

Commissioners discuss archiving county maps, union position

by Cat Cannon

The Washington County Commissioners this month accepted a bid for the preservation of 147 county maps.

The \$16,052.50 cost will also cover backing them up onto microfilm said Registrar of Deeds Sharon Strout.

The funds will come out of the \$195,000 in the department's surcharge account. According to state statute, money in this account must be used for restoration and preservation of such records.

Commissioners Chair Chris Gardner wondered whether the state would ever consider scanning documents into digital files as a viable archival method. He asked Strout to suggest that the state registry of deeds association update the standard which currently requires archives of plans to be held on microfilm.

Also at the meeting, Regional Communications Center Operations Supervisor Josh Rolfe requested that the county change his position into a non-union "deputy director" position.

Rolfe, the county and the union discussed this change last year, but the union did not agree to it, Rolfe said.

He said his "position does not meet the standards for a union position," and that "by federal definition, in everything [he does, he is] an exempt employee." Because of this, he hasn't paid union dues this year, and he has not been contacted by the union.

Rolfe asked the board to recommend the change, and said that if union opposes it again, he will argue the point himself.

Gardner responded that he does not disagree with Rolfe's logic,

but that the county manager should consult with the county attorney before pursuing the change to make sure that the right protocols are followed.

In other business the board shared a notice to caucus for open spots on the county budget advisory committee made up of town selectmen and city councilors.

District 1, including Alexander, Baileyville, Baring, Beddington, Calais, Charlotte, Codyville Plantation, Cooper, Crawford, Danforth, Deblois, Dennysville, Grand Lake Stream Plantation, Meddybemps, Northfield, Passamaquoddy Indian Township, Princeton, Robbinston, Talmadge, Topsfield, Vanceboro, Waite, Wesley and the unorganized territory of North Washington, will vote at city hall July 21 at 4:45 p.m.

District 2, including Cutler, East Machias, Eastport, Lubec, Machias, Passamaquoddy Pleasant Point Reservation, Pembroke, Perry and Whiting and the unorganized territory of East Central Washington, will vote at the county courthouse Aug. 11 at 3:45 p.m.

District 3, including Addison, Beals, Centerville, Cherryfield, Columbia, Columbia Falls, Harrington, Jonesboro, Jonesport, Machiasport, Marshfield, Milbridge, Roque Bluffs, Steuben and Whitneyville, will vote at the Columbia Falls town hall on July 20 at 6 p.m.

The commissioners also welcomed National Guard officer Dean Preston back to his role as Unorganized Territories supervisor.

Preston spent the past year at the U.S. Army War College,

earning a master's degree in strategic studies. He was selected for one of Maine's two brigade command positions and is set to receive a promotion to colonel later this year.

Preston presented the county with a war college souvenir in recognition of its "solid support of my membership in the Army National Guard," and presented each commissioner with a ceremonial coin acknowledging his "key and essential support" and patriotism.

Board Chair Chris Gardner commented on the "irony that [Preston] would thank us, because in reality it's the other way around," and thanked Preston for his service on behalf of the county and the country.

The next board of commissioners meeting will be held Aug. 11 at 4 p.m. in the Washington County courthouse probate court room.

Community group to buy Milbridge Theatre

by Johanna S. Billings

With little fanfare, representatives of a nonprofit group announced a major step forward last week.

At a July 12 meeting of the Milbridge Historical Society, Crystal Hitchings and Richard Bondurant, of the nonprofit Gateway: Milbridge, said the group signed a purchase agreement to buy the former Milbridge Theatre.

"Our plan is to resurrect the facility as the Milbridge Theatre and Community Arts Center," said Hitchings, adding the facility will host movies, live performances and community events. "It won't just be a movie house. It will be so much

more." The Milbridge Theatre closed in December 2014 when owner Dave Parsons died. The building has been vacant ever since.

"The movie theater was a great spot to socialize and to get together and we want to bring that back," Bondurant said.

According to the agreement of sale, signed July 8, Gateway: Milbridge will make a \$15,000 down payment and will have three years to pay off the remaining \$35,000 of the purchase price.

"But we don't anticipate taking that long," said Hitchings.

The group hopes to close on the property in the next couple

weeks, she said.

"We're all incredibly excited to say we did it and thank you," Hitchings told the approximately 25 people gathered for the meeting.

Hitchings and Bondurant noted the nearest movie theaters are in Ellsworth and Bangor. Having a theater in Milbridge will benefit many nearby communities, including Machias.

The group has raised more than \$30,000 since it formed a little more than a year ago. Members decided to buy the building now, rather than waiting until they had the cash, in part because this will make it easier to get grants.

"[Those offering grants] are going to see that we're serious and that the community is really behind the project," said Hitchings.

The group already obtained a \$10,000 grant from the Maine Community Foundation for the writing of a business plan, expected to be done at the end of the year.

"We really want to succeed. This is very important," she said.

The next step is to remove the existing structure. At one time, the group hoped to restore the existing building but it has since deteriorated to the point where

(Milbridge Theatre pg 5)



This painting of a popcorn container illustrates progress made fundraising to bring back the Milbridge Theatre.

Photo by Johanna S. Billings

DOWNEAST TIDE TABLE FOR WASHINGTON COUNTY

Eastport										
DATE	HIGH			LOW			☀	☾		
20 Wed	11:59	18.7		5:58	-0.6	6:15	0.4	5:00	8:08	
21 Thu	12:14	20.1	12:41	19.1	6:41	-1.1	6:59	-0.0	5:01	8:07
22 Fri	12:58	20.3	1:25	19.5	7:25	-1.3	7:44	-0.3	5:02	8:06
23 Sat	1:42	20.4	2:10	19.8	8:10	-1.4	8:31	-0.5	5:03	8:05
24 Sun	2:29	20.3	2:57	20.0	8:56	-1.4	9:20	-0.6	5:04	8:04
25 Mon	3:19	20.0	3:48	20.1	9:46	-1.1	10:13	-0.5	5:05	8:03
26 Tue	4:13	19.6	4:42	20.0	10:38	-0.7	11:09	-0.4	5:06	8:02

Lubec										
DATE	HIGH			LOW			☀	☾		
20 Wed	12:03	18.5	12:30	17.6	6:31	-0.5	6:48	0.3	5:01	8:08
21 Thu	12:45	18.9	1:12	18.0	7:14	-0.8	7:32	-0.0	5:02	8:07
22 Fri	1:29	19.1	1:56	18.4	7:58	-1.0	8:17	-0.2	5:03	8:06
23 Sat	2:13	19.2	2:41	18.8	8:43	-1.1	9:04	-0.4	5:04	8:05
24 Sun	3:00	19.1	3:28	18.8	9:29	-1.0	9:53	-0.4	5:05	8:04
25 Mon	3:50	18.8	4:19	18.9	10:19	-0.8	10:46	-0.4	5:06	8:03
26 Tue	4:44	18.4	5:13	18.8	11:11	-0.5	11:42	-0.3	5:07	8:02

Cutler										
DATE	HIGH			LOW			☀	☾		
20 Wed	11:49	13.8		5:39	-0.5	5:56	0.1	5:02	8:08	
21 Thu	12:04	14.8	12:31	14.2	6:22	-0.8	6:40	-0.0	5:03	8:07
22 Fri	12:48	15.0	1:15	14.5	7:06	-1.0	7:25	-0.2	5:04	8:06
23 Sat	1:32	15.1	2:00	14.7	7:51	-1.1	8:12	-0.4	5:05	8:05
24 Sun	2:19	15.0	2:47	14.8	8:37	-1.0	9:01	-0.4	5:06	8:04
25 Mon	3:09	14.8	3:38	14.9	9:27	-0.8	9:54	-0.4	5:07	8:03
26 Tue	4:03	14.5	4:32	14.8	10:19	-0.5	10:50	-0.3	5:08	8:02

Machiasport										
DATE	HIGH			LOW			☀	☾		
20 Wed		12:00	12.9	5:49	-0.4	6:06	0.3	5:02	8:09	
21 Thu	12:15	13.8	12:42	13.2	6:32	-0.7	6:50	-0.0	5:03	8:08
22 Fri	12:59	14.0	1:26	13.5	7:16	-0.9	7:35	-0.2	5:04	8:07
23 Sat	1:43	14.1	2:11	13.7	8:01	-1.0	8:22	-0.3	5:05	8:06
24 Sun	2:30	14.0	2:58	13.8	8:47	-0.9	9:11	-0.4	5:06	8:05
25 Mon	3:20	13.8	3:49	13.8	9:37	-0.8	10:04	-0.3	5:08	8:04
26 Tue	4:14	13.5	4:43	13.8	10:29	-0.5	11:00	-0.3	5:09	8:03

Jonesport										
DATE	HIGH			LOW			☀	☾		
20 Wed	11:47	11.5	11:52	13.2	5:42	-0.2	5:46	0.8	5:04	8:09
21 Thu		12:27	11.9	6:22	-0.5	6:29	0.5	5:05	8:08	
22 Fri	12:34	13.4	1:09	12.2	7:03	-0.8	7:14	0.2	5:06	8:07
23 Sat	1:19	13.4	1:54	12.5	7:46	-0.9	8:03	0.1	5:07	8:06
24 Sun	2:07	13.3	2:41	12.8	8:32	-0.9	8:54	0.0	5:08	8:05
25 Mon	2:58	13.0	3:32	12.9	9:21	-0.7	9:50	0.0	5:09	8:04
26 Tue	3:53	12.6	4:26	13.0	10:14	-0.4	10:50	0.0	5:10	8:03

Milbridge										
DATE	HIGH			LOW			☀	☾		
20 Wed		12:00	11.2	6:07	-0.2	6:11	0.7	5:05	8:10	
21 Thu	12:05	12.8	12:40	11.5	6:47	-0.5	6:54	0.4	5:06	8:09
22 Fri	12:47	13.0	1:22	11.8	7:28	-0.7	7:39	0.2	5:07	8:08
23 Sat	1:52	13.0	2:07	12.1	8:11	-0.8	8:28	0.1	5:08	8:07
24 Sun	2:20	12.9	2:54	12.4	8:57	-0.7	9:19	0.0	5:09	8:06
25 Mon	3:11	12.6	3:45	12.5	9:46	-0.6	10:15	0.0	5:10	8:05
26 Tue	4:06	12.2	4:39	12.6	10:39	-0.4	11:15	0.0	5:11	8:04



Cards of Thanks

Thank you, thank you, thank you!
John and I would like to extend our heart felt appreciation for all who made our 70th Anniversary so wonderful! Thank you for all the work everyone put into our party making it a beautiful success. The gifts and cards touched us deeply. We were very overwhelmed by all your love and support on our special day.

Much love to you all,
John & Ruth Farris





The Milbridge Theatre closed in December 2014 when owner Dave Parsons died. On July 8, the nonprofit Gateway: Milbridge signed an agreement of sale to purchase the building.

Photo by Johanna S. Billings

Milbridge Theatre continued from page 3

it's more economical to tear it down and construct a new one. "It's falling apart," Hitchings said. "It's full of mold."

The lot will be turned into a temporary green space until construction begins on the new building. It is expected to open in 2018 or 2019.

Hitchings said the group will have a better idea of the timing for the project once the business plan is done.

The total cost for the project is \$450,000, a figure which includes the \$50,000 purchase price for the building.

"That's a comprehensive figure, not just to build a building," said Bondurant.

The funds will be raised through donations and grants. The group will not seek support from tax dollars, Hitchings and Bondurant said.

"We have promised, and this is written into our bylaws, that we will always pay taxes on the properties we own," Hitchings said.

Some of the fundraising will come from the sale of the existing theater seats.

"Despite the seats being very uncomfortable, there's a large number of people who one of the seats and we've been asked to preserve them," said Bondurant.

The new building will be constructed to look like the existing building but it will have portable stages and seating so

that the space can accommodate live shows and community events. The existing building also comes with features such as the ticket counter and popcorn machine which will be used to create an authentic look in the new structure.

"It's going to be a new building but we want to preserve that history," said Bondurant.

Hitchings said after the meeting she was thrilled about signing the agreement of sale.

"I'm so excited. I got chills when I said it out loud tonight," said Hitchings. "It means a lot to a lot of people."

For more information, email info@milbridgetheatre.org or visit milbridgetheatre.org or gatewaymilbridge.com.



This building on the Washington Academy campus, has been continuously used as a school building since it was built in 1823. It was the only building on campus until 1959.

Photo by Johanna S. Billings



This old photo shows the Washington Academy Class of 1942.

Photo courtesy of Washington Academy



In front, from left, are Carson Prout, Ben Griffin, Pierce Walston, Brian Dennison, Benjamin Hennessey, Brandon Porter, Tristan Hicks, Caden Schwinn, Ethan Libby, Levi Campbell, Coleton Whitney and Shane Feeney. Coaches are Brian Campbell, Michael Hennessey and Darren Prout. Submitted Photos

Machias area win the Maine District Baseball Champion title

The Machias Area Little League 9- and 10-year old All Stars clinched a first-ever District 1 Championship with a 6-2 win over Ellsworth at Beal Field last Saturday. Coached by Brian Campbell, Darren Prout and Mike Hennessey, the boys are now one of eight teams to play for the state title. Each district champion begins the tournament on July 22 in Westbrook. The winner advances to Rhode Island. This is the first ever baseball championship for Machias at any age level.



225th celebration continued from page 1

Two other notable members of the Class of 2017 are Rylea Steeves, daughter of Athletic Director Blaine Steeves, and Lydia Day, daughter of Assistant Head of School MaryEllen Day.

Wright, McBrine and Mahar all commented on the school's growing diversity.

"When I was here, there were very few foreign exchange students," said Mahar. "But we had a lot of diversity from around the country."

At that time, students came to the school from two military bases, one in Cutler and one in Bucks Harbor, both of which have since closed, he said.

"I remember it being really novel when we would have one or two exchange students," said Wright. Now, the student body of approximately 425 shows "amazing diversity" with about 88 foreign students. All of them, plus another dozen American students, live on campus.

McBrine said the foreign students really form a bond with the local community.

"When those kids come in, they love Downeast Maine. They cry when they leave," he said.

Many of those foreign students invite their American classmates to visit them during the summers, he said.

Wright remembers going all the way from kindergarten to eighth grade with only two others in her class. Washington Academy felt huge, she said.

Mahar also remembers coming to Washington Academy when the much smaller Pembroke High School closed. Going to a

bigger school was good for him, he said.

"It gave the opportunity for us to spread our wings," he said.

The school has a rich history starting long before Wright, Mahar and McBrine were even born. In 1792, when the school was founded, Maine was still a part of Massachusetts. John Hancock, best known as a signer of the Declaration of Independence, was the Massachusetts governor at the time and signed the original school charter, said Mahar.

Initially, the school had no building of its own and classes were held at the Burnham Tavern and the Masonic hall, according to the school's website.

The school constructed its first building in 1823 at the current site. Since then, that building has been used continuously as a school, said Mahar and McBrine. It was the only building on the campus until 1959.

"It's pretty exciting," McBrine said. "It's pretty neat to be at a place that has this kind of history."

Anyone interested in volunteering to help plan festivities during the coming year is asked to call Wright at 207-255-8301, ext. 220 or email her at k.wright@raider4life.org.

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