nancy Reagan's shining example and just say no, the better to appreciate the delectable bag of exploded kernels in its virgin state.

Popped in canola oil (according to Eric Anderson, one of the cinema's managers), this is buttery flavored all on its own, without the addition of mystery toppings. It also achieves a nice balance with a fine Milk Dud.

YEAR OF THE DRAGON

Joining the culture club

For Portland's Cambodian community, the New Year's celebration is a complex and poignant time.

"It's not just New Year's, it's a way for them to reconnect with one another," said Rotha Chan of the Maine Khmer Council, which is presenting a celebration at the University of New England's Westbrook campus. "It's also a time to share their common tragedy, having to leave Cambodia, having to live through a holocaust." April 17 is the memorial day for the two million Cambodians killed in the 1970s by the Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot, Chan said.

In the Cambodian calendar, the upcoming year is 2543, the Year of the Dragon. In Cambodian villages, the New Year's celebration lasts three days. It's not possible in Portland to hold a three-day festival. But two celebrations are planned, one on Sat., April 8, and another on Fri., April 14 at the King Middle School. Both events will feature traditional food. There will be a break-dancing contest and traditional music by the band Preanneary at the April 8 celebration. The Maine Khmer Council will also present community service and cultural preservation awards.

Dancer Chan Moly Sam will lead the Portland Cambodian Dance Troupe at the April 14 festival, presented in conjunction with the Center for Cultural Exchange. The Samaki Ensemble of Maine will also perform.

The celebrations are a way for "the children to learn about a culture they do not practice every day," Rotha Chan said. "We are adopting, and in my opinion that is the best way to go. It is not possible to hold 100 percent of everything traditional."

These events are not just for the Cambodian community. "It's also important for the general community to support this kind of effort," Chan said. "These are people who survived genocide. [These celebrations are] a way for us to be strong and confident of ourselves. Only a strong and confident people can really contribute to a community. If they are not comfortable in their own skin, they are not good for anybody."

DAVID TYLER

The Cambodian New Year Dance will be held at Finley Recreation Center, University of New England, Westbrook Campus, Portland, on Sat., April 8 at 7 p.m. Tix: \$10 (\$5 students). 874-7025. The Cambodian New Year Festival will be held at King Middle School, 92 Deering Ave., Portland, Fri., April 14 at 7 p.m. Tix: \$10 at the door, \$8 in advance (\$5 students, \$3 children under 12). 761-1545.

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MUSIC

Prime cut



Croonin' Kurt and the Hi' Geared Combo come east for a show at Free Street Taverna on Fri, April 7.

Rochester, N. Y., is a productive place, exporting such premium products to the world as white hot dogs (don't ask, just eat), garbage plates (don't ask, just eat), Genesee beer (don't ask, just drink) and CBW listings editor Chris Busby (don't ask, just buy him a drink). The Rochester band **Croonin' Kurt and the Hi' Geared Combo** exports their brand of rockabilly and Western swing to satisfied customers the world over. Lead vocalist and rhythm guitarist Croonin' Kurt is joined in the band by upright bassist Hotrod Mike (who also played with Kurt in regional rockabilly favorites the Slippin' Slacks), guitarist Kinloch Nelson (a.k.a. "The Professor") and drummer Dave Grieco. Gear up to dance on Fri, April 7 at Free Street Taverna, 128 Free St, Portland, at 10 pm. Tix: \$3 (\$21+). 774-1114.

- thursday 6**
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The Big Easy Trade & Joy 9:30 pm/\$3/21+
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First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church DiPonte String Quartet "Dvorak's 'String Quartet in F Major' 12:15 pm/free
Free Street Taverna Call ahead 110 pm/no cover/21+
Jewett Hall Auditorium, University of Maine at Augusta Don Straton with the Perpetual Motion Machine (jazz, jam, rock) 7:30 pm/free/62-13385
Jack Magee's Pub Diesel Doug and the Long Haul Truckers (honky tonk) 9 pm/no cover/21+
Old Port Tavern Open mic with Lyle Large 110 pm/no cover/21+
O'Rourke's Landing Open mic with Dave Dodge 9 pm/no cover/21+
Sisters Line dancing with Linda 7 pm/no cover/21+
Techno Dance Night with Neil 9 pm/no cover/21+
The Skinny Say Zuzu country rock 9 pm/\$5/21+
Somewhere Karaoke with Larry 9 pm-1 am/no cover/21+
The Station DJ Captain Jeff and DJ New Screen (top 40 dance hits) 8 pm-1 am/no cover before 10 pm, \$3 after/21+
Hip-hop dancing 11-4 am/\$5/18+
- friday 7**
The Better End Mirvise with guest track 9 pm/\$12+
The Big Easy The Manhattan Nine 9:30 pm/\$5/21+
Bordere Cafe Espresso Bruce Cole 12 pm/free
Breakaway Blues Lounge Demick Senter's Modern Blues Band 9:30 pm/\$3/21+
Brian Boni Rakish Paddy traditional Irish 9 pm/no cover/21+
Center for Cultural Exchange Dance Friday event with Balkan dance instructor Marie Wendt 8 pm/\$6-\$1 students
Chappies Brad Harris 5 pm/no cover/21+
Civic Center Elton John 8 pm/\$30-\$50-\$55, sold out
Cornell Concert Hall The University of Southern Maine Department of Music Chamber Music Awards Concert 8 pm/free
Free Street Taverna Croonin' Kurt and the Hi' Geared Combo (swing) 10 pm/\$3/21+
Geno's Big Meat Hammer with the Marbles (punk rock) 9:30 pm/cover T.B.A./21+
Hanson Bros. Seafood Cafe Van Vorst Jazz 9-7 pm/no cover/21+
- saturday 8**
Aylam Canfora with All Out War: Fahrenheit 451, Diecast and Suffocate the Will (progressive metal) 5 pm/\$10
The Better End Zola Turn with the Hologens 9 pm/\$12+
Somewhere Karaoke with Larry 9 pm-1 am/no cover/21+
The Station DJ Captain Jeff and DJ New Screen (top 40 dance hits) 8 pm-1 am/no cover before 10 pm, \$3 after/21+
Hip-hop dancing 11-4 am/\$5/18+
- Stone Coast Brewing Company** Original P Parliament Funkadelic (10 pm/\$18 \$20/21+)
Don Corman's Karaoke 9 pm/no cover/21+
Three Dollar Dewey's Jason Spooner 9-10 pm/no cover/21+
The Underground DJ Nova (pop, house and trance) 9 pm-1 am/no cover/21+
Zootz The Franklin Mint with Shawn Sandon (rock, folk rock) 9 pm/\$2/21+
The Industry College Night DJ Jeremy spins Top 40 dance hits 10 pm-3 am/21+
\$3/18+, \$8
Jack Magee's Pub Shanna Gagnon and Liz Stahler (folk) 9 pm/no cover/21+
Old Port Tavern Empty Head (rock) 10 pm/no cover/21+
Portland Conservatory of Music 116 Free St, Portland, Carol Eaton Elbow Classical piano 8 pm/\$12, \$6 seniors and students/775-3356
Saco Coffeehouse "Music by Meditation" by Rebecca Wing 8 pm/\$6
Silver House Tavern Karaoke 9 pm/no cover/21+
Sisters DJ Kate (dance music) 9 pm/no cover/21+
Somewhere Mary Murphy (piano) 9 pm/no cover/21+
The Industry DJ Captain Jeff and DJ New Screen (top 40 dance hits) 8 pm-1 am/no cover before 10 pm, \$3 after/21+
Hip-hop dancing 11-4 am/\$5/18+
Stone Coast Brewing Company The Troubles (rock) 9 pm/\$5/21+
The Underground DJ Ken 9 pm-1:30 am/\$3/21+
Zootz WFNX Leftover Lounge with DJ Shawn Sandon 180s alternative dance 9 pm-3 am/\$1 before 11 pm, \$4 after/18+ ages after 1:15 am
Rodney's Rec Room 9 pm-1 am/same as above
- The Big Easy** T.B.A. 9:30 pm/\$5/21+
Brannahl Pub Muddy Marsh Ramblers (bluegrass) 10 pm/no cover/21+
Breakaway Blues Lounge The Alan Rous Band 9:30 pm/\$3/21+
Brian Boni Rakish Paddy traditional Irish 9 pm/no cover/21+
Commercial Street Pub Acoustic blues with Keith 9 pm/no cover/21+
Free Street Taverna Stream (reggae) 9 pm/no cover/21+
Gorham High School, 41 Morrill Ave. The University of Southern Maine Concert Band (classical) 3 pm/\$5, \$3 seniors and students/780-5559
Gritty McDuff's Truffle 6 pm/no cover/21+
Old Port Tavern Karaoke with Don Corman 110 pm/no cover/21+
Portland Public Market Martin Swinger (jazz) 2 pm/free
Saco River Grange Hall, Salmon Falls Rd, Bar Mills Gordian Bok and Carol Roth (sea song) 7:30 pm/\$10/29-6472
Sacred Heart Church, 326 Main St, Yarmouth The Oratorio Choral with the Maine Chamber Ensemble (Bach's "St. John Passion") 7:30 pm/\$12-\$50-\$15, \$6-\$25-\$75 students, kids under 12 free/725-1420
Silver House Tavern Karaoke 9 pm/no cover/21+
Sisters Club 45 with John Saulte (top 40) 5 pm/no cover/21+
State Street Church Virginia Rodriguez (Brazilian jazz) 7:30 pm/\$18-\$21, \$14-\$16 students
Three Dollar Dewey's Katie Daggett (weber) 4-8 pm/no cover/21+
The Underground Karaoke with Bob Wilson 9 pm-1 am/no cover/21+
The Station DJ Captain Jeff and DJ New Screen (top 40 dance hits) 8 pm-1 am/no cover before 10 pm, \$3 after/21+
Hip-hop dancing 11-4 am/\$5/18+

The listings above are for live entertainment and dancing. Bars and clubs may be open on additional nights. Submissions for this section should be received the Friday prior to publication, including dates, times, cost and type of music. Send listings to Chris Busby, Casco Bay Weekly, 561 Congress St, Portland, ME 04101 or e-mail listings@maine.net.

- St. John's Church, 39 Pleasant St, Brunswick**
The Oratorio Choral with the Maine Chamber Ensemble (Bach's "St. John Passion") 7:30 pm/\$12-\$50-\$15, \$6-\$25-\$75 students, kids under 12 free/725-1420
- The Station**
DJ Captain Jeff and DJ New Screen (top 40 dance hits) 8 pm-1 am/no cover before 10 pm, \$3 after/21+
Hip-hop dancing 11-4 am/\$5/18+
- Stone Coast Brewing Company**
Another Planet 110 pm/\$3/21+
- Top of the East**
Tee Tee Soul (soul, R&B, adult contemporary) 9:30 pm/no cover/21+
- The Underground**
DJ Mike 9 pm-1:30 am/\$3/21+
- Zootz**
Decades of Dance '70s, '80s, '90s dance music 9 pm-3 am/\$1 before 11 pm, \$4 after 11 pm/21+, all ages after 1 am
DJ Moose (hip-hop/midnight-3 am/same as above)
- the next BIG things**
Mighty Mighty Bosstones University of Southern Maine, Gorham, 4/14
Mix Master Mike/Rahzel Bowdoin College, 4/15
Bob Weir/Rob Wasserman State Theatre, 4/19
Kenny Wayne Shepherd State Theatre, 4/20
Hampton Beach Casino Ballroom, 4/21
Indigo Girls Colby College, 4/21
Barry Manilow Civic Center, 4/21
Dick Dale Asylum, 4/26
Method Man/Redman University of Maine, Orono, 4/26
Warrant The Falls, 4/26; Hampton Beach Casino Ballroom, 4/29
- Weekend**
Bowdoin College, 4/29
Ramblin' Jack Elliott The Skinny, 5/7
The Reverend Horton Heat Stone Coast Brewing Company, 5/10
Mickey Hart Band Hampton Beach Casino Ballroom, 5/12
Guster State Theatre, 5/13
Red Hot Chili Peppers/Foo Fighters Civic Center, 5/14
Medeski Martin & Wood State Theatre, 5/19
Kiss, Ted Nugent and Skid Row Civic Center, 6/15
Little Richard Hampton Beach Casino Ballroom, 7/1
Weird Al Yankovic Hampton Beach Casino Ballroom, 7/6
- Ellen DeGeneres**
State Theatre, 7/7
K.C. and the Sunshine Band Hampton Beach Casino Ballroom, 8/2
Pat Benatar Hampton Beach Casino Ballroom, 8/4
George Thorogood and the Destroyers Hampton Beach Casino Ballroom, 8/5
The Beach Boys Hampton Beach Casino Ballroom, 8/23
Carrot Top Hampton Beach Casino Ballroom, 8/24
Eddie Money Hampton Beach Casino Ballroom, 8/25
Dave Brubeck Merrill Auditorium, 9/1
- Catherine McAuley High School**
631 Stevens Ave, Portland. The Portland Symphony Orchestra's Kinderkonzert "The Little Engine That Could" 9:30 am, 10:30 am, 12:45 pm/\$2, \$50/29-5751
- Free Street Taverna**
Open mic 110 pm/no cover/21+
- Old Port Tavern**
Karaoke with Don Corman 110 pm/no cover/21+
- Stone Coast Brewing Company**
Eggbot's Test Reveal Crusade 8 pm/no cover/21+
- Zootz**
The Invasion with DJ Gimp and DJ Dark Orphan (gothic industrial dance and fetish) 10 pm-1 am/\$3/21+
- breakaway Blues Lounge**
Blues jam with Mark "Guitar" Miller 9 pm/no cover/21+
Commercial Street Pub Jeff Aumiller folk rock 9 pm/no cover/21+
Down-East Restaurant, 705 Route 1, Yarmouth Port City Jazz 7-9 pm/cover/846-5161
Free Street Taverna Natty Oats Band 110 pm/no cover/21+
Gritty McDuff's Mark Miller blues 9 pm/no cover/21+
Old Port Tavern Karaoke with Don Corman 110 pm/no cover/21+
- Old Arts Center**
Bates jazz improvisation 7 pm/free
O'Rourke's Landing Karaoke with Mark Miller 9:30 pm/no cover/21+
The Pavilion Ladies' night with DJ Shane Staples (top 40 dance hits) 9 pm/\$3/dance free/21+
Silver House Tavern Karaoke 9 pm/no cover/21+
Sisters Karaoke with Jackie 9 pm/no cover/21+
Valle's Steak House Ira Stockwell (piano bar) 5:30-9 pm/no cover
- musical Directory**
Aylam 121 Center St, Portland, 772-8274.
The Better End 446 Fore St, Portland, 874-1833.
The Big Easy 55 Market St, Portland, 871-8817.
Bordere Cafe Espresso 400 Gorham Rd, So. Portland, 775-6110.
Brannahl Pub 788 Congress St, Portland, 773-9873.
Breakaway Blues Lounge 35 India St, Portland, 541-4804.
Brian Boni 57 Center St, Portland, 780-1506.
The Canney Lower Falls Landing, Yarmouth, 846-1226.
Center for Cultural Exchange 1 Longfellow Sq, Portland, 761-1545.
Chappies 1192 Forest Ave, Portland, 797-9155.
Civic Center 1 Civic Center Sq, Portland, 775-3458.
Commercial Street Pub 129 Commercial St, Portland, 761-9870.
Cornell Concert Hall USM Gorham campus, 37 College Ave, Gorham, 780-5555.
The Falls Riverside Ave, Sanford, 324-5430.
First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church 425 Congress St, Portland, 775-3356.
Free Street Taverna 128 Free St, Portland, 774-1114.
Geno's 13 Brown St, Portland, 772-7891.
Gritty McDuff's 396 Fore St, Portland, 772-2739.
Hanson Bros. Seafood Cafe 25 Preble St, Portland, 228-2008.
The Industry 50 Wharf St, Portland, 679-0865.
Kresge Auditorium Bowdoin College, Brunswick, 775-3855.
Ludick Auditorium 716 Stevens Ave, Portland, 797-7261.
Jack Magee's Pub Bowdoin College, Brunswick, 725-3375.
Merrill Auditorium 20 Myrtle St, Portland, 842-0800.
The Music Hall 28 Chestnut St, Portsmouth, NH, 603-436-2400.
Old Port Tavern 11 Moulton St, Portland, 774-0444.
Olin Arts Center Bates College, 75 Russell St, Lewiston, 786-6252.
O'Rourke's Landing 175 Picket St, So. Portland, 767-3611.
Saco Coffeehouse 60 School St, Saco, 282-0062.
Sea Dog 231 Front St, So. Portland, 789-6055.
Silver House Tavern 340 Fore St, Portland, 772-8865.
Sisters 45 Barbers St, Portland, 774-1505.
The Skinny 625 Congress St, Portland, 871-8883.
Somewhere 117 Spring St, Portland, 874-6396.
State Theatre 609 Congress St, Portland, 775-3331.
The Station 272 St. John St, Portland, 773-3310.
Stone Coast Brewing Company 14 York St, Portland, 773-2337.
Three Dollar Dewey's 241 Commercial St, Portland, 773-3310.
Top of the East 157 High St, Portland, 775-5411.
The Underground 3 Spring St, Portland, 773-3315.
Valle's Steak House 1140 Brighton Ave, Portland, 774-4551.
Zootz 31 Forest Ave, Portland, 773-1817.
- unless otherwise noted, all events are all ages.**

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Sunday, April 23

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GRITTY music calendar
sun 4/9 TRUFFLE
tue 4/11 CHAIR 13
wed 4/12 MARK MILLER
sun 4/16 CATTLE CALL

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DRINK SPECIALS HAPPY HOUR 4-8
BUZ, BUD LITE \$3.50 ALL DAY
THURSDAY KARAOKE W/ LARRY BARTENDERS JERRY & KELLY
FRIDAY MARY MURPHY 8-1
PIANO AND VOCALS
SATURDAY MARY MURPHY 8-1
PIANO AND VOCALS
SUNDAY COMPLIMENTARY BUFFET 10PM
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RAMON:
Cut to the chase.

JOHN:
Cut to what chase? there wasn't any chase.

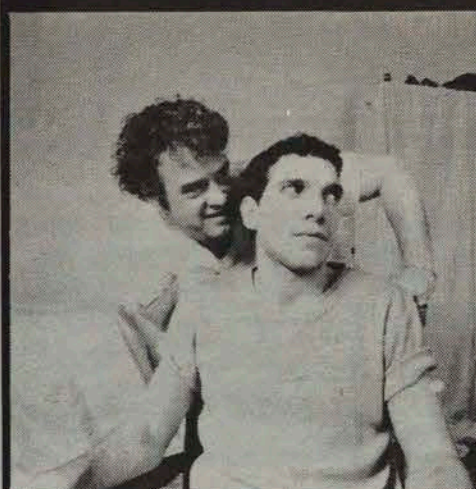


Photo: Leon Konyanjan

RAMON:
It's a movie expression.
Get to the good part.

JOHN:
It's all good part.

RAMON:
Get to the sex.

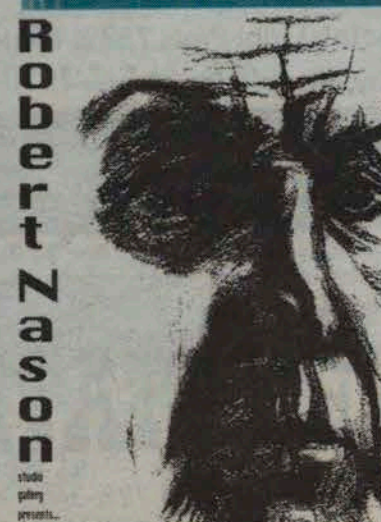


calendar

friday, april 7

"MRS. FRISBY AND THE RATS OF NIMH"

It's not easy being a mouse — cats try to murder you, women shriek at the sight of you and though the free cheese is tasty, it's often little more than a ruse to break your back. Mrs. Frisby, the main character in the Children's Theatre of Maine's production of "Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH," has it harder than most. A widow with four children, one of whom is seriously ill, she must seek help from a pack of mysterious rodents while staying on guard against Dragon, an ill-intentioned farm cat. Shriek with delight at the Children's Theatre of Maine, 317 Marginal Way, Portland, at 7 p.m. Tix: \$7 (\$5 kids). Continues through April 22. 828-0617.



"Still Portrait," by Robert Nason, part of his "Perpetual Retrospective," opening Sat. April 8 at his studio gallery.

saturday, april 8

DAVIDSON & DAUGHTERS

It's not easy running a gallery in Portland's crowded, contentious "Arts District." One solution: collaborate. Davidson & Daughters is holding a grand opening in celebration of its collaboration with Hole in the Wall Studioworks, Studio 208 and "Portland's Picasso" Robert Nason. In the main gallery, Hole in the Wall Studioworks is curating "Narrative Fantasies," paintings by Brenda Atwood Pinardi. Nancy Davidson is curating new paintings by Dudley Zopp in the main gallery and "Portland Scenes ... And More," paintings and works on paper by Lucy Barber, in the gallery's underground salon. The adjacent space features work by Studio 208 artists Carson Bass, Ann Fridinger and Charlotte Fullam, and on the other side of Davidson & Daughters, longtime artist and educator Robert Nason is holding a "Perpetual Retrospective" of his work in his studio gallery. Stuff your face four times during the opening reception at Davidson & Daughters, 148 High St., Portland, from 5 p.m.-8 p.m. Continues through April 30. 780-0766.



"And More" and "Interstate 295," by Lucy Barber, shows as part of "Portland Scenes And More," opening in Davidson & Daughters' underground salon on Sat., April 8.

saturday, april 8

TARGET STARS ON ICE

It's not easy being a professional figure skater. Beyond the risks of tire-iron attacks and pulled groins, there's the shameless corporate pandering involved in spectacles such as Target Stars on Ice. Athletes appearing under the auspices of the soulless department-store chain include Scott Hamilton, Tara Lipinski, Kurt Browning, Kristi Yamaguchi and others. Sell out at the Civic Center, Portland, at 7:30 p.m. Tix: \$42-\$58. 775-3458.



"Roku Dragon," by Carson Bass, opens in Davidson & Daughters' adjacent gallery space on Sat., April 8.

friday, april 7

THE NATIONAL SONG AND DANCE COMPANY OF MOZAMBIQUE

It's not easy to live in Mozambique, where floods have recently wrecked havoc on life and property alike. PCA Great Performances is bringing the National Song and Dance Company of Mozambique to town, and donating a portion of the ticket sales to Doctors Without Borders, a nonprofit agency aiding flood victims that relies entirely on independent bookstores for its reference materials. The company will perform traditional songs and dances (with elements of modern choreography) while attired in colorful costumes, accompanied by drums and other African instruments. Stay awhile at Merrill Auditorium, 20 Myrtle St., Portland, at 8 p.m. Tix: \$22-\$27. 842-0800.



The National Song and Dance Company of Mozambique performed at Merrill Auditorium on Fri., April 7.

quick picks

THURS., APRIL 6

Go to that funny-lookin' building in Congress Square to hear architects Tod Williams and Billie Tsien discuss the way they meld work and life when they deliver "Work Life," the first lecture in the "Architalk 2000" series at the Portland Museum of Art, 7 Congress Square, at 6 p.m. Tix: \$5. 775-6148.

FRI., APRIL 7

See feet aplenty at "Dance Celebration 2000," a performance by nine dance companies and soloists such as Lisa Hicks and Dancers, Baraka! Middle Eastern Dance Ensemble, Perennial Effects Dance Collective, Carl Rudman and others at Thornton Academy, 438 Main St., Saco, at 7:30 p.m. Tix: \$5, \$3 students and seniors. 282-3361 x234.

FRI., APRIL 7

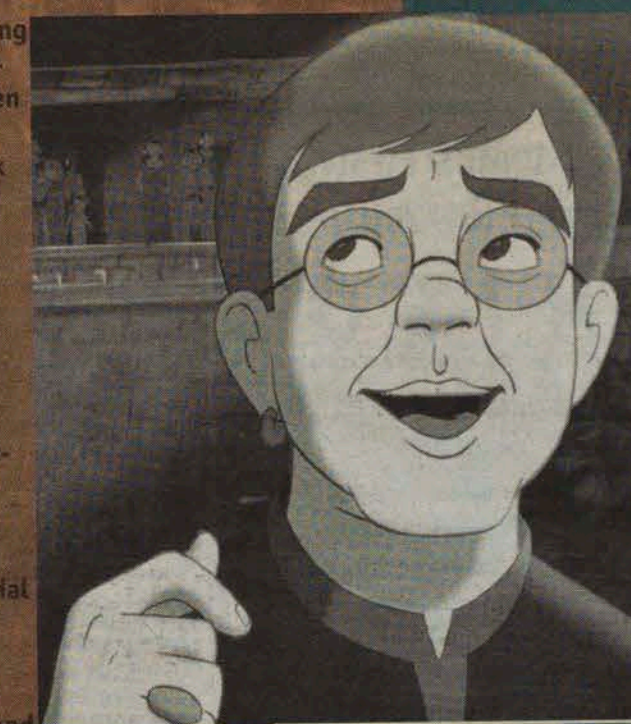
Challenge your artistic assumptions at the opening reception for "A Matter of Perception: Third Annual Juried Exhibition by Artists with Disabilities" at the Portland Museum of Art, 7 Congress Square, from 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. Free. Continues through May 7. 775-6148.

MON., APRIL 10

Take affirmative action and see activist, educator and — at one tumultuous time — nominee to head the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division Lani Guinier give a talk titled "Rethinking Power: The Work that Race and Gender Do" at Kresge Auditorium, Bowdoin College, Brunswick, at 7:30 p.m. Free. 725-3961.

sound bites

- Rocket Man-cum-cartoon Elton John does the Crocodile Rock on Fri., April 7 at the Civic Center, Portland (8 p.m./\$39.50-\$55, sold out). 775-3458.
- The canceled-cum-rescheduled show by progressive hardcore bands Candiria, All Out War, Fahrenheit 451, Diecast and Suffocate the Will happens Sat., April 8 at Asylum, 121 Center St., Portland (5 p.m./\$10). 772-8274.
- Manicurist-cum-internationally-known diva Virginia Rodrigues brings her beautiful Brazilian voice to town on Sun., April 9 at the State Street Church, 159 State St., Portland (7:30 p.m./\$19-\$21, \$14-\$16 students). 761-1545.
- Percussionist-cum-record-executive-cum-author-cum-legend Chris Cutler joins the improvisational musicians of the Steve MacLean Ensemble on Tues., April 11 at Oak Street Theatre, 92 Oak St., Portland (8 p.m./\$10). 775-5103.



The real-life version of Elton John plays the Civic Center on Fri., April 7.

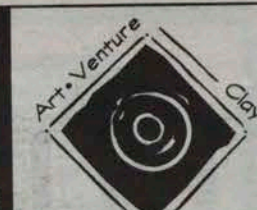
SUBMISSIONS TO THE CALENDAR MUST BE RECEIVED in writing by the Thursday two weeks prior to publication. Send your calendar listings to **Chris Busby, Casco Bay Weekly**, 561 Congress St., Portland, ME 04101, or e-mail listings@maine.rr.com.

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Morning sessions run from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Afternoon sessions run from 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. 15 students per class limit. Cost (includes all materials): \$10 per session Museum members/\$15 non-members.

These hands-on workshops are perfect for 6-12 year-olds who need something fun to do during April vacation. Classes include sculpture, printmaking, photography, and painting. Each session is offered twice, but sign up early to save a space. Call the education department at 775-6148 for more details.

Portland Museum of Art

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Dining GUIDE

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Sunday Dinner 4 - 9 pm

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Mon. Free Lunch 11:30-1:30 • Brunch/Lunch Tues-Fri 9-2:30
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ROSES. Voted #1 Old Port Tavern & Best spot in the Old Port with reviews from Boston, North to prove it - Great homemade soups & chowders & specials. Open 7 days per week. 11am-1am. 330 Fore Street, Portland, 772-5656.
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VISUAL arts

Submissions for the visual arts section should be received two weeks prior to publication. Send to Chris Busby, Casco Bay Weekly, 561 Congress St, Portland, ME 04101 or e-mail listings@maine.cc.

OPENING

Bates College Museum of Art Lewiston. Opening reception for the annual Senior Exhibition, work by 13 Bates College seniors, Fri, April 7 at 7 pm. Shows through Sun, May 28. Highlights from the permanent collection are ongoing. Hours: Tues-Sat 10 am-5 pm, Sun 1-5 pm. Free. 786-6158.

Bowdoin College Museum of Art Brunswick. "Artistic License: Visions of Literature," prints and illustrated books by William Blake, Eugene Delacroix, Henri Matisse, Leonard Baskin and others, shows Thurs, April 6, Sun, June 4, "Terry Winters: Print" shows Fri, April 7, Sun, June 4. "Landscape Methodology," an exhibition exploring the condition through art, shows through Sun, April 16. Portraiture, European art, and artifacts of the ancient Mediterranean and Asian art are ongoing. Hours: Tues-Sat 10 am-5 pm, Sun 2-5 pm. Free. 725-3275.

The Clow 123 Middle St. Portland. Opening reception for abstract oil paintings by Peter Taylor and Intuitive paintings by Caron Carter, Thurs, April 6 from 6-8 pm. Shows through Sun, April 30. Hours: Mon-Wed 10 am-6 pm, Thurs-Sat 10 am-7 pm. Free. 756-7399.

Coffee by Design 620 Congress St, Portland. "Surf Maine," photographs by Eugene Cole, shows through Fri, May 5. Hours: Mon-Thurs 7 am-6 pm, Fri 6:30 am-9 pm, Sat 7 am-8 pm, Sun 7 am-6 pm. 772-5533.

Daniels & Daughters 148 High St, Portland. Opening reception for "New Paintings" by Dudley Zoppo, curated by Nancy Davidson and "Narrative Fantasies," paintings by Brenda Ahwood Pinar, curated by Hole in the Wall Studios/works in the main gallery. "Portland Scenes" and "More," work by Lucy Barber, in the underground studio, and "Pillows by Ann Frisling," sculpt photographs by Caron Bass and monotypes by Charlotte Fuller in the adjacent studio 208 space, Sat, April 8 from 5-8 pm. Shows now through Sat, April 29. Hours: Tues-Sat noon-5 pm. 780-0766.

June Fitzpatrick Alternative Space 652 Congress St, Portland. Opening reception for "Witness," an installation by Mia Wood, Fri, April 7 from 5-7 pm. Shows through Sat, April 29. Hours: Wed-Sat noon-5 pm. 772-1961.

Free Street Taverna 128 Free St, Portland. Opening reception for original prints by Ron Slater, Fri, April 7 at 8 pm. Shows now through Sun, April 30. Hours: daily 11 am-1 pm. 774-1114.

The Gallery at 108 High Street 108 High Street, Portland. Opening reception for "Internal Ocean," photographs by Jean Twomey, Fri, April 7 from 5-7 pm. Shows through Sat, April 29. Hours: Tues-Sat noon-5 pm. 761-0078.

Maine Artists Space 20-36 Danforth St, Portland. Opening reception for "Works in Clay," by Christine Caswell, "Paintings & Drawings," by Dean Corbin and "Daydreams, Memories, and Wishes That Never Came True," by Kathy Smith, Thurs, April 13 from 5:30-7 pm. Shows Tues, April 11-Sat, April 15. Exhibit hours: Tues, Wed, Fri 10 am-4 pm, Thurs 4-8 pm. Opening reception for "Figures," by David Shennett and "Earthen Vessels," by Emily Wallace, Tues, April 18 from 5:30-7 pm. Shows through Sat, April 22. Exhibit hours: Wed, Fri and Sat 1-4 pm, Thurs 4-8 pm. 775-6245.

Montgomery Gallery 625 Congress St, Portland. Opening reception for paintings by Will Scherer, prints, collage and paintings by Chris Dignow and drawings by Scott Smith, Fri, April 7 from 4-7 pm. Shows through Thurs, May 4. Paintings, photographs and mixed media by Colleen Kinsella, Kelly Nesbitt, Mike Zarate, Alessia Norling and Sarah Jane Lottia show through Thurs, April 6. Hours: Tues-Sat 10 am-4 pm, Sun noon-4 pm. 871-8933.

Robert Nasson Studio/Gallery 150 High St, Portland. Opening reception for the ongoing retrospective of Nasson's work, Wed, April 8 from 5-8 pm. Hours: Tues-Sat 11 am-5 pm. 775-7543.

O'Farrell Gallery 58 Maine St, Brunswick. Opening reception for "William Manning: New Paintings & Collages" in the main gallery and Margaret Libby, Animal Paintings & Pottery, and "Quest/Rose: Paper Inspired in Burma" in the new downstairs gallery, Thurs, April 13 from 5-7 pm. Shows Tues, April 11-Thurs, May 11. From Nature By Heart, work by landscape painter Chuck Thompson, shows through Sat, April 8. Hours: Tues-Sat 10 am-5 pm. 729-8228.

Older Map Library 314 Forest Ave, Portland. Opening reception for "Charles Neustein's Realm: From Classical Mythology to Satellite Imagery," an exhibit of sea charts from the 16th century to the present; and a lecture, "A Sailor's View of Neustein's Realm," by guest curator Donald Johnson, Tues, April 11 at 6 pm. Shows through Thurs, Jan 11. Hours: Tues 12:30-4:30 pm, Wed 6-8 pm, Thurs 12:30-4:30 pm and 6-8 pm, Sat 9 am-1 pm. 782-4550.

Portland Museum of Art 1 Congress St, Portland. Opening reception for "A Matter of Perception: Annual Joint Exhibition by Artists with Disabilities" Fri, April 7 from 5:30-7:30 pm. Shows through Wed, May 3. Hours: Mon-Wed, Sat-Sun 10 am-5 pm, Thurs and Fri 10 am-9 pm. Admission: \$6 US students and seniors \$1 kids 6-12. Free every Fri from 5-9 pm. 775-6148 or 800-639-4067.

Portland Public Library 5 Monument Square, Portland. Opening reception for "Les Saisons d'un Village," black-and-white photographs by Madeleine de Sneyth, Thurs, April 6 from 5-7 pm. Shows through Fri, April 28. Hours: Mon-Wed and Fri 9 am-6 pm, Tues and Thurs noon-8 pm, Sat 9 am-5 pm. 871-1700.

Steen Gallery 195 Middle St, Portland. "Curly, Moiré and Baldy," work by glass artist Douglas Olin, shows through Wed, May 24. Hours: Mon-Sat 10 am-6 pm. 772-9072.

The University of Southern Maine Area Gallery USA's Portland campus, Bedford Street. Opening reception for paintings and drawings by Jennifer Joaquin and photographs by Christopher MacWhinnie, Thurs, April 6 from

5:30-7 pm. Shows through Thurs, April 20. Hours: Mon-Thurs 8 am-10 pm, Fri 8 am-5 pm, Sat 9 am-5 pm. 780-5009.

GALLERIES

A Gallery 123, Harpwell. A series of "Sea Muse" masks decorated with sea debris, sculpted lotus blossoms and dancing figures is ongoing. Hours: Fri 10 am-5 pm. 833-7664.

Androscoquin Artists Gallery 49 Lisbon St, Lewiston. "Bridging Lewiston-Auburn," paintings and drawings by Ruthanne Harrison, shows through Thurs, April 7. Hours: Mon-Fri 10 am-4 pm. 782-7228.

ArtWorks 522 Congress St, Portland. An exhibit of jewelry, photography, sculpture, handmade books and pottery by Maine College of Art alumni and students and members of the Maine Crafts Association is ongoing. Hours: Tues-Sat 11 am-5:30 pm, Thurs 11 am-8 pm. 879-5743-5283.

Atrium Gallery The University of Southern Maine's Lewiston Auburn College, 51 Westmain St, Lewiston, U.A. Arts 11th annual Art Exhibition and Auction preview shows through Fri, May 5. Hours: Mon-Thurs 8 am-6 pm, Fri 9 am-4:30 pm, Sat 9 am-3 pm. 753-6500.

Ascendex 142 High St, Suite 403, Portland. New paintings by Michael Waterman are ongoing. Hours: by appointment. 771-9885.

The Chocolate Church Arts Center 804 Washington St, Bath. "Fusion: Form & Function," practical objects with an artistic bent by various craftspersons, shows through Sat, April 15. Hours: Tues-Sat noon-4 pm. 442-8455.

Edmonds Curran Gallery Route 302 and Elmwood Ave, Westbrook. Surreal oil paintings by Malcolm Christhill and work by Rachel Eastman, Tom Edmonds, Cary Maltz and Andrew Curran show through Sat, April 8. Hours: Thurs and Fri noon-7 pm, Sat 10 am-5 pm or by appointment. 775-1961.

Fore Street Gallery 366 Fore St, Portland. "Impressions of the New Biology," paintings by Tom Macias, shows through Sun, April 30. Group show of photographs by Nancy and Matthew Seeth and Rodney Paulson and paintings by John Beckford, K. Dana Nelson, Marcia Baker, Sylvia Dyer, Richard Rowell, Paul Bonazzi, KD Semmes, June Griffin and Joe Mar are ongoing. Hours: Tues-Sat 11 am-5 pm, Sun noon-5 pm. 874-8084.

Frost Gully Gallery 411 Congress St, Portland. Paintings by Alfred Chadouron, Alan Moyses, Laurence Sisson, William Thon, Dabney Igar, Stephen Elmer, John Laurent and Thomas Croly are ongoing. Hours: Mon-Fri

noon-6 pm and by appointment. 772-2555.

Gallery at Midway Cove Studios 31 Midway Cove Lane, Harpwell. "Ritual Spaces: Food for Thought," collaborative sculptures by gallery artists, shows through Sun, April 2. Paintings, jewelry, sculpture, paper and books by gallery artists are ongoing. Hours: Fri 10 am-5 pm, Sun 1-5 pm and by appointment. 833-6081.

Greenleaf Gallery 146 Middle St, Portland. "Maine Alzheimer's Cookbook," by Mary Bourke, and "Sculpture Studio," curated by Jane Lacombe, show through Fri, April 21. Hours: Mon-Fri 10 am-5:30 pm, Sat 10 am-5 pm. 772-2693.

Hall Gallery The University of Southern Maine's Lewiston-Auburn College, 51 Westmain St, Lewiston. "In the Shadow of Intolerance: Photography by Ernest C. Withers, Danny Lyon, E.O. Goldberg and Yevgeny Khaydarov," 22 sculpt photographs on human rights and the U.S. Civil Rights Movement, shows through Sat, May 20. Hours: Mon-Thurs 8 am-6 pm, Fri 8 am-4:30 pm, Sat 9 am-3 pm. 753-6500.

May Gallery 54 Congress St, Portland. "Oil Water and Light," landscape paintings by Julie Freund and Stan Mader, shows through Sun, April 16. Hours: Sun-Tues noon-5 pm, Wed, Thurs and Sat 10 am-7 pm. 772-1513.

Hole in the Wall Studios/works Route 302, Raymond. Mixed-media drawings by Brenda Ahwood Pinar, encaustic oils by Debra Galt, and work by other gallery artists show through Sun, April 30. Hours: Tues-Sun 3 pm-5 pm. 655-4952.

ICON Contemporary Art 19 Mason St, Brunswick. Oil paintings and black-and-white photographs by Claire Sedgwick show through Sat, April 15. Hours: Mon-Fri 5 pm, Sat 1-4 pm and by appointment. 725-8157.

Institute of Contemporary Art 522 Congress St, Portland. "Beyond Decorum: The Photography of Uriel Orlan," shows through Thurs, April 13. Hours: Tues, Wed, Sat 11 am-4 pm, Thurs 11 am-9 pm. 879-5742.

Local 188 188 State St, Portland. "Dubois: A Work in Progress," photographs by Colin Makie, shows through Sun, April 30. Hours: Tues and Wed 4 pm-close, Thurs-Sat 1 am-close, Sun 9 am-2 pm. 761-7909.

Maine Photo Co-op Gallery 100 Oak St, Portland. "Photographic Approach to Meditation," black-and-white photographs by Ying Ho Choi, shows through Sun, April 30. Hours: Tues 11:30 am-9 pm, Fri 11:30 am-5 pm, Sat 10 am-6 pm, Sun noon-5 pm. 774-1900.

Mainly Frames & Gallery 534 Congress St, Portland. Pen and ink drawings by William C. Harrison and other work by gallery artists are ongoing. Hours: Mon-Wed 10 am-6 pm, Thurs and Fri 10 am-8 pm, Sat 10 am-5 pm. 529-0031.

Montgomery Memorial Gallery at MECA 522 Congress St, Portland. Work by Claude Montgomery is ongoing. Hours: Tues, Wed, Fri and Sat 11 am-4 pm, Thurs 11 am-8 pm. 775-5088.

River Tree Arts 12 Depot St, Kennebunk. "Enamored," work by 10 members of the River Tree Arts Gallery Committee, shows through Thurs, April 27. Hours: Mon-Fri 9 am-4 pm. 885-4343.

Toby Rosenberg Gallery 293 Read St, Portland. Pottery, contemporary crafts and fine art by Appel, Asen, Austri, Clarot, Clement, Cloutier, Conway, Davidson, Hackett, Pansy, Shuman, Usher and other artists are ongoing. Hours: Mon-Fri noon-5:30 pm and Sat and Sun by appointment. 878-4590.

Salt Gallery 110 Exchange St, Portland. "New Work for a New Building," work by five photographers and 12 writers, shows through Fri, April 28. Hours: Mon-Fri noon-5 pm, Fri 6 pm-9 pm. 782-4550.

3 Fish Gallery 377 Cumberland Ave, Portland. Paintings by Michael Zarate show through Fri, April 28. Hours: Mon, Wed, Fri noon-5 pm. 11:30 am-2:30 pm. 773-4337.

Take 305 Commercial St, Portland. "Portraits with Personality," photographs by Steven Smith is ongoing. Hours: Mon-Fri 9 am-6:30 pm, Sat 10 am-4 pm. 874-0929.

The University of New England Art Gallery UNE's Westbrook College campus, 716 Stevens Ave, Portland. "Selections from Maine Corporate Collections," works from the collections of eight Maine companies, shows through Sat, April 22. Hours: Wed, Fri and Sat 1-4 pm, Thurs 1-7 pm. 797-7261.

The University of Southern Maine Art Gallery USA's Gosham campus, Senior BFA show, work by graduating fine art students, shows through Fri, May 12. Hours: Tues-Fri 11 am-4 pm, Sat 1-4 pm. 780-5009.

Hugh Verrier Studio 13-15 Bryanton St, Portland. Sculpture and paintings by Hugh Verrier are ongoing. Hours: call ahead. 773-9814.

MUSEUMS

Colby Museum Colby College campus, Waterville. "Counting," paintings by Gail Spier, shows through Sun, April 9. The Joan Whitney Payson Collection shows through Sun, June 18. Hours: daily 10 am-4:30 pm. 872-3228.

The Museum of African Tribal Art 122 Spring St, Portland. "Symbols of Power and Authority," museum pieces used by traditional African rulers and leaders, and a collection of African tribal masks and artifacts representing over 1,000 years of Central and West African history are ongoing. Hours: Tues-Sat 10:30 am-5 pm. 871-7168.

Pleyston Museum 159 Park Row, Brunswick. "Currents of Change: Understanding the Androscoquin," historical exhibit of photographs, maps, objects and installations, shows through Wed, Jan 31, 2001. Hours: Tues, Wed and Fri 9 am-5 pm, Thurs 9 am-6 pm, Sat 9 am-4 pm. 729-6606.

Portland Museum of Art 7 Congress St, Portland. Hours: Mon-Wed, Sat-Sun 10 am-5 pm, Thurs and Fri 10 am-9 pm. Admission: \$6 US students and seniors \$1 kids 6-12. Free every Fri from 5-9 pm. 775-6148 or 800-639-4067.

***Hamilton Easter Field Foundation Collection,** paintings and works on paper by Field, Peggy Bacon, Stuart Davis, Marsden Hartley, Yasuo Kuniyoshi and others, shows through Sun, May 7.

***"Images of Women: Reprieve,"** 12 photographs from the 1977 exhibition "Images of Women," shows through Sun, May 28.

***Lasting Impressions: Contemporary Prints from the Bruce Brown Collection,"** shows through Sun, June 4.

***"Recollections: Images: Chansonette Stanley Emmons at the Portland Museum of Art,"** photographs by Emmons, shows through Sun, May 21.

***"Sa Schioli: Portland Gallery,"** an installation incorporating portrait photography and objects, shows through Sun, May 28.

Umbrella Cover Museum 105 Brackett Ave, Peaks Island. Exhibit of over 150 umbrella sleeves from 12 countries including "People and Their Covers" and "New Umbrella Cover Fashions" shows by appointment. Guided tours by director/curator Nancy Hoffman available. Admission: \$2 and foreign currency. 766-4496.

OTHER VENUES

Abolnash Library University of New England's Westbrook College campus, 716 Stevens Ave, Portland. "Women Make History," a book and information exhibit, shows through Fri, April 14. Hours: Mon-Thurs 8 am-3 pm, Fri 8 am-5 pm, Sat 11 am-7 pm, Sun 1-9 pm. 797-7261 x4323.

Americana Workshop Route 1, Kennebunk. Oil paintings by Jean Colquhoun are ongoing. Hours: Thurs-Sun 10 am-5 pm and by appointment. 885-8356.

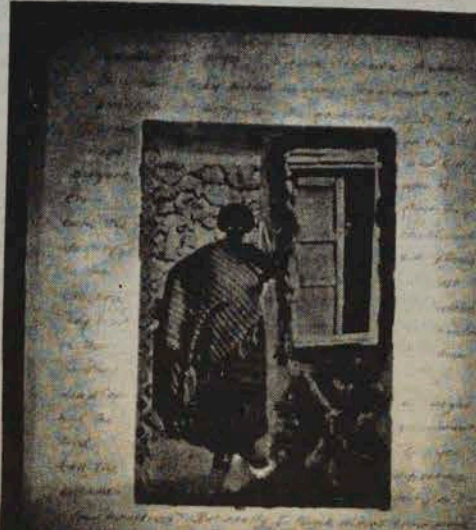
Cafe Ulla 190 State St, Portland. Work by collage artist/painter Dorette Marie Ameli and watercolorist Holly Brooks shows through Tues, April 11. Hours: Wed-Fri 7-11 am and 5:30-10 pm, Sat 8 am-noon and 5:30-10 pm, Sun 9 am-2 pm. 775-3380.

Falmouth Memorial Library 5 Lunt Rd. "Artist's Books by Island Friends," books by Allison Brown, Barrett Brewster, Betsy Shepard, Yolanda de Leve, Sarah Harvey, Erika Soule and Martha Hall, shows through Tues, April 18. "Art for Our Children," illustrations from children's books by Holly Meade, Tom Cooke and Kevin Hawkes, shows through Sun, April 30. Hours: Tues and Thurs 9:30 am-8 pm, Wed and Sat 9:30 am-5 pm. 781-2351.

Fetch 102 Congress St, Portland. Poster-size blow-up photographs of Mabel by Shoshannah White are ongoing. Hours: Tues-Fri 10 am-6 pm, Sat and Sun 11 am-6 pm. 773-5450.

Fifth Maine Regiment Community Center 45 Seashore Ave, Peaks Island.

TESTIFYING



Mixed-media collage from "Witness" by Mia Wood at the June Fitzpatrick Alternative Exhibition Space.

Making art on a human level

Like many journalists, Mia Wood has explored the ravages left in the wake of political anarchy. Wood has seen it all firsthand in Cambodia, Kenya, Northern Ireland and Bosnia. But she's not covering it for CNN. Wood is an artist who's bearing witness.

"Journalism takes the emotion out of the experience and records it in as clear language as possible," she said. "I'm not objective, I am an emotional person and it's important for me to translate the experience in a way that affects people on a human level."

With lines from W.B. Yeats "The Second Coming" echoing in her head — "Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold/Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world" — Wood began a project 99 days before the end of the millennium. As she traveled from one trouble spot to another, she gathered stories from such trauma survivors as a translator from Sarajevo who'd seen her husband shot and killed, a Palestinian who'd been jailed, a Ugandan hotel owner who helped deliver orphans in Rwanda to shelters and was later brutally threatened himself by soldiers.

During the 99 days, Wood, who is originally from Bath, documented her travels with diary entries on her Web site (miawood-art.com) and made collages from the family portraits, maps and documents she collected along the way. Now she's incorporated those collages, diary entries and quotes from the people she met into a collection of lanterns with glass fronts, which will be shown in its entirety for the first time at the June Fitzpatrick Alternative Exhibition Space.

As compelling as the visuals may be — a poignant photograph of a hardscrabble couple; fetishistic items like coins, hair and dice — they never overpower the grimness of the stories. "People in Beirut have collective amnesia," an entry for Lebanon says. "They refuse to talk about the war, its embarrassment for them if their son joined a militia and went off to kill his neighbors." And a quote from Londonderry, Northern Ireland: "I was an altar boy during Bloody Sunday."

It's a uniquely personal account of a journey into the many hearts of darkness, mementos of a trip across highly charged emotional terrain.

PAT SIMS

"Witness" begins Fri, April 7 with an opening reception from 5-7 p.m. at the June Fitzpatrick Alternative Exhibition Space, 652 Congress St., Portland, and runs through Sat., April 29. Hours: Wed-Sat, noon-5 p.m. 772-1961.

VISUAL arts

Submissions for the visual arts section should be received two weeks prior to publication. Send to Chris Busby, Casco Bay Weekly, 561 Congress St, Portland, ME 04101 or e-mail listings@maine.cc.

"The Coney Island of Maine: Peaks Island, 1880-1920," a look back at Peaks Island's history as a summer resort, is ongoing. Hours: daily 11 am-4 pm. 766-5514.

Gallery Music 21 Forest Ave, Portland. Exhibition and silent auction of abstract gestural expressionist paintings by Ray Dobson and an exhibition of impressionist landscapes and collages by Mary Leverett show through Sat, April 15. Hours: Mon-Sat 10 am-5 pm. 775-1304.

Maine Pottery Market 376 Fore St, Portland. New work by Laurie Adams, Peter Jones, Neal Loken, Peggy Anne Mack and Peter and Susan McDougall is ongoing. Hours: Mon-Sat 10 am-6 pm, Sun noon-5 pm. 774-1633.

Thos. Moser Cabinetmakers 149 Main St, Freeport. Photographs by Paul Rochelleau show through Sun, April 23. Hours: Mon-Sat 10 am-6 pm, Sun 11 am-5 pm. 865-4519.

Muskie School of Public Service University of Southern Maine's Portland campus, Falmouth St. "2500 Hours of Community Service," photographs by George Hamilton, is ongoing. Hours: Mon-Fri 8 am-5 pm, Sat 7 am-4 pm.

Portland Parks and Recreation 17 Arbor St. Paintings by Casey Fontaine show through Fri, April 28. Hours: Mon-Fri 9 am-4 pm. 756-8388.

Starbucks 504 Congress St, Portland. Selections from the Hay Gallery by Duane Patricio, Laura Fuller, Sara Gray, Michael Libby, Janice Lynch, Gary Robinson, Jane Page Cowan and Shoshannah White are ongoing. Hours: Mon-Thurs 6 am-8 pm, Fri 6 am-10 pm, Sat 7 am-10 pm, Sun 7 am-6 pm. 781-6334.

Thomas Memorial Library 650 Dyer Rd, Cape Elizabeth. Drawings, linocuts and monotypes by Kari Pike show through Sat, April 29. Hours: Mon, Wed, Fri 9 am-5 pm, Tues and Thurs 9 am-8:30 pm. 799-1720 or 799-0648.

CALLS FOR ART/ARTISTS

"Answer Shier" The new homemade publication needs poets, short stories and art, particularly black and white. Send work to: 6 Walker St, Apt. 2, Portland 04102.

Cafe Ulla seeks submissions from visual artists working in all mediums for ongoing exhibits. Send slides with a SASE to Cafe Ulla, 190 State St, Portland 04101 or call 775-3380.

Danforth Gallery seeks interns for all aspects of gallery and exhibition management. 775-6245.

Front Room Gallery seeks slides/photos of work for upcoming exhibitions. Send to Front Room Gallery, 378 Cottage Rd, South Portland, ME 04106. 767-9070.

The Frodo Gallery seeks to represent two or three sculptors with strong ties to Maine. Send slides and/or photographs, along with a personal biography and resume, to: Adelle Gabrielson, Associate Director, 411 Congress St, Portland, ME 04101. 773-2555.

The Gallery at 108 High St. is seeking new members. Those interested in belonging to a co-op gallery may submit slides/photos and bio/resume to The Gallery, 108 High St, Portland, ME 04101.

Maine Artists Space seeks visual artists between the ages of 19-35 for an exhibition at the Danforth Gallery and on the MAC Web site (www.maineartists-space.org) from Oct-Dec. Artists must live or work in the North Atlantic Area. For guidelines, send a SASE to Maine Artists Space, 34 Danforth St, Portland, ME 04101 or visit the Web site and click on "Join Us" for an application form.

Maine Arts Inc. hosts the second annual Poster Art Contest for the 24th Annual Maine Festival, taking place Aug 3-6. Deadline: May 15. For an application, send a SASE to Maine Arts Inc., 582 Congress St, Portland or call 772-8012.

Portland Drawing Group seeks models and drawing enthusiasts. For more info, call Don at 934-1592.

Tony Rosenberg Gallery 293 Read St, Portland. Seeks paintings, photographs and small-to-medium-sized sculpture to fit into upcoming shows. Contact Michael. 878-4590.

INTERNSHIPS & FUNDING

The Maine Arts Commission offers grants and services to assist arts organizations, artists and communities in various projects. Call 287-2724, e-mail jan.paulin@state.me.us or visit www.mainearts.com.

The Maine Humanities Council has grant money available to nonprofits interested in creating projects exploring their community's history. Quarterly deadlines: Wed, May 10, Thurs, Aug 10, and Fri, Nov 10. For more info, call 773-5051 or e-mail info@mainehumanities.org.

Percent for Art The Art Selection Committee for Department of Public Safety — Maine State Police — in Houlton is holding a competition for professional artists residing in Maine to design, execute and install artwork for a new police barracks. For a prospectus, send a SASE to Viola Pelletier, Maine State Police, PO Box 340, Houlton, ME 04740-0340. Deadline: Fri, April 7.

EVENTS & LECTURES

Archibald 2000 A lecture series featuring world-renowned architects and designers. Thurs, April 6: Tod Williams and Billie Tsien, architects, give a lecture entitled "Work Life." Thurs, April 13: Architecture critic Bar Kamhi gives a lecture entitled "The Critical Eye: Architecture, Culture, and the Critical Process." At the Portland Museum of Art, 7 Congress Square, at 6 pm. Tix: \$5. 775-6148 or 800-639-4067.

Magellan Body Thurs, April 6. The New York-based digital imaging artist speaks as part of the Maine College of Art's Volving Lecture Series. At MECA's Bader Imaging Center, 619 Congress St, Portland, at 6 pm. Free. 775-5088.

The Central Maine Friends of Photography holds meetings the first, Tues and third Wed of each month. At the Creative Photography Arts Center, Gates Mill Enterprise Arts Center, fourth floor, 59 Canal St, Lewiston, from 7-9 pm. 782-1369.

"First Monday" Informal gathering of MECA students and community artists for art-related discussions the first Monday of every month. At the Institute for Contemporary Art, MECA Building, 522 Congress St, Portland, at 5 pm. For more info, call Alison at 761-1902.

PERFORMANCE

Submissions for the performance section should be received two weeks prior to publication. Send to Chris Busby, Casco Bay Weekly, 561 Congress St, Portland, ME 04101 or e-mail listings@maine.cc.

DANCE

"Dance Into Spring" Sat, April 8. The Gosham Community Ballet and the Competition Dance Teams of the Dance Studio of Maine perform scenes from "The King and I," "West Side Story," "Khan," "The Viper" Rogers and Ken "The Viper" Rogers at 8:30 pm. Tix: \$9. Sat, April 8: Ken "The Viper" Rogers at 8:30 pm. Tix: \$6. Fri, April 7: Ken "The Viper" Rogers at 8:30 pm. Tix: \$9. Sat, April 8: Ken "The Viper" Rogers at 8:30 pm. Tix: \$6. At the Comedy Connection, 6 Custom House Wharf, Portland, 774-5554.

"Fusion" Fri, April 7. Performance by the juggling trio of Michael

Ward, Jason Tardy and Matthew Tardy. At Brunswick High School, Maquoit Rd., at 7 pm. Tix: \$5. \$3 students, benefits Arts Are Elementary, a program bringing artists into Brunswick elementary schools. 729-5083.

"A Millennium of Force" Thurs, Sat, April 13-15 and April 27-29. Three young Colby College students perform a two-part anthology of theater from the last 1,000 years. Part one, "Phantom Identities," performed Thurs, April 13, Fri, April 15 and April 28, includes "Noah's Flood," by Tasso, "Caliban," scenes from Shakespeare's "The Tempest," "Allometry at Love," by Feydeau and "We All Have the Same Old Story," by Franco Rame and Dario Fo. At Strider Theater, Colby College, Waterville, at 8 pm. Tix: \$3. \$2 students and seniors. 872-3338.

"Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH" Fri, April 7. Sat, April 8. The Children's Theatre of Maine presents Robert C. O'Brien's classic tale of a widowed mouse and the rats she befriends aboard a ship. At the Children's Theatre of Maine, 371 Marginal Way, Portland, Fri 7 pm, Sat at 2 pm.

"Dance Into Spring" Sat, April 8. The Gosham Community Ballet and the Competition Dance Teams of the Dance Studio of Maine perform scenes from "The King and I," "West Side Story," "Khan," "The Viper" Rogers and Ken "The Viper" Rogers at 8:30 pm. Tix: \$9. Sat, April 8: Ken "The Viper" Rogers at 8:30 pm. Tix: \$6. Fri, April 7: Ken "The Viper" Rogers at 8:30 pm. Tix: \$9. Sat, April 8: Ken "The Viper" Rogers at 8:30 pm. Tix: \$6. At the Comedy Connection, 6 Custom House Wharf, Portland, 774-5554.

"Fusion" Fri, April 7. Performance by the juggling trio of Michael

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portland PROWLER

CHRIS BUSBY

Spring Break Portland '00

Portland has all the makings of a prime Spring Break destination: clean beaches; dirty dance clubs; beautiful, college-age women and obnoxious, college-age guys. The night I set out to relive my Spring Break memories, it was even (comparatively) warm outside. The brain trust behind the city's "Discover Portland" marketing scheme should take advantage of this. How about, "Spring Break in Portland: Skin cancer kills." Or, "Portland: Closer than Cancun and easy extradition."

My forays in Portland's Spring Break scene shared some similarities with those of my undergraduate days at the dawn of the '90s. The music, for instance, hadn't changed, leading me to wonder whether students will be shaking their stuff to "Bust a Move," "1999" and the soundtrack to "Grease" well into the third millennium A.D.

Unlike past Spring Breaks, however, I didn't funnel watered-down Budweiser down until the beer's meniscus reached my esophagus, puke or have a deranged motel manager stick a shotgun in my face. But those are good things.

The most beautiful thing about Spring Break is the license it gives you to let loose like it's Friday on a Monday or a Wednesday night. Thus, wishing to perform a true test of Portland's aptitude as a Spring Break destination, I set out on a Wednesday night with my friend Rich White (not exactly his real name), a local artist in his mid-50s. We headed to the part of the Old Port where it seems like Spring Break year-round — Wharf Street.

The Iguana was dead at 10 p.m., save for a raucous group of revelers celebrating someone named Steve's birthday. Steve was drunk.

I learned an interesting thing about the Iguana that night — it's perfectly acceptable to stand on the bar and begin shouting, as a member of Steve's party did. Grabbing a carnation, the young gentleman inserted its stem into his fly and declared to those assembled, "I got a flowah in my peckah!" He must have been from Boston.

"We're goin' to the Pavilion!" was his next announcement, and before long they had.

The bartender led Rich and me to believe that the Pavilion was the place to be on Wednesday nights, given that most of the other Wharf Street bars were closed. Sure enough, Gilligan's Tiki Bar and the Dirty Bird/Shady Lady were not open to accept our Spring Break dollars. The Better End was offering some most un-Spring Break-like heavy metal, so we wandered into Fore Play, the sports bar on Fore Street.

The scene there was similarly sparse, with one group of drunken dancers bumping buttocks by the door. I ran into a friend of mine named Phil (not exactly his real name) and asked him what he thought of Spring Break in Portland.

"I just want to get drunk and high and get laid," he declared. "Sex, drugs, rock and roll." "Are you getting rock and roll here?" I asked, as "Come on Eileen" blared in the background. "If you call 1983, you know, rock," he said. Then he bought us a round of Jell-O shots. They weren't half bad.

Determined to hit the hot spot, however, Rich and I departed for the Pavilion shortly after midnight. Unfortunately, our prior partying had depleted my resources, and I was unable to swing both the \$3 cover and an alcoholic beverage.

The doorman was stubborn as a golem, refusing my entreaties when I pointed out that there were only 45 minutes of entertainment left. He countered by calling my attention to the quality of the "ass" present in the club, and, indeed, there were asses aplenty inside.

The Pavilion was packed with undulating student bodies, some linked at the lips. I had found Spring Break in Portland at last, right down to the inflexible bouncers!

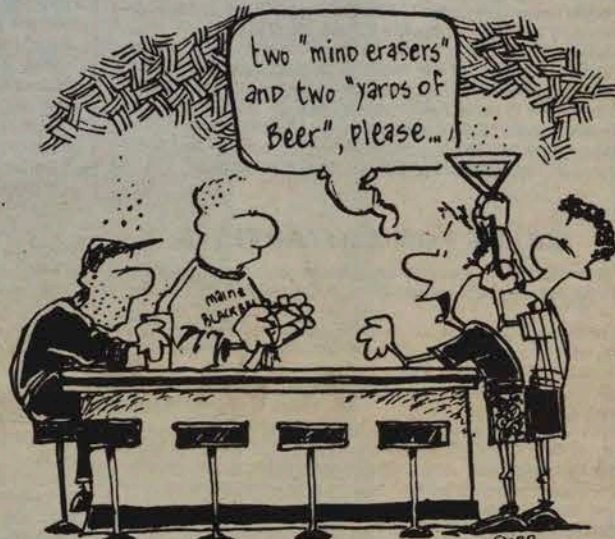
"What if I showed up at two minutes to one?" I asked a manager-type who joined the discussion. "Would you let me in for free then?"

"No. Then you wouldn't be able to buy a drink," he reasoned.

Our asses parted company at that point. Rich's went home. Mine ended up on a stool at Sangillo's Tavern, the legendary dive bar that recently resurfaced on Hampshire Street.

Sangillo's provided the perfect cap to the evening. An ingenious fountain behind the bar endlessly poured Budweiser from an inverted bottle. Couples Rich's age slow-danced to the Eagles' "Take It to the Limit."

"This is the limit," I thought. "The place where old Spring Breakers end up." I could think of worse places to be. **CBW**



ILLUSTRATION/COREY PANDOLPH

stage

JASON WILKINS

Uncharted territory

The Mad Horse Theatre Company specializes in emotionally intense, socially engaged dramas. People have been known to leave Mad Horse shows in a state of shock. Still, every once in a while, the group kicks back and presents something more light and slice-of-life. "Off the Map," currently under the lights at the Oak Street Theatre, is one of these mellow entertainments.

The setting is a ramshackle but cozy house somewhere in the unmapped deserts of New Mexico. We can see an outhouse standing in the yard, amid piles of rusty tools and machinery. All the furniture and appliances in the house are oddly mismatched because they have been culled from the local dump — but everything has been lovingly refurbished, and works just fine.

Into this setting strides a woman (Renee St. Jean) who sets the quirky tone of the play by saying: "The summer my father was depressed, the face of our Lord Jesus Christ appeared on a tortilla at the Morning Glory Cafe." The woman's name is Bo Grodin. "Off the Map" is the tale of that summer.

The Grodins are an odd clan in a state of disarray. Bo's father, Charley (Brian Shorey), is so mysteriously depressed that he does little but drink water to replace the fluids constantly flowing from his eyes.

Poverty is not the cause of his funk: Since the Grodins grow and kill their own food, they have little need of cash. And it's hard to see how anyone married to Bo's mother, the fetching and resolutely cheerful Arlene (Christine Louise Marshall) could be blue for long.

Arlene is so worried about her husband that she asks his ultra-laconic best friend, George (Bob Colby), to visit a shrink and fake a funk so as to access antidepressants. Meanwhile, teenage Bo (Sarah "Squid" Lord) keeps busy by scamming free Twinkies through the mail and dreaming of life in a place with indoor plumbing.

"When my American Express card comes," Bo vows, "I'm outta here!" The outside world soon pays a visit in the form of William (Guy Durichek), a former short-order cook with a law degree now working for the Internal Revenue Service. He comes to audit the Grodins, but instead swoons at the sight of Arlene weeding her garden in the nude. Is it love or just heatstroke?

I describe the setting and characters at such length because "Off the Map" contains very little plot. The play moves with the kind of lazy gait one adopts when moving through an airy house in the summertime. Some may find the pace tedious, but it suits the dreamy atmosphere of the play, which, after all, takes place in the rosy afterglow of the adult Bo's memory.

About the adult Bo: Why does she even appear? Every once in a while, St. Jean gets to step forward and make a short, lyrical speech about the past. These speeches are a shade too purple, and when she is not delivering them, St. Jean has nothing to do but stand around and smile at her younger self. This feels like a waste of a good actress. Why couldn't Lord have simply delivered these soliloquies in an older tone of voice? Especially since, praise the Lord on a tortilla, she owns the stage as young Bo.

Just as Bo's teenage rambunctiousness brings needed energy to the Grodin homestead, 15-year-old Equity actress Lord shows her adult peers how to carry a show without breaking a sweat. Whether playing with imaginary circus animals or writing letters to her prison pen pals, Lord is always a joy to watch, and never merely cute.

Her fellow cast members give sweet, relaxed performances. The folks at the Grodins' are comfortable in their eccentricities, and these actors are cozy in their roles.

Not much happens in "Off the Map," but who cares? It's plenty enjoyable to spend two hours in the company of such people — and you don't need a map when you're happy where you are. **CBW**



Reaching for something more: (left to right) Sarah "Squid" Lord with Christine Louise Marshall and Guy Durichek in "Off the Map."

Mad
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Company's "Off the
Map" plays through Sat.,
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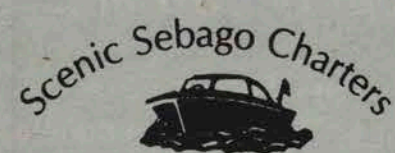
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congress street MINUTES

Mystic tea & tarot

Just when I thought I had exhausted all of Portland's magical places, one day at the restaurant/gallery Local 188 I found an exotic white paper card with an ink drawing of a teapot decorated with a pyramid and a hand-colored red and yellow Egyptian eye. Ornate black letters proclaimed, "Mystic Tea, Tarot by Sarabell. Every Saturday 2-6 at Tamarind Tree Cookery." Fine print at the bottom promised "delicious treats and the finest tea in an environment of spiritual enhancement." The card was sprinkled with gold glitter in the shape of stars and moons.

Although I have been referred to as a "cardomancer" here and there, my dabblings in tarot have been sporadic and amateur. A strange reading an old friend gave me on the cliffs at Two Lights State Park kept me away from tarot for over a decade. On that occasion, huge fog banks appeared from nowhere on a clear and cloudless summer day, enveloping us completely. Need I say that the dire elements forecast in the cards came true?

I am skeptical of many things, including crystal healing, channeling, polarity therapy, firewalking and dowsing. Nonetheless, I have experienced strange phenomena in my short life and have heard inexplicable tales of spirits, visions and psychic encounters come out of the mouths of otherwise rational and sober people. I like to stay open-minded about these things. One sloppy March Saturday I arranged to meet a friend at the Tamarind Tree Cookery at 151 Newbury St. (a couple blocks down from the Village Cafe).

The tearoom far exceeded my expectations. Our waitress informed us that the cozy room with dim lighting and windows overlooking a courtyard was occasionally used as a dining room for the cookery (at the moment, largely a takeout venture), but is specially set up for the tea and tarot venture. The small tables were covered with gold and purple cloths, adorned with green candles and dried wildflowers in colored glass vases. Edith Piaf songs played from the speakers. Incense burned in the foyer.

The intriguing dioramas I had recently seen at Delilah Pottery that hung on the tea-room walls turned out to be the creations of our waitress, Nancy Kureth, who was dressed in a Gypsy-esque mix of antique garb. My favorite piece was one called "He's Scared" in which a huge heart made of metal castoffs and glittering objects dangled on Inquisition-type chains above paper cutouts of a skeleton and a flaming candelabra, next to a tiny black eye mask.

Elegant teacups were placed before us and we ordered tea and scones. Never a big tea drinker, I found the orange ginger tea delicious. The scones were star-shaped and arrived accompanied by lemon curd, pomegranate juice and lingonberry jam. An elderly woman was having her cards read, so I was given a placard to reserve the next appointment. The card bore an illustration of a "Fire Witch" and the back had a quotation from women's health specialist Dr. Christiane Northrup about "women who had the courage to speak their truths even in the face of great opposition."

When it was my turn, I was invited to bring my tea over to the tarot table, where I met Sarabell, a charming, vivacious blonde, who wore bright red nail polish, black clothing and multiple earrings. I was drawn hypnotically to one crystal earring in particular. After going into a brief trance, Sarabell reached into a velvet bag and drew out a pack of Voyager tarot cards that are unusual because they contain actual photographs of surreal images.

I was impressed by Sarabell's level of knowledge about my inner life — things that many of my closest friends would probably have been hard-pressed to describe. Some of it was rather vague, but I hardly expected a psychic forecast to be literal. Highlights included being told I had experienced a profoundly difficult winter, that I needed to avoid knee-jerk reactions and give myself permission to be a full-time artist.

One of the best parts was a free-associated description of my ambivalent attraction to intense experiences. Sarabell said I am the type who yearns to have coffee with no less than Jesus himself! As metaphorical as that suggestion may have been, I still can't get that image out of my head.

Both Nancy and Sarabell work for the Tamarind Tree Cookery, which serves brunch from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the dining room on Sundays. Saturday tarot readings are first-come, first-served, cost \$15 and last 15 to 20 minutes, or you can simply enjoy tea and pastries in what is definitely "an environment of spiritual enhancement." CBW



ILLUSTRATION/JOSH MCDONOUGH

MOVIES

"High Fidelity," directed by Stephen Frears. Rated R. At Maine Mall Cinema, Maine Mall Road, South Portland. 774-1022.

review

"High Fidelity" is going to place third on my top-five list of pop culture signposts that will, rightly or wrongly, lead most acquaintances as well as total strangers to believe they now understand me. I'm not looking forward to it.

Many years ago, when Barry Levinson's "Diner" was released, people I hadn't spoken to in years started sending cards and placing late-night calls to me. Had I possibly recognized myself in the scene when Shrevie (Daniel Stern) goes ballistic over his girlfriend's filing error in his record collection? Charlie Parker is filed under jazz, alphabetically and then chronologically by recording date. Simple. And anal.

When one's life is untethered, the little things that are done perfectly become significant. It fully understood Shrevie's explosion but of course feigned confusion as to why I was now having a resurgence of correspondents.

Five years after Nick Hornby's novel "High Fidelity" roared to number two, just behind "Diner," on that same list of pop culture signposts, Stephen Frears has directed the film version. Though Rob (John Cusack) as a music store owner, semi-retired DJ and record collector has a few doughy years on Shrevie, he's still holding on to his youthful obsessions. They are fodder for his self-deprecating humor and they get him laid periodically.

In the first minute of the film, much of what will take place in the next one hour and 40 minutes is revealed. Staring into the camera, Rob asks, "What came first — the music or the misery?"

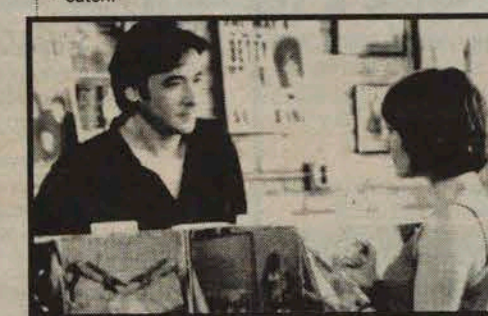
He then begins a circuitous journey down memory lane of "the top five all-time breakups." The reason for the reverie is the departure of his live-in lawyer girlfriend, Laura (Iben Hjejle). As he attempts to revisit those five responsible for his misery, trying to make sense of his current situation, he exposes himself in increasingly surprising ways.

What Hornby detailed in the book has been brought scrupulously to the screen by writers Cusack, D.V. DeVincentis, Steve Pink and Scott Rosenberg along with production designers David Chapman and Therese DePrez. The depictions of Rob's life both in and out of his store, Championship Vinyl, as well as those of his employees Dick (Todd Louso) and Barry (Jack Black) are hyper-realized.

Everything is letter-perfect. Rob's apartment is rudimentary. It is clearly his home, and Laura, despite their years together, has left little mark on

his environment. He has the obligatory posters of Miles Davis and John Coltrane, he has the one-step-above-cinder-block-and-board shelving for his records. (At 50 records to one foot, he has well over a thousand in his foyer alone). He has the Marantz and Sansui equipment that he hasn't upgraded in 10 years and the turntable that won't engrave his collection of records (which are individually sleeved in protective plastic). Perfect perfect. And the store and its employees follow suit. The aging crack-and-peel "Blind Pig" records logos, the Silos poster, the bin dividers that have writing on both sides because they're reused as needs change.

Dick argues with Barry over Belle and Sebastian. Dick argues with a customer over his daughter's desire for Stevie Wonder's "I Just Called to Say I Love You" (and as the abused customer leaves, Dick continues with a discussion of how to dismiss that slice of driver yet simultaneously recognize Wonder's brilliance). Throughout the film, there are 70 song cues where the somewhat obscure — such as Love's version of "My Little Red Book" — collides with the more familiar — such as Stereolab's "Lo Boob Oscillator," Bob Dylan's "Most of the Time" or even Katrina and the Waves' "Walkin' on Sunshine." In Championship Vinyl everything may be both praised and savaged, solely depending on the mood of the employees and the audience whose ear they catch.



Somewhere between the music and the misery: John Cusack and Natasha Gregson Wagner.

One of the wonders of "High Fidelity" is that the three male leads don't suck all the available air out of the movie. There is room enough for Hjejle's fragile performance, which is an acutely intelligent balance to all the smart-mouthed chaos that swirls around her. Lisa Bonet, appearing even more glassy than in her final year on "Cosby," is perfect as the fantasy turned reality one-night stand. Catherine Zeta-Jones, not surprisingly, plays the role of vapid eye candy to a T and Tim Robbins overcomes both the George Washington outfit and his unfortunate career move in "Mission to Mars" to bring life to a professional conflict resolver.

But despite all this perfection and near perfection it would be an ill-directed leap of faith for viewers to believe they now understand the peculiar microcosm portrayed in the movie. Music store employees do not see themselves as "unappreciated scholars who sit on people who know less than they do," as one Championship customer puts it. They only act that way. Trust me. I'm still juggling with the signpost list but I suspect changes in the order are just around the corner.

Jim Pinfold is a columnist for CBW and has worked in music stores for 23 years.

now playing

NEW THIS WEEK

BLACK AND WHITE James Toback directed this brilliant ensemble film about a group of people living in Manhattan on the eve of the millennium. There's an ex-con who wants to cut a hip-hop record, a group of white teens trying to kill black, and Brooke Shields as a decaying former model who aspires to — wait a moment, Brooke Shields? Brenda Starr? Suddenly Susan? The ex Mrs. Agassi? Forget it. This movie really blows. Hoyts Clark's Pond.

KEEPING THE FAITH He's a priest. His best friend's a rabbi. They're both in love with the same girl. Guess which one can't get any action. Directed by Ed Norton. Maine Mall Cinema.

MAN OF THE CENTURY His name is Johnny Twennies, and he's a 1920s reporter living in the 1950s. When his editor orders him to come up with the story of the century or take a hike, Johnny helps save a beautiful dame kidnapped by a notorious gangster. Directed by Adam Aronson. Look for Frank Corbie, the father from the '80s "Babylon" TV show. The Movies.

READY TO RUMBLE If you haven't gotten enough of David Arquette from those no-nonsense A.I.G. commercials or from his raunchy movie "Scream," "Scream 2," "Scream 3," "Scream 4," "Scream 5," "Scream 6," "Scream 7," "Scream 8," "My Life Foot," you can check him out in this ultra-violent tale of two teens in search of their wedding veil. Jimmy King. Maine Mall Cinema. Hoyts Falmouth 10.

REAR WINDOW What's a playboy to do when he's got a broken leg and can't leave his apartment? Get a long lens camera and spy on that busty — but homicidal — Raymond Burr living across the courtyard, naturally. Confined to a wheelchair and armed with nothing but the drop-dead curves of the gorgeous Grace Kelly, Jimmy Stewart must stop a murderer before his own life is at risk. Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. The Movies.

RETURN TO ME With "The X-Files" winding down, tough-guy David Duchovny makes his second leap onto the silver screen in this wholesome generic comedy. Duchovny stars as a recent widower who discovers his new girlfriend (Minnie Driver) was the transplanted recipient of his deceased wife's heart. Hoyts Clark's Pond. Hoyts Falmouth 10.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT Someone dug William Friedkin ("The French Connection") out of his grave to direct this tale of friendship and suspicion. Tommy Lee Jones plays a lawyer who must defend a decorated Marine (Samuel L. Jackson) accused of murdering downed soldiers during a rescue attempt. Hoyts Clark's Pond. Hoyts Falmouth 10.

TUMBLEWEEDS Seems more like a case of identity theft. Along with her 12-year-old daughter, care-free Mary Jo packs up and heads out whenever a relationship gets too deep. Ending up outside San Diego, the movingly made movie is a handsome truck driver, but just as her daughter is finally feeling settled into their new home, she decides it's time to hit the road again. The Movies.

ALSO SHOWING

AMERICAN BEAUTY Oscar-winner Kevin Spacey stars as a downward spiraling trade writer who's rejuvenated by the attentions of his adolescent daughter's head-casting director (performs in the limbo). Directed by Sam Mendes. Hoyts Clark's Pond. Hoyts Falmouth 10.

ANGELAS ASHES Moviegoers are sure to find humor in this galling tale of a poverty-stricken, drug-addicted young Irish lad trying to keep his family alive. Directed by John Huston. Hoyts Clark's Pond. Hoyts Falmouth 10.

BENG JOHN MALKOVICH: Music video wunderkind Spike Jonze ("Sabotage") directed this warped tale of a down-on-his-luck puppeteer (John Cusack) who discovers a portal behind the filing cabinet in his office. Entering the mysterious doorway, he finds he's inside the brain of actor John Malkovich (John Malkovich), an anomaly the puppeteer exploits as a tourist attraction. Nickelodeon Cinemas 1-6.

BOYS DON'T CRY Alternate title: "Absence of Ceviche." While theaters in the rest of the country received director Kimberly Peirce's tragic, a million years ago, now is your chance — finally — to see the true tale of young romance, gender-bending and violent tragedy. Best Actress nominee Hilary Swank portrays Teena Brandon, a Nebraska teenager who switches both her gender and her name. As Brandon Teena, she successfully wooed high school mate Lana (Chloe Sevigny), and even became friends with Lana's mouth-breathing buddies John and Tom. However, tragedy ensues when Brandon's friends discover her true sexuality. Maine Mall Cinema.

THE CIDER HOUSE RULES Dr. Larva (Michael Caine) grows up in a rural orphanage in 1930s Maine, helping mothers deliver their babies and rearing the unwanted kids. But the good physician's heart is broken when his favorite child, Homer (Felix Maguire) leaves with a visiting couple (Paul Rudd and Charlize Theron). Maine Mall Cinema. Hoyts Falmouth 10.

EVIL BROCKHOFF Alternate title: "A Civil Action With Coverage." Julia Roberts stars as a lawyer's assistant who's persistent efforts and carry good looks help bring down a powerful utility suspected of poisoning local wells. We won't know whether Roberts will be sued for poisoning local cineplexes. With Albert Finney. Hoyts Clark's Pond. Hoyts Falmouth 10.

THE INSIDER Tumbleweeds Thugs Three Kings Switching Goals Happy, Texas Cabaret Balkan

AVAILABLE: TUES, APRIL 11

THE INSIDER

TUMBLEWEEDS

THUGS

THREE KINGS

SWITCHING GOALS

HAPPY, TEXAS

CABARET

BALKAN

AVAILABLE: TUES, APRIL 11

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AVAILABLE: TUES, APRIL 11

THE INSIDER

TUMBLEWEEDS

THUGS

THREE KINGS

SWITCHING GOALS

HAPPY, TEXAS

CABARET

BALKAN

times starting friday

SCHEDULE EFFECTIVE FRIDAY THROUGH THURSDAY, April 7-April 13. Except where indicated. Owing to scheduling changes after CBW goes to press, moviegoers are advised to confirm times with theaters.

HOYTS CLARK'S POND

333 Clark's Pond Rd., So. Portland, 879-1511

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT PG-13
 12:30, 1:30, 4:30, 6:30, 7:30, 8:45, 10:10
RETURN TO ME PG
 1:10, 4:10, 7:10, 9:50
BLACK AND WHITE PG
 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:10
AMERICAN BEAUTY PG-13
 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:10
THE SKULLS PG-13
 1:20, 4:15, 6:45, 9:20
ROMEO MUST DIE PG
 3:30, 9:15
EVIL BROCKHOFF PG
 12:40, 3:40, 7:55
MISSION TO MARS PG
 12:45, 6:40

HOYTS FALMOUTH 10

206 U.S. Route 1, Falmouth, 781-5616

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT PG-13
 12:40, 3:40, 7:45, 9:45
READY TO RUMBLE PG-13
 1:40, 4:10, 7:20, 10:10
HIGH FIDELITY PG
 12:45, 3:20, 7:05, 9:35
RETURN TO ME PG
 12:55, 4:15, 7:15, 9:55
AMERICAN BEAUTY PG-13
 1:15, 3:50, 6:30, 9:25
THE CIDER HOUSE RULES PG-13
 12:55, 3:30, 6:40, 9:30
NO SHOWING SAT. AND SUN.
EVIL BROCKHOFF PG
 1:10, 4:10, 6:50, 9:40
MISSION TO MARS PG
 12:55, 3:20
MISSION TO MARS PG
 SAT. SUN. ONLY 12:35

KEYSTONE THEATRE CAFE

504 Congress St., Portland, 871-5500

THE NEXT BEST THING PG-13
 8:35SAT. SUN. MAT. 3:45
WHATEVER IT TAKES PG-13
 9:30SAT. SUN. MAT. 12:30
ANGELAS ASHES PG
 8:45SAT. SUN. MAT. 12:45
THE GREEN MILE PG
 6:45SAT. SUN. MAT. 2:15
TURKEY TURKEY PG
 6:15SAT. SUN. MAT. 2:45
WONDER BOYS PG
 6

MAINE MALL CINEMA

Maine Mall Road, So. Portland, 774-1022

READY TO RUMBLE PG-13
 1:15, 3:45, 7:15, 9:45
KEEPING THE FAITH PG-13
 SAT. APRIL 8 ONLY 7:15
BOYS DON'T CRY PG
 1:20, 4:05, 7:20, 9:50
HIGH FIDELITY PG
 1:15, 4:15, 7:15, 9:45
NO 7:15 SHOWING ON SAT., APRIL 8
MY DOG SKIP PG
 1:30, 4
PRICE OF GLORY PG
 7:10, 9:45
ROAD TO EL DORADO PG
 12:50, 1:10, 2:55, 3:10, 5, 5:20, 7:30, 9, 9:30
THE CIDER HOUSE RULES PG-13
 1:30, 4:15, 7, 9:40

THE MOVIES

10 Exchange St., Portland, 772-9600

REAR WINDOW PG
 THURS. APRIL 6 TUES. APRIL 11
 THURS. SAT. 5, 9:40AM. MAT. 3:50PM. TUES. 7
MAN OF THE CENTURY PG
 THURS. APRIL 6 TUES. APRIL 11
 THURS. SAT. 7:15-9:40AM. MAT. 1-3:15PM. TUES. 7:15, 9:15
TUMBLEWEEDS PG-13
 APRIL 12-13
 WED. TUES. 5, 7, 9:50SAT. SUN. MAT. 1, 3

NICKELODEON

Temple and Middle Streets, Portland, 772-9751

GALAXY QUEST PG
 3:30, 6:45SAT. SUN. MAT. 1
MANFRIED PARK PG-13
 4:20, 7, 9:35SAT. SUN. MAT. 1:20
BENG JOHN MALKOVICH PG
 4:10, 7:10, 9:40SAT. SUN. MAT. 1:40
THE INSIDER PG
 4:30, 6:50SAT. SUN. MAT. 1:10
THE TALENTED MR. RILEY PG
 6:45, 9:20
THE HURRICANE PG
 8:55
SIXTH SENSE PG-13
 4, 7:20, 9:45SAT. SUN. MAT. 1:30
STUART LITTLE PG
 4:45SAT. SUN. MAT. 12:45, 2:45

CASCO BAY WEEKLY

personals

DISCLAIMER: Casco Bay Weekly Personals and other advertisements and voice messages may be submitted only by persons 18 years of age. Casco Bay Weekly does not investigate or accept responsibility for claims made in any advertisement. The screening of respondents is solely the responsibility of the advertiser. Casco Bay Weekly assumes no liability for the content of or any introduction, advertisement or voice message. All personal ads may not contain voice greeting and Casco Bay Weekly is not responsible for ads without voice greetings. Advertiser assumes complete liability for the content of, and all replies to, their personal ads. All personal ads may not contain voice greeting and for any resulting claims made against Casco Bay Weekly that may result from the advertisement, advertiser agrees to indemnify and hold Casco Bay Weekly harmless of all cost, expenses, including attorney's fees, damages and reasonable out-of-pocket costs caused by the introduction, advertisement and voice messages placed by the advertiser, or any reply to the Personals or other advertisement or voice message. The Casco Bay Weekly reserves the right to edit or refuse and edit. Warning: We recommend that you do not use cellular or cordless phones with this service or other advertisement or voice message.

women & men

A ROOM with a view. This adventurous, attractive, artistic, 42-year-old SWF, 5'9", seeking companion to share his view. You are warmhearted, enjoy building, have sense of humor and have room. #85497

A STUDY in contrasts. Me: SWF, petite, 50s, young ideas, passion for life. Imaginative, energetic, idealistic, spiritual, artistic, accomplished personality/professionally. Seeking 30- to 40-year-old, educated, professional, fit male to share his slopes, travel books, cookbooks, adventure, arts, wine, life, ambitions, dreams. #85480

ADVENTURES in Wonderland. Now wishing on stars and in wells for something lasting. 33, pretty, slim, sincere, educated, accomplished personality/professionally. Seeking 30- to 40-year-old, educated, professional, fit male to share his slopes, travel books, cookbooks, adventure, arts, wine, life, ambitions, dreams. #85693

ALPHA FEMALE seeks alpha male. Forty-something female with long mane and nice haunches, tired of running from wolves. Looking for long-term partner in crime and possible den mate. Basic survival gear (besides running), in museums or canoes. You: SWM, n/s, with soul. Surely your varied interest and personality will enhance my life. #85420

AMAZING, BRAINY, attractive, ly-educated, environmentalist wacko, 30, sits in streets during Northeast, climbs mountains, canoes, camps, bicycles around town (do have car), won't shop Walmart. Idea-a-minute. Aries seeks smart, outgoing, 25-35, environmentalist (no SUV's), humor to match. Friendship, more! #85289

ARE YOU strong enough to be my Man. Outdoorsy, attractive, wholesome, artistic, fun Woman looking for a date with trustworthy Man who likes spontaneous adventures, good food and fun company. Tall, mid-30s to mid-40s. #85471

ARTISTIC, FUN-LOVING! Enjoys nature, camping, hiking, exploring new places. Loves music, dance, gardening and home-life. Attractive DWFF, 39, 5'5", seeking partner with same qualities, who's self-aware and values spirituality, professional with a sense of humor. #86315

ATTRACTIVE, ARTISTIC, amorous, adventurous, absolutely adorable, ageless 52-year-old Single White Woman looking for attractive, amicable, active Man. #85129

ATTRACTIVE PROFESSIONAL Woman, 50, active, educated, affectionate, positive and grounded. Seeking fellow adventurer to explore the arts, outdoors, culinary mysteries and our internal landscapes. Portland area. #85446

AVERAGE, GOOD-LOOKING, sincere SWF, 38, loves music, dancing, dining out, flowers, walking, talking, down-to-earth. Seeks Male, 35-45, for fun in the sun and good times, with similar interests. All responses answered. Serious replies only. #85500

BRUNSWICK AREA SWF, 40, 5'9", enjoys dining out, movies, quiet nights at home. Seeking Single, tall Male for relationship in Brunswick area. #85375

CATHOLIC, FRENCH medical professional, 36, spiritual, compassionate mother, pleasing to the eye, with shining inner beauty, traditional values, enjoys scenic bike riding, fine dining, champagne and good conversation. ISO best friend, 33-40, who communicates with positive, respectful words and warm touches. #86947

COMBINE ONES? 33, 5'7", with one S/DW, n/s, 30-45, mix well, still in movies, dancing and dining out, garnish with good conversation, laughter and romance, serve immediately and enjoy. #85511

CONTRADICTION of opposites. Sweet, feisty, highly educated, ditty, serene/motivated, 40s. DF seeks shy/ascribic, abstract/uncomplicated, normal/abnormal Guy who loves people, enjoys exercise and finds life thrilling. No matter what. #85552

CREATIVE AND FUN, courageous, spiritually aware, financially stable, intellectually curious SWFF, 39, tall, attractive, loves art, nature, music, movies, friends, conversation. Seeking SWPM, 35-50, who's thoughtful, gentle, has polish, depth, appreciates beauty and wants to share center stage with wonderful Woman. #85195

CREATIVE, FUN-LOVING, 51-year-old blonde, 4'7", baby blue eyes you get lost in, cuddles, hugs, kisses and spark. Remember, good things, small packages, n/s, n/drugs, light drinker. Enjoys dancing, painting, old cars, photography, camping, Scottish festivals, sunrises, sunsets, oceans and candles. #86787

DWF SEEKING Male role model for my black Lab. He has excellent retrieving instincts and swims like a seal. I am the first to admit that I shamelessly spoil him. I am petite with strawberry-blond hair and in my youth dubbed "the prettiest Girl in dancing school." Am financially independent and a great cook. For my needs I look for an unencumbered, urbane, articulate and thoroughly charming Man, 50-60, #85438

DWF, 24, looking for honest, caring Man, 21-36, for friendship, possibly more. Must like kids as I have two. I am 5'3", 140 lbs, brown/hazel. #85515

DWF, 59, older Woman seeks younger Man, 35-50, third-shift worker. I'm heavy-set, brown/hazel, smoker, enjoy long drives, old movies, conversation you must have a sense of humor, willing to have fun with no strings attached, race and looks important. #85108

DWP, PETITE, 50s, seeks kind, intelligent, independent-minded Man with a nice sense of humor, for fun and companionship. Portland to Augusta. #85352

FUN-LOVING, ATTRACTIVE, active DWFF, n/s, enjoys dancing, dinners with adult conversations, hiking and more. Seeking attractive SWPM, 38-45, WPH, intelligent, humorous, who enjoys people and life. #85505

GENTLE SOUL, loving and kind, with a wild side, loves dancing, music, long walks and sunshine. Looking for SWM, 30-35, for friendship and good times. #85453

GOOD, FIT, sexy, bright, attractive, passionate, together SWF. You: sexy, bright, passionate, attractive, together SWM, 38-50. Let's see if you fit the profile. #85513

GREGARIOUS, FUN-LOVING, 33-year-old professional Woman seeking a Man who makes me laugh, enjoy the theater, gourmet cooking, antiques, traveling and attending sporting events. #85454

HELP DWFF, 5'4", 124 lbs, graphic artist, seeks n/s, 35-45, swimmers, fun-loving, fun, of frame of reference including pool shark, Pucci, peonies, pointillism. More than K.I. is needed to keep warm in Maine and summer is still months away. #85417

HONEY BEAR, I know you're out there! DWF, no children, mid-20s, loves walks on the beach, sunsets, oceans, loves being spoiled and surprises. Seeking Guy, 35-40, n/s, n/d, affectionate, compassionate, for companionship. Give me all your love/hugs, I'll give you LTR. #85504

HUMOROUS, THOUGHTFUL DWF, 47, blonde/blue, n/s, social drinker, loves dancing, music, candlelit dinners, dining, cards. Seeks warmhearted, trustworthy, honest Man, late 40s, early 50s, for laughter, good times, LTR. Must know how to treat a Lady. #85247

25-YEAR-OLD SWM, n/s, large athletic build, educated, enjoys walking, good conversation, skating, camping, biking. Seeks athletic build, educated and affectionate, n/s, 24-33. #85440

35-YEAR-OLD DWM, 5'4", fit, cute and conscientious professional. Loves plays, music, biking, movies the Exchange for, 38, n/s, health-conscious, open, self-assured, warmhearted film lover. #85334

ATTENTION KMAAT shoppers SWPM, 36, extroverted, n/s, with active sense of humor and kind heart. Seeks SWF, 30-40, with infectious smile and laid-back personality. Interests: hiking, movies, flea markets, traveling, lazy Sundays. Call now, operators are standing by! #85494

AUTHENTIC DWM, young 48, 5'11", 170 lbs, attractive, fit, gentle, loving, compassionate and has a soul that needs to love. Female for friendship, fun, possible spiritual partnership. #85487

BLMLOOKING for a companion in the Portland area, 25-40, n/s, n/d. Race not important. #85460

BORED BUSINESS owner seeks partner with valid passport, Young 50, runner, 6'1", 185 lbs, smart, funny, spiritual, joyful, open, independent, sporty, seakayaker. ISO slim, athletic, joyful Woman, 30-50, with commonality. #85481

CALLING A Siren, 43-year-old M, 5'9", longer graying hair, energetic, spontaneous, romantic. Enjoy music, dancing, biking, hiking, cooking. Tired of wearing out one end of the couch, one set of dishes, etc. Seeking nonsmoking, unusual, unique, unpretentious companion, ready for love. Degree in kissing a plus. #85479

COASTAL TRADER, shipwrecked on MDI, vigorous, balding, bookish antiquarian with interests in art, ecology, Maine history, kids and gardening. Interested in meeting a SF with similar interests, for conversation, dinner, travel to Europe, possible LTR. #86810

CREATIVE HERPES Guy, DWM, 51, 5'11", 226 lbs, n/s, n/d, quiet enjoyer, Andrea Bocelli to George Jones, movies, quiet times. Seeking affectionate S/DWF with herpes, 45-55, enjoys similar interests. Sense of humor a must. Let's have coffee and talk. #85339

DON'T CARE what you drive or what degree(s) you hold. I desire a genuine, honest Woman with heart and soul, who values a clean living space, is very physically active and has a fit, toned body. Please be under 5'7", under 40. Talk with me! #85226

DWM, "YOUNG", 55, 6', 175 lbs, seeking romantically inclined SWF, n/s, n/d, attractive, physically fit, to start building a relationship. I am caring, sensitive, have a sense of humor and communication is very important to me. Hope to hear from you! #85492

IM! I equals individual, intriguing, intense, inspired, intelligent, imaginative, intuitive. Me equals Male/young for something fit, educated, secure, creative, professional. My interests include travel, dancing, golf, people, realizing awareness and the pursuit of laughter. I'm game for anything, have

a wild side that's tempered by moderation, basic family values. ISO sensitive, sexy, smart, sensual, secure, sweet match for symbiotic relationship. #85467

1967 SWM, 6' well-maintained with spare tire, thoughtfully designed interior, quiet trips on or off road, stable on all terrain. No reasonable offers refused. Call today, limited time special! #85506

GENUINE SWPM, 43, 6'1", 170 lbs, fit, n/s, attractive, no children, grounded in nature. Looking to find true intimacy. Looking for S/DW, 33-43, to navigate together on true course for LTR. As co-partner, let's stay on course together. Friends first. #85153

GOOD-LOOKING, ACTIVE. This SWM, 44, is looking for companionship with you! Enjoy hiking, camping, fall foliage, movies and learning. Seeking attractive, fit, self-aware Woman. You should be S/DWF, 25-45, active outside and have a good sense of humor. I know you're out there! #86892

HANDSOME DWM, 59, college graduate, athletic, 5'9", funny, loves to walk boulevard and beach, movies. Interests: reading, rollerblading, golf, travel, yoga. Looking for fit, pleasant, smiling, attractive Woman, 45-60, to enjoy me. #85177

HEY! BEAUTIFUL and brilliant, athletic, active, spiritually fit one, you are at peace outside, inside at the opera, at a baseball game, hiking, swimming. Have joy de vivre and call soon. #86170

HONEST, ROMANTIC, 37-year-old SWM, 5'10", 180 lbs, medium build, looking for physically fit Woman who is honest and looking for a Man who will treat her like a princess. #85457

HONEST, SINCERE, 29-year-old SWM, 5'10", 170 lbs, black/brown, enjoys summer home sports. Seeking SF, 24-34, race unimportant, with similar interests, to just enjoy each other's company. #85461

HONESTY...ITL be honest. I'm a SWM, 40, tall, average good looks and build, seeking a Woman, average looks and build, with an above-average, feminine, sensual side, especially a Woman who loves wearing lingerie. #86932

I LIKE hiking, winter sports, movies, concerts and theater. Have a broad taste in music. Interested in literature and history. Seeking a Woman who is interested in the world, and the arts, is creative and adventurous. #85340

I WANT to know what is love. Do you know? Teach me. SWM, 36, financially stable, popular, Ladies Man, open and caring. Seeking heady SWF, 35-50, for quiet times, conversations, much more. Must be true self. Serious only. #85479

INTIMACY WITH space. Artistic/mathematical, sports. Seeking SF, 24-34, race unimportant, with similar interests, for conversation, dinner, travel to Europe, possible LTR. #86810

ISO FULL-FIGURED Lady, SWM, 34, 5'9", attractive, nice build, brown/blue, clean-shaven, easygoing, funny, dedicated, no children, never-married, seeks nonperfunctory F, 32-50, who enjoys beaches, gardens and more. It's what's on the inside that really matters. Portland area. #86207

JUST 52 going on 38. Lady, fit, professional, philosophical, sane but eccentric, gourmand, loves movies, jazz, travel, running, the water. You would probably like the same, be 35-47. Where are you? Would love to meet you for coffee! Portland area. #85472

SHARLIFE'S adventures. 49-year-old 6'2", romantic Gentleman, n/s, seeks intellectually inquisitive, elegant, slender Lady to share life's adventures. Must be affectionate and willing to engage life with passion. #85318

SHM, 45, 160 lbs, 5'11", enjoys singing, outdoor sports, fishing, boating. Looking for SF, 25-35, 5'2"-5'7", race unimportant, educated, n/s, n/d, to have fun with, who clubs, movies, social functions, for platonic relationship. #85482

LOOK HERE for a partner! SWD dad of one, 5'9", 160 lbs, with good looks, athletic build, charming personality, enjoys traveling, hiking, outdoor activities, travel. ISO n/s, attractive, trim SF, 28-38, 5'5" or under, caring and outgoing, for possible relationship. #85488

MAN, SLIGHTLY off the wall, into walking around the city, art, consuming lots of coffee and staying up all night. #85517

MAN, OLDER but wise, youthful, healthy, full of life, eager, philosophical, sensual, cultured, want simple, easygoing relationship with a wonderful Woman. Contact me. #85452

ME: BOYSH! at 50, adult educator, affectionate, romantic, quirky humor, outdoorsy, kayaks and canoes, tennis, NPR additions, films, chess, jazz, dining. You: n/s, young, spirited, world-wise, fit, self-aware, comfortable in your skin, engaged in passions, share some of my interests. #85167

NEW TO Portland, from New York. Honest, educated, passionate, caring SWM, 50, with good sense of humor. Seeking a Woman with whom I can enjoy the natural world, dancing, music, the arts, kids, etc. interested in long-term monogamy. #85302

NEW TO Portland, would like to be shown around SWM, 23, 5'9", 145 lbs, blonde hair, deep blue eyes. Seeking Female, 20-27, to show me around Portland, Maine. #85441

NICE GUY, 34-year-old SWM, never married, no kids, n/s, intelligent, fit, clean-cut, seeks S/DW, 21-49, who's intelligent, fit, n/s, fun-loving, good personality. #85393

OPEN-MINDED, CULTIVATED professional, attractive, financially secure BM, 43, 5'8", I enjoy art, traveling, jogging, cooking, dancing and music. Seeking an attractive, professional, n/s, athletic, fun-loving F. Race unimportant. #85232

OUTDOOR GAD! Looking for an environmentalist wacko! I am a 29-year-old White Male working on a degree in environmental law. Let's get together as friends and ski Maine in the winter and kayak the South in the summer! #85396

PASSIONATE, ROMANTIC, educated DWM, 38, lover of the outdoors and fitness. Looking for a Woman who wants to be spoiled completely. You: fit and n/s, 34-42, who wants to laugh and be happy. #86969

RUGGED TYPE! 29-year-old, down-to-earth, hardworking Divorced dad of two with a sense of humor and a sense of who I am. I like dining and dancing, cuddling on the couch. Honesty looking for a Woman with similar interests, possible LTR. #85447

SBM, 40, 5'8", 6'2", 180 lbs, good shape, enjoys camping, shooting pool, fishing, swimming. Looking for a SF, 30-45, who's truthful, honest, caring, no game playing. Friendship first, possible LTR. #85426

SEEKING OPEN mind and kind heart. Me: admittedly just a bit of an oddball, though attractive inside and out. Interests: art, people watching, outdoors, conversation, friends. You: beautiful soul, positive nature, attractive curvy a plus. #85286

SEEKS DIVERSITY. Professional, well-educated, extremely fit DWM, 40, seeks fit Asian or ethnic Female, 25-40, n/s, n/drugs. Interests: art, photography, other cultures, nature, world travel, sailing and dining. LTR. Portland to mid-coast. #85269

SHARLIFE'S adventures. 49-year-old 6'2", romantic Gentleman, n/s, seeks intellectually inquisitive, elegant, slender Lady to share life's adventures. Must be affectionate and willing to engage life with passion. #85318

SHM, 45, 160 lbs, 5'11", enjoys singing, outdoor sports, fishing, boating. Looking for SF, 25-35, 5'2"-5'7", race unimportant, educated, n/s, n/d, to have fun with, who clubs, movies, social functions, for platonic relationship. #85482

LOOK HERE for a partner! SWD dad of one, 5'9", 160 lbs, with good looks, athletic build, charming personality, enjoys traveling, hiking, outdoor activities, travel. ISO n/s, attractive, trim SF, 28-38, 5'5" or under, caring and outgoing, for possible relationship. #85488

MAN, SLIGHTLY off the wall, into walking around the city, art, consuming lots of coffee and staying up all night. #85517

MAN, OLDER but wise, youthful, healthy, full of life, eager, philosophical, sensual, cultured, want simple, easygoing relationship with a wonderful Woman. Contact me. #85452

ME: BOYSH! at 50, adult educator, affectionate, romantic, quirky humor, outdoorsy, kayaks and canoes, tennis, NPR additions, films, chess, jazz, dining. You: n/s, young, spirited, world-wise, fit, self-aware, comfortable in your skin, engaged in passions, share some of my interests. #85167

NEW TO Portland, from New York. Honest, educated, passionate, caring SWM, 50, with good sense of humor. Seeking a Woman with whom I can enjoy the natural world, dancing, music, the arts, kids, etc. interested in long-term monogamy. #85302

NEW TO Portland, would like to be shown around SWM, 23, 5'9", 145 lbs, blonde hair, deep blue eyes. Seeking Female, 20-27, to show me around Portland, Maine. #85441

NICE GUY, 34-year-old SWM, never married, no kids, n/s, intelligent, fit, clean-cut, seeks S/DW, 21-49, who's intelligent, fit, n/s, fun-loving, good personality. #85393

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- FAMILY SERVICES CLINICIAN
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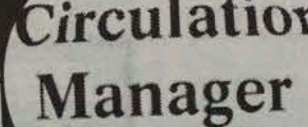
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FREE WILL ASTROLOGY - WEEK OF APRIL 6
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ARIES (March 21-April 19): You know how some people love to fall in love over and over again? Often it's just an excuse for them to fall back in love with themselves. Each new beau is a pawn in their strategy for coming home to the source of their deepest passions. What I'd like to ask these people is: Why not just eliminate the middleman? I'm not necessarily saying this is advice you need right now, Aries. But then why did that little voice in my head insist that I tell it to you?

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): I know of a Jehovah Witness who has knocked on doors for more than 11 years without converting a single nonbeliever. Does this religious devotee possess an undaunted faith and holy determination that will be rewarded in heaven? Maybe. But what if the true story is that he is too stuck in his ways to pursue a more productive calling? What if he is perversely blind to the clear signals life seems to be giving him? The moral of the tale, Taurus, is that it's time to ask the same questions about the most futile aspect of your own fate. Should you keep plodding along, inflamed with righteous persistence? Or is it high time to move on?

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You're the fray in the fabric, Gemini—and that's good. You're the monkeywrench in the works, the pothole in the road, the voice in the wilderness—and that's very, very good. Because if you weren't there to question everyone's motives, silliness and superficiality would soon triumph. If you weren't gutsy enough to call everyone's bluff and keep people honest, sins of omission would quickly make once-noble plans a joke. So don't sit on your objections. Be a big, sweet, idealistic pain in the ass.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): A quantum leap is a radical shift beyond what was previously imaginable. It can be problematic even as it's exhilarating. Physicist Fred Alan Wolfe notes that in his field, such a leap often "leads to personal regrets, even though its ultimate consequences produce a new vision of humanity and the universe." Einstein, Planck, and Schrödinger, whose revolutionary work shredded the old physics, "were sadly upset with their discoveries," Wolfe says. "Whenever a quantum leap occurs," he concludes, "there is something that tends to resist it. In matter we call it inertia, in mind we call it prejudice or pig-headedness." I hope Wolfe's words give you the inspiration to press on, dear Cancerian, as you both mourn and celebrate in the wake of your own quantum leap.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): In case you haven't noticed, the Great Refuse Hunt is well underway. Quick! Don't fall behind. Retrace your steps and try to recover the hot tips you've overlooked. Then make yourself hyper-alert for the slew of new clues that'll be arriving any minute. In fact, here comes one now: What current situation in your life is most like a duty-free store in an international airport or a speakeasy during the Prohibition Era?

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Please meditate on the following holy text from the "Discordian Book of Secrets: Si syadasti syadavakavyasya syadasti syannasti syadavasya syadasti syannasti syadavakavyasya." In case you don't understand Sanskrit, Virgo, here's the translation: "All affirmations are in some sense, false in some sense, meaningful in some sense, true and false in some sense, and meaningless in some sense, false and meaningless in some sense." As you digest this gem, Virgo, I predict that your mind will be zapped free of any tendencies to believe that thinking alone can solve everything. You will thereby be rendered delightfully empty and robustly innocent, allowing you to enjoy the irrational bliss that life will soon be offering you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): First of all, my friend, you don't need no second-hand "anything" let alone second-hand

love. Second of all, dearest, you are hereby ordered not to hang around any third-rate situations where you feel like a fifth wheel. You savvy? Thirdly, wonderful one, keep in mind that any eighthail you may think you're behind is a figment of your own delusions. Fourthly, lover, I assure you that your sixth sense can now lead you—if you strip it of all superstitious fear—to a place that is, for all intents and purposes, a suburb of seventh heaven.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Earnest Benn once offered this definition: "Politics is the art of looking for trouble, finding it whether it exists or not, diagnosing it incorrectly, and applying the wrong remedy." I'm afraid, Scorpio, that there are a few people in your sphere who are now flitting with that strategy. What's even more worrisome is that your decisions are on the verge of being distorted by their cracked notions. I beg you to try your best to stop them from heading straight to hell; but at the very least, don't hop on their bandwagon and merrily join them in their journey.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): "Dear Reverend Brezsnny: I'm pretty happy with God. My life is good. The only complaint I have is, when will I get to be in an all-right drug-induced orgy like my friend Leah? I'm in good shape, have an open mind, and am not a scaredy-cat. Why won't God give me a chance to go totally out of control?—Simmering Sagittarius."

Dear Simmering: Coincidentally, God is willing to open the doors of perception pretty wide for you in the coming weeks. However, He prefers for you to lose your inhibitions in a way that doesn't risk your mental health or rack up sloppy karma. Hell also love it if you get wild in a way that ultimately gives you more control over your life. Skip the drugs, in other words.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): The girl from down the street is selling cookies door-to-door to raise money for her Sunday School class's trip to Disneyland. Her knock comes just as you sit down to dinner in front of the TV, finally ready to put a hard day's work at the office behind you. What do you do? Al you open the door and order her she has a lot of nerve bugging you when you're trying to unwind. Bi Pretending to be an angry dog, you bark viciously behind the closed door until she goes away. O you fling a \$10 bill at her through a crack in the door and order her to leave the damn cookies on the porch. Di you happily ignore her, not wasting even five seconds on worrying about what you should do. P.S. The correct answer, if you hope to be in tune with cosmic currents, is "D."

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): An apprentice violin-maker works eight years before being considered ready to practice the craft seriously. Likewise, Aikido adepts tell me that it takes at least two decades to master the moves and spirit of their martial art. I hope this helps put into perspective the skills you're struggling to perfect now. They simply wouldn't be worth learning if you were already a whiz. There's no rush, speedo. Give yourself more credit for how far you've already come.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Time to specialize, Pisces. Of the three kinds of pleasures outlined below, please focus on just one. "Right brain joys." Fantasize about future travel. Escape to your room with a book you've been longing to dive into. Balance a spoon on your nose. As you gaze out the window, daydream about all the varieties of the color green. "Left brain joys." Schedule every moment. Return phone calls promptly. Organize finances. Clean desks. Figure out short cuts. "North brain joys." Study books that describe techniques for conjuring up more sexual fun. Make plans to bring a fresh assortment of delicious tastes into your diet. Research how to find great new music outside the narrow range of styles offered on the radio.

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line, well-endowed and single. Seeking
other attractive and masculine, BI or
straight Guy for some discreet fun. Let's
talk. #90024
37-YEAR-OLD SWM, attractive,
brown/blue, 6'1", 195 lbs, enjoys mas-
sages, camping, fishing, laughing, walks
on the beach and dogs. Looking for
Female, BI okay, for hot summer fun and
possible LTR. #90027
40-YEAR-OLD SWM, 6'2", 220 lbs,
brown/hazel, kindhearted, honest, hard-
working, enjoys family, movies, friends,
riding my Harley, not into bar scene.
Essential, you be also. My schedule is
somewhat flexible and I can travel if
necessary. Let's get it on and start the
new year on an up note. #90830
42-YEAR-OLD, MARRIED WM in the
Portland area, seeking a discreet affair.
Would like to meet F in similar situation.
I'm clean, drug-free and discreet.
Essential, you be also. My schedule is
somewhat flexible and I can travel if
necessary. Let's get it on and start the
new year on an up note. #90830
ACTIVE, ENERGETIC, outgoing BIM
looking for same for possible long-term
relationship. 5'9", 160 lbs, straight-act-
ing, with sense of humor, 40 in years,
30 in outlook and energy. Life is too
short to spend it alone or with a chain-
changer. #90670
ATTRACTIVE, WELL-PROPORTIONED,
masculine, 30-year-old Male seeks
another Male for ongoing physical rela-
tionship during daytime. I'm healthy, you
be too. Discretion is guaranteed and
expected. #90532
ATTRACTIVE, MIDDLE-AGED WM
seeks the company of a pretty, petite,
young Lady, Single or Married, who's a
true exhibitionist at heart and eager to
share that youthful beauty without any
further commitment. Discreet meetings
for totally safe fun and personally val-
uating times. Be truly appreciated for
the beauty you are. Let's talk! #90872
ATTRACTIVE, MASCUINE, sensual,
educated WM, late 40s, healthy, per-
sonable, safe, seeking short or long-
term relationship with well-groomed,
healthy, relaxed, discreet, uninhibited
A/B/W Woman, preferably Married,
very young, very tiny, petite but none of
those a must. #90016
BI-CURIOS WM, 32, 6'2", 175 lbs,
seeking older BW, 30-75. #90812
BIM, 40s, discreet and healthy. Seeks
Male, 30-50, for indoor daytime ac-
tivities. Portland area. #90011
BIM ISO BI, Married or straight Men
around the Lake Region. We're out here.
Must be healthy, rugged, very discreet,
hairy, equipped a plus. We don't want
our spouses or lovers to know, do we?
Must act very cool about this. I'm 39
years old, 6'1", 200 lbs, blonde/blue,
very equipped. #90216
ENERGETIC, ACTIVE WM, 28, clean,
safe and well-contained, seeking older
Lady, 45+, for good times and fulfill-
ments. Lewiston/Auburn areas. #90864
GAY WHITE MALE, very good-looking,
5'11", fair/blue, seeks very good look-
ing, 5'11" type, 35-45, 1m-45 minutes
north of Portland. #90507
GW, 44, talented, artistic, creative,
hardworking, sensual, enjoys to cook,
outdoor/indoor activities and closeness.
Seeking GW, late 30s-50s, must be
healthy, sensual, creative, considerate
and discreet. Recently came to terms
with being Gay. Looking for friendship
first, possibly more. #90336
GW, HOT, handsome, well-endowed,
hairy, 6', 180 lbs, 38-year-old profes-
sional, ad Alpine plus cross-country
skiing looking for same to burn up the
trails. Only experts and real Men,
please! #90881
HANDYMAN, 36-YEAR-OLD WM, 6',
160 lbs, strawberry-blond hair, clean,
Southern transplant, seeks Female, any
age, race or size, for discreet re-
lationship. #90021
IN SEARCH of that lovely and large
Lady who knows what she needs.
Please be 35+, 5'6" and very healthy and
discreet. This mid-40s SWM has
many unique talents to offer. #90005
KICK BACK and enjoy. In search of
well-endowed receiver for oral fantasy.
#90765
LADY, I'm a 45-year-old SWM, 165 lbs,
5'9", brown/brown, I heard there's a 35-
to 40-ish, discreet SBW, petite to
medium-built, who likes the woods,
camping, fishing, gardening, maybe
shooting pool or just cuddling up at the
old homestead with a good x-rated mo-
vie. If you know her, please tell her to
call. #90013
LET'S HAVE fun together. Attractive,
intelligent, funny, healthy WM, 25, 5'10",
160 lbs, blonde/blue. I am very oral and
straight. Seeking short-term relationship
with discreet Females or Couples.
Seeking uninhibited erotic adventures.
Very open-minded. Any age. #90025
LONG-TERM FRIENDSHIP wanted by
44-year-old Guy, 5'11", 190 lbs, dark
hair and eyes, mustache, masculine.
Looking to connect up with rugged,
muscular Guy, BI okay, hairy, and blue-
collar Guy a plus. Ready to please.
#90029
LOOKING FOR F or Couple for daytime
adult fun. I'm 32, 190 lbs, 6', athletic
build. Can travel. Discretion is assured
and expected. Fantasies will be fulfilled.
#90023

couples seeking

BIM, 43, Brunswick area, profession-
al, 5'9", 165 lbs, healthy, n/s, very dis-
creet, good-humored, enjoy outdoors,
massage, quiet times. Seeking similar WM
to share enjoyable times. #90707
BIM, 47, 6'1", 180 lbs, attractive,
intelligent, very smooth, avid nudist,
masculine professional, secure, inexpe-
rienced. If you are a fit Man, 40-60,
interested in a monogamous relation-
ship with romance and seduction,
please call. #90031
BOY WONDER, SWM, 27, 6'3", 190 lbs,
blonde/hazel, seeking mature, very
sexy, toned Woman, 35-50, prefers
young Men. Take this Boy wonder and
make him into your wonder Man. All the
ingredients are here. Let's meet some-
one to mold them. #9040
DOMINANT WOMAN wanted. Married
WM, 40, very healthy, obedient, seeks
true F for pleasure. No strings. #90018
DOMINANT WOMAN wanted. Single
White Male, 45, in good shape, seeks
dominant Woman for pleasure. #90038
DWM, 59, n/d, n/s, sincere, caring, hos-
tess, likes the outdoors, photography,
country rides, lairs. Looking for a loving,
caring, romantic Woman LTR. Must be
sincere and honest. #90032
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#90029
LOOKING FOR F or Couple for daytime
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#90023
MARRIED WHITE MALE, 35, 6'3", 235
lbs, brown/brown, seeking White
Couple, Male and Female or Married or
Single Females for discreet fun.
#90733
MARRIED WM, 44, Seeking
Single/Married F, 40-55, full-figured, in
need of special attention. Partner's
interest non-existent. Discreet meet-
ings. Healthy, safe, you be too, will par-
ty with you. All responses will be answered.
#90844
MARRIED WM seeks Female to help
me improve my oral skills. Wish to be a
master of sexual linguistics. English
degree not required. Open to your com-
ments, suggestions, all replies
answered. #90878
MARRIED WM 42, brown/blue, 5'10",
200 lbs, professional. Seeking WF, 21-
40, BI, lonely housewives, wanting or
needing to be completely satisfied with
good, safe sex. I love oral and straight.
WM or BIM, 18-40, for a discreet rela-
tionship. #90006
MATURE WOMAN wanted, 40-52, by
vital, attractive, sensitive Male, 34. Must
be n/s and fit. Busty a plus. #90000
NATIVE AMERICAN Male, 50, quiet
and shy, enjoys horseback riding. Seeks
FW, 45-55, to have good times and fun,
for dating, possibly more. #90035
ORAL DESIRES. Handsome, separated
Male, 38, looking for hot times on oc-
casion, with a S/Married Woman and pos-
sibly the night Couple? Please be discreet.
Call me soon, you'll be glad! #90744
PASSABLE CROSS-DRESSER seeking
someone for fun, adventure and rela-
tionship. Location is southern Maine.
Seeking big beautiful Woman, WF, 30+,
who wants to experience fantasies of
reality of a BM, sexy pleasures and
more. #90822
YOUNG MAN with lots of ideas, seeks
older Woman with lots of time for adult
fun. 33, 5'7", 190 lbs, rugged, dark hair.
You are 35-50, enjoys kissing, carress-
ing and being ravished. No strings.
Please call. Short, tall, large or small.
#90028

women seeking

ITALIAN BIM who's independent, loves
sex, music, and looking for uninhibited
fun. Healthy, discreet and open-minded
children. Seeks an attractive B/GF, 30-45,
with a few similarities and can live life to
its fullest. N/s a must, light drinker, a
fine. #90847
MARRIED WOMAN seeking B/GF or
Couple. I am 32, 5'4", 125 lbs, with auburn
hair, sexy and fun. Seeking someone who
knows how to have a good time. Likes din-
ing, movies and movies. My husband can
watch or play. #90527
SEXY, STRONG WFE, 29, looking for bed
buddy who's a sexy, fit, hairy WM, 21-
35. I have a hard body, pretty face, sweet
spirit, no baggage. You be same. Discreet
and healthy a must. #90030
STRAWBERRY-BLONDE F, 48, 165
lbs, seeking BM who likes to have
good time, dancing, dining out,
movies, to start with a good friendship
and hopefully a good relationship.
#90836
UNBELIEVABLE, EXTRAORDINARILY
attractive, pre-op Hispanic Female, very
intelligent, 41, n/s, n/d, likes movies,
dinners, garage sales, bowling, etc.
Seeks serious inquiries only. For LTR.
Must be open-minded. #90463
WHITE COUPLE seeking another
Couple for discreet fun. We are healthy,
you be too. He is mid-20s, heavyset,
she is mid-30s. #90852

couples seeking

ATTRACTIVE WHITE COUPLE, He's 39
and handsome and she's a 37-year-old,
feminine B/GF. Seeking Couples or B/GF for
fun, erotic times. Please no SM, healthy
and drug-free. Discretion is a must.
#90026
ATTRACTIVE WHITE COUPLE, he's 38,
she's 34, looking for B/GF, 19-35, for
discreet fun and good times, possible
LTR. #90033

THINK SPRING!
MORE
personals
ON
page
30!!

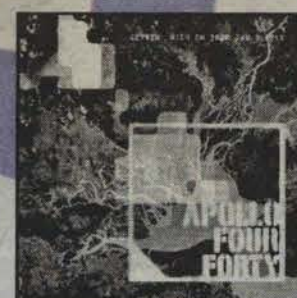
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(Blackbird/Atlantic)



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The Virgin Suicides
(Astralwerks)



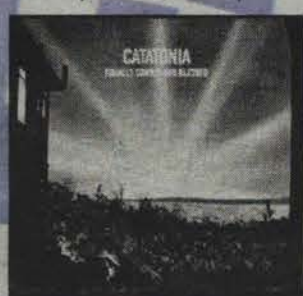
APOLLO FOUR FORTY
Gettin' High On Your Supply
(Epic/550)



BECK
Midnight Vultures
(DGC)



BLOODHOUND GANG
Hooray For Boobies
(Geffen/Republisc)



CATATONIA
Equally Cursed And Blessed
(Atlantic)



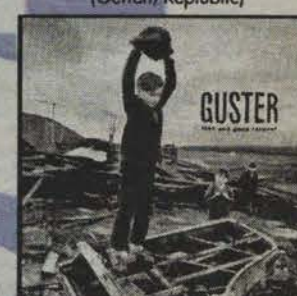
DISTURBED
The Sickness
(Giant)



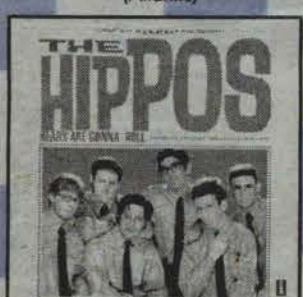
EELS
Daisies Of The Galaxy
(Dreamworks)



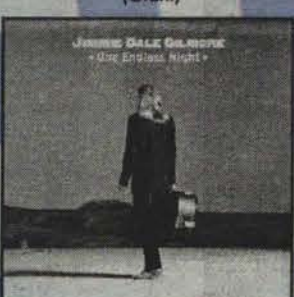
ELLIOTT SMITH
Figure 8
(Dreamworks)



GUSTER
Lost And Gone Forever
(Hybrid/Sire)



THE HIPPOS
Heads Are Gonna Roll
(Interscope)



JIMMIE DALE GILMORE
One Endless Night
(Windcharger Music/Rounder)



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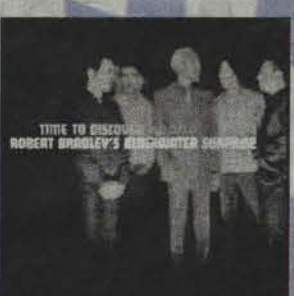
JOHN OSZAJCA
From There To Here
(Interscope)



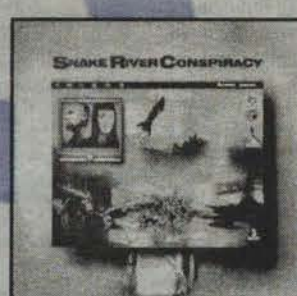
MARS ELECTRIC
Beautiful Something
(Portrait/C2)



PAT MCGEE BAND
Shine
(Giant)



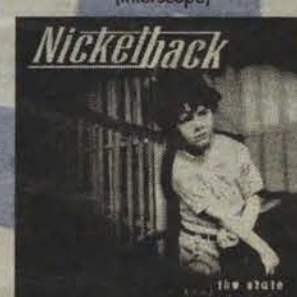
ROBERT BRADLEY'S
BLACKWATER SURPRISE
Time To Discover
(RCA)



SNAKE RIVER CONSPIRACY
Sonic Jihad
(Kinetic/Reprise)



TAMI!
Hello Friends Do You Read Me?
(Roadrunner)



NICKELBACK
The State
(Roadrunner)



THE THE
Naked Self
(Nothing)

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