

A Maine spin on dancing with stars

Charity to feature local ‘celebrities’

BY SHELBY HARTIN
BDN STAFF

“A smooth waltz,” Maurine Michaud says wistfully, making a small noise of contentment as she stares out into her room at Phillips-Strickland House. The space is comfortable, with a cozy rocker situated neatly in the corner by a window.

Photos of her family are on the walls. Here is her daughter. There she is at a wedding. In the center is a son, and below is a grandson.

She loves to reminisce and tell stories about her younger days. She believes in keeping memories alive.

And she believes in dancing. Michaud is one of many residents at Phillips-Strickland House, a nonprofit residential care center offering independence to residents. The facility will be on the receiving end of funds raised at an upcoming dancing event, “Dancing for the Stars Fundraiser, A Red Carpet Evening.”

Organizers are hoping for a triumphant return for the fundraising event that hasn’t been held for the past few years. It starts at 6 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 21, at Morgan Hill Event Center in Hermon. The event’s six “stars” include Buffie McCue, assistant director for athletic advancement at the University of Maine; Sarah Smiley, local writer and columnist; Kate Hills, real estate agent with ERA Dawson Bradford Co.; Dr. David Koffman of St. Joseph Internal Medicine; Dr. Peter Ver Lee of Northeast Cardiology Associates; and Philip Henry of Canuck Investments LLC. They have been paired up with dancers from the UMaine dance department for a night of dancing, from swing and hip-hop to salsa and celtic soft shoe.

Dancers from UMaine include Katherine Keaton, who will be performing with Philip Henry; Scott Downs, who will be performing with Kate Hills; Caitlynn Davenport, who will be performing with Dr. Peter Ver Lee; Ian Raugh, who will be performing with Sarah Smiley; Mallory Osborne, who will be performing with Dr. David Koffman; and Fredrick Sawyer, who will be performing with Buffie McCue.

“The dancers from the University of Maine — they are professionals,” says the event’s emcee, See *Dancing, Page C2*



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Dahlov Ipcar, 98, sits in the studio attached to her home in Georgetown recently. She and her late husband moved into the house in 1937, and she had her first solo show in 1939 at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

The art of longevity

Dahlov Ipcar, 98, still painting, savoring life

BY KATHLEEN PIERCE
BDN STAFF

Meat, cheese, cream, butter and art every day. That’s artist and author Dahlov Ipcar’s recipe for a long life.

In a studio annexed to an old farmhouse, the 98-year-old painter sits surrounded by her lively animal paintings and sculptures carved by her father, the artist William Zorach. Overlooking a serene 40 acres in Robinhood Cove, it’s a fine retreat.

But retreating is not what the painter is doing. Though macular degeneration, a condition she’s had for years, has robbed her of her central vision, she still paints most mornings.

“Everything is foggy. I get within an inch and a half of the canvas,” she says gesturing toward the almost complete painting drying on her canvas. “I don’t think I’d stop. Even if I can’t see anything, it makes me happy.”

She already has had what she considers an extra 18 years of life. Both her parents died at age 80 and so did her brother.

“I thought I’d die at 80,” said Ipcar, seated on a couch with her calico cat, Chelsea Girl, purring in her lap. “I’ve written instructions but thrown them away. I don’t know why I’m living so long.”

She has undergone a series of “artificial things” such as hips and shoulder operations, but for the most part, she gets around fine on a walker. At an opening last week of recent work at the Frost Gully Gallery in Freeport, Ipcar greeted a receiving line of 500 people who waited eagerly



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Dahlov Ipcar’s palette sits loaded with paint in her Georgetown studio recently. At 98 years old, she’s still painting nearly every day.

for a few minutes of her time. Shaking each person’s hand, she had a warm smile for all.

She grew up in an artistic family where Ipcar’s mother Marguerite Zorach, an artist whose work is in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art, was a worthy partner to her father. The Zorachs, as they became known, had a joint influence on the modern art movement.

A Greenwich Village childhood, with summers in Maine, made Ipcar’s artistic path seem inevitable. But it wasn’t a foregone conclusion for her family. Her parents didn’t push her into art. They taught her to “clean the brushes, put out the paints and stretch the canvases,” but they didn’t instruct her what to put on the canvas — or teach her their techniques.

“I guess I am self-taught,” she said. As her art career developed, her parents would praise what they liked or remain mum. “That was how I learned,” she said.

For a while the family’s only source of income was her father’s teaching salary at The Arts Students League of New York. The budget was tight. See *Artist, Page C2*

BSO, Geaghan Bros. partner to brew Beethoven beer

BY EMILY BURNHAM
BDN STAFF

At 120 years old, the Bangor Symphony Orchestra looks younger than it has in decades. It has a robust social media presence. It regularly premieres newer works, whether it’s compositions by music director Lucas Richman or from another contemporary American composer. And it loves craft beer.

Specifically, local craft beer — so much so, that the BSO has partnered with Geaghan’s Bros. Brewing Co. to offer Maestro’s Marzen, a German-style lager that will celebrate the orchestra’s 120th season. The specialty beer will be unveiled at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 21, at the Geaghan Bros. Brewing Tap Room in Brewer, the day before the BSO’s second concert in the 2015-2016 season, “Beethoven & Friends,” set for 3 p.m. Sunday at the Collins Center for the Arts in Orono.



ALESSANDRA TINOZZI

BSO executive director Brian Hinrichs said collaborations such as this beer, or other programs

like its music series at Nocturnum Drafthaus during ARTober or the Music & Wellness program at

Acadia Hospital, are key to expanding the BSO’s core audience. Hinrichs, BSO marketing director Sarah McCarthy and Geaghan’s development and marketing director Lisa Sturgeon stumbled across the idea of combining Beethoven and beer last year.

“Projects like this ... bring the symphony to the attention of new audiences and let them know that we are attuned to the community beyond the concert hall. We believe strongly that a concert of Beethoven and Schubert can speak to anyone, but not everyone will believe that without first encountering us in a space or medium that’s familiar to them,” said Hinrichs. “It’s also another way for the BSO to contribute to Bangor’s growth and new vibrancy. Do you want to live in a city where a craft brewery and a symphony collaborate? I personally do.” See *Beer, Page C2*

Danger, daring on the high seas

Harpswell author’s new novel shines

BY JOHN HOLYOKE
BDN STAFF

Maine is full of accomplished writers, and some — the master of horror guy who lives in Bangor comes to mind — have done quite well for themselves.

Among those seasoned Maine scribes is James L. Nelson, who might just be the best Maine writer you’ve never heard of.

Nelson’s niche is a bit more narrow than pop horror, but the award-winning writer of nautical historic fiction and nonfiction spins a wonderful tale in his latest novel, “The French Prize” (323 pages, St. Martin’s Press, released July 14, 2015).

The book tracks the travels of young Jack Biddlecomb, the son of one of Nelson’s frequent protagonists, Isaac Biddlecomb, in the post-Revolutionary United States.

Set in 1797, Biddlecomb the younger takes command of his first ship, Abigail, a merchant vessel bound for Barbados. There are some who don’t want that ship to arrive, Biddlecomb eventually learns, and some of the fledgling nation’s most powerful men are pulling strings he can’t see.

If you crave some adventure on the high seas, Nelson delivers, in spades. The battle scenes are elaborately written, the characters are full if not mysterious and the struggles of captain and crew against nature and humans is tangible.

Many readers will likely struggle with frequent references to specific parts of the sailing ships and other nautical terms. Fortunately, the book includes reference sections that will help ease the transition from easy chair to the helm. There’s one problem with that, though: Flipping back and forth to find out exactly what Nelson’s writing about breaks up the flow and certainly interrupts the reading process.

Nelson lives in Harpswell and has written 20 books, including the popular “Revolution at Sea” saga. Five of those volumes are nonfiction. According to his website, the Nelson has long had a passion for boats and sailing and built his first boat when he was a freshman in high school.

According to the bio, the 12-foot skipjack didn’t sail too well, “due to design flaws and Nelson’s inability to sail a boat.”

Since those humble beginnings, Nelson has immersed himself in all things nautical and has worked on plenty of sailing ships, learning the craft. Eventually, his bio states, he decided it would be easier to write about sailing than to actually sail, and he came ashore to begin a new career.

While a great read, “The French Prize” isn’t an easy read, particularly for landlubbers who don’t know their spanker boom from their mizzen topgallant sail.

And while I’ve never been one to read the final page of a book first, I’d suggest readers make an exception in this case. Taking a good look at the final seven pages, in fact, can help readers navigate the book much more smoothly.

That’s where you’ll find a glossary of nautical terms you might not know. And trust me, if Nelson includes it in the glossary, you’re going to need to know what it See *Novel, Page C2*

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