



Dr. Wendy Kasten (left) and Denise Pendleton with Literacy Volunteers of Waldo County restock one of the small WaldoReads Little Libraries boxes in Belfast last week.

The gift of reading

Little libraries popping up all over the state

BY ABIGAIL CURTIS
BDN STAFF

A few years ago, Tim Hughes of Belfast came across a small, free outdoor library while visiting California, and he was smitten.

“I thought, that’s a cool idea,” he remembered, and he decided to start his own free library back home.

After finding an old artillery box at Liberty Tool, filling it with books and putting it outside his house on the corner of Spring and Cross streets in downtown Belfast, he and his wife, Cris Hughes, sat back and waited to see what would happen. It didn’t take long for the community to notice his box of books, he said.

“People love it, actually,” he said. “It’s really fun. People stop by and peruse the books. There’s a notebook, and people leave us little notes, so it’s fun. It’s totally free, and it’s a little tiny service there.”

Hughes didn’t realize at first that his small box of free books fits right into a movement that is growing around the state, the nation and even the world. It’s hard to know exactly where it began, but a Wisconsin man in 2009 built a model of a one-room schoolhouse, filled it with books and put it on



Literacy Volunteers of Waldo County maintain the selection of books in the small WaldoReads Little Libraries boxes in Belfast. This library box is at the Belfast Transfer Station.

a post in his front yard. Todd Bol’s schoolhouse book box was the beginning of the official Little Free Library movement, which aims to promote literacy and the love of reading by building free book exchanges worldwide.

The grass-roots effort is clearly catching on. As of this June, there were 40,000 registered Little Free Library book exchanges in all 50 states and in over 70 countries. In Maine, there are official Little Free Libraries all over, from Stockholm to York and from Eastport to Mount Vernon. Bangor has six registered libraries, including ones lo-

cated close to Hayford Park, Broadway Park and in other downtown locales.

“We have a lot of people pass by our street, and we thought this would be a good way to get people to read and come together as a community,” Alisa Roberts, who maintains the Little Free Library on Cottage Street in Bangor, wrote on the official map.

Old Town has just one registered Little Free Library located on Woodland Avenue, close to Pushaw Lake. The wooden structure was built by the children of a woman who was an avid reader.

Mainer’s first novel debuts at San Diego Comic-Con

BY JOHN HOLYOKE
BDN STAFF

BANGOR — Dave Barrett didn’t set out to be a novelist. In fact, the Hampden man took up writing as a lark nine years ago, when he participated in National Novel Writing Month.

That contest’s goal: Write 50,000 words — in the form of a novel — in 30 days.

“I had a blast, and my family was super-accommodating. ‘Daddy’s writing, don’t bother him,’” Barrett said. “I didn’t cook dinner. I didn’t do dishes. I didn’t do anything. And I just kind of got into a habit. Every November, I sit down, and I do my writing.”

On Tuesday, the product of the 2010 NaNoWriMo contest, “It’s All Fun and Games,” will hit bookstores. It’s the first novel Barrett tried to get published, and it’s already creating buzz in at least one key demographic.

Barrett recently returned from San Diego, where his book premiered at Comic-Con International. An Inkshares book, it was one of two titles chosen by Nerdlist to serve as the pop culture enterprise’s initial foray into publishing.

His road toward becoming a published author began with an Inkshares contest.

“To be honest, it was not a writing contest,” Barrett said. “Inkshares is a crowdfunding publisher, and so the first tier of the contest was based on who could get the most individuals to preorder the book.”

Barrett finished in the top five of that contest, and his novel was submitted to Nerdlist, along with other finalists, before ending up in the top two.

Inkshares is billing “It’s All Fun and Games,” as a pioneer in the sub-genre of live-action role play in fantasy fiction.

The premise of his book is simple, to start: Six friends who enjoy spending their weekends in live-action role play situations — picture imaginary dragons, wizards and the like — head into the forest to play a game. Then, they realize that the game has come to life, and their make-believe powers are real.

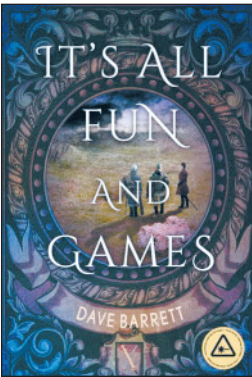


Exhibit puts faces to homelessness

BY SARAH WALKER CARON
BDN STAFF

Jamie cuddles her 9-month-old son, Hunter, his little head on her shoulder. He stares into the camera, his fist in his mouth. “She said that if it wasn’t for the shelter, her little boy would be in foster care,” photographer Patrisha McLean said. “Imagine if she had to give up her boy for his whole life.”

There’s Erin, in makeup and a pink prom dress at the beach. She was in her senior year of high school in Camden when she and her mom no longer had anywhere to live. Despite both of them working, they couldn’t afford rent. “They had no place to live, so that’s why they moved into the shelter,” McLean said. The staff at the shelter helped her get a dress for prom.

These are just two of the stories behind photos that give a new, raw look at homelessness in Knox County. They are part of an exhibit artist Susan Williams and McLean have teamed up for. It’s on display at Pascal Hall in Rockport. Williams’ paintings and McLean’s portraits of homeless and formerly homeless people from the area are available for sale, with a portion of the proceeds going to benefit the Knox County Homeless Coalition/Hospitality House. Signed copies of McLean’s book, “My Island,” also are available with a \$75 minimum donation to KCHC.

Williams has had significant exhibitions in New York and Maine, including an acquisition of a group of paintings by McKinsey & Co. and Goldman Sachs & Co. She is representing the exhibit.

‘Julius Caesar’ reflects current political rhetoric

BY JUDY HARRISON
BDN STAFF

Julius Caesar has come home victorious. Banners emblazoned in red letters reading “Hail Caesar” and “Keep Rome great forever” greet him in Rome.

The people toss rose petals in his path while his fellow senators speculate about his political ambitions. A soothsayer warns Caesar, “Beware the ides of March.”

The undercurrent in Opera House Arts’ multilayered production of William Shakespeare’s “Julius Caesar” is the unspoken admonition: “Beware Election Day.” Performed through Sunday, the production makes no overt references to any presidential candidates but does emphasize how a mob may be manipulated to cry havoc.

Presented in the three-quarter round at the Stonington Opera House, director Peter Richards subtly parallels the politics of ancient Rome with those rumbling across America today. There’s similar speculation and declarations that are half-truths fueled by innuendo in the play — all because Caesar three times rejects an offer to be king without enough gusto for his fellow senators.

The cast, for the most part, gives outstanding performances. The men who plot Caesar’s demise are convinced their cause is true, but their motives are different.

The motives of Christopher Michael McFarland’s Brutus are noble. He fears the republic will be lost if Caesar declares himself king. McFarland gallantly portrays the man who righteously sacrifices his position and his family for Rome.



Bari Robinson as Flavius (left), plots with Matt Hurley as Marullus in Opera House Arts’ production of “Julius Caesar” in Stonington.

He delivers Caesar’s eulogy with an angry, bitter irony

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