

EVENTS

Things to Do

BANGOR — Bangor Area Children's Choir's 2015 Winter Concert "Make the Season Bright," 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 11, at St. John's Episcopal Church, 225 French St.

BANGOR — University of Maine German club traditional Christmas Market, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 12, University of Maine Museum of Art, 40 Harlow St. Christmas cookies, stollen, decorations, cafe. Benefits UMMA programs. Artists Paul Myoda and Traer Scott, and selections from the Bruce Brown collection, through Dec. 31.

BANGOR — Bangor Daily News editorial cartoonist George Danby signing copies of his cartoon collection, "The Essential Danby," 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 12, Islandport Press book kiosk, Bangor Mall. For more information, visit islandportpress.com.

BELFAST — Unitarian Universalist Church of Belfast green sanctuaries committee hosting Chuck Piper speaking about solar energy in Maine, solar electric farms, heat pumps and solar hot water systems, 6:30-8 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 9, at the church sanctuary, 37 Miller St. Refreshments will be served. Corliss Davis at 930-3562.

BELFAST — Second annual Nativity display and tea, 1-3 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 12, at Belfast United Methodist Church, 23 Mill Lane. Free. Refresh-

ments. 338-5575.

BELFAST — Cold Comfort Theater holiday show for children 4-5 p.m. Friday, Dec. 11, The First Baptist Church of Belfast, 95 High St. Admission free, donations appreciated. 930-7244 or coldcomforttheater@gmail.com.

BELFAST — The Belfast Maskers' live radio show re-creation of the classic 1947 family film, "Miracle on 34th Street" at 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 11; 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 12; and 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 13, at Unitarian Universalist Church, 37 Miller St., next to library. Tickets \$10 for adults; \$5 for children and teens, available at Left Bank Books, Eat More Cheese, The Chocolate Drop and Colburn Shoes. belfastmaskers.com.

BELFAST — Winter Solstice Celebration by Unitarian Universalist Church of Belfast, 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 12, Blue Goose Center, Route 1. Tickets, available at the door, are \$10 for adults; \$5 for children and youth ages 6-18; free for children under 6; \$25 for a family. Proceeds will support Belfast Soup Kitchen. Snow date is Dec. 13. Liz Fitzsimmons at 338-4245.

BLUE HILL — The 10 x 8 group's 16th annual art show and sale, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 12, at Emlen Hall, The Bay School. Preview at 9:30 a.m. Live music and refreshments. 374-5417 or info@heididaub.com.

BUCKSPORT — Mount View Chamber Singers 25th anniversary perfor-

mance of "Carols in the Round," 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 12, at Franklin Street United Methodist Church, 71 Franklin St. Refreshments. 469-3622.

CAMDEN — Heidi Karod talking about her recent trip to Peru, where she volunteered with Center for Child and Adolescent Workers, 7-8 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 10, Camden Public Library. 236-3440.

EASTPORT — Eastport Arts Center sixth annual Festival of Trees, a silent auction of decorated tabletop trees, 4:30-5:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 12, at the center, 36 Washington St. info@eastportartscenter.org, 853-4650 or eastportartscenter.org.

ELLSWORTH — Opening reception and holiday open house with the artists in "Small Works 2015" show, 5-7 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 9, Courthouse Gallery Fine Art, 6 Court St. Free and open to all. 667-6611.

ELLSWORTH — Beginner needle felting ornaments workshop with fiber artist Heidi Jai, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 12, Woodlawn Museum, 19 Black House Drive. \$40 Woodlawn members, \$50 others, includes materials. Not suitable for children under 12. Children over 12 must be accompanied by adult. Registration required. 667-8671 or events@woodlawnmuseum.org.

ELLSWORTH — Woodlawn Museum traditional high tea, 3-4 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 9; Friday, Dec. 11; Wednesday, Dec. 16; and Friday, Dec. 18, at the

museum, 19 Black House Drive, Route 172. \$22 Woodlawn members, \$25 others, includes museum visit. Advance purchase of tickets required. 667-8671.

LEVANT — Book sale 1-4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 12, Levant Heritage Library, Union Street. The library has closed. Hardcover \$1; paperbacks 50 cents; children's books, 25 cents; quantity discounts.

NEWCASTLE and CAMDEN — Down East Singers, in collaboration with harpist Virginia Flanagan in a concert titled "Harps of Gold," 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 10, at St. Patrick's Catholic Church, 380 Academy Hill Road, Newcastle; and 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 13, at Camden Opera House, 29 Elm St., Camden. Admission Dec. 10 by suggested donation of \$20. Admission Dec. 13 \$20; free to those 18 and under, available from chorus members, online at downeastingers.org, by calling 619-0413 or at local retail outlets.

ORONO — Hudson Museum's Maine Indian Basketmakers Holiday Market, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 12, Collins Center for the Arts, University of Maine.

PITTSFIELD — Town of Pittsfield annual Christmas tree lighting and caroling, 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 9, Hathorn Park. For more information, call the Pittsfield town office at 487-3136.

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For a complete listing of calendar items or to submit your event, visit www.bangordailynews.com.

Tips

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real. In high school, he augmented his fir tip money with what he earned selling wreaths out of the back of his truck near the Bangor Mall complex.

"I still think tipping is the most enjoyable labor aspect of the business," he said. "You're out in the woods alone, and that's nice. You've got the constant smell of balsam on your hands and clothes and everything."

He said that Washington County fir tippers, such as the men and women he buys from, don't do the job just as a hobby or a way to make a little extra income.

"I don't think that anybody that is tipping is using it for play money. Tipping is serious business. They put in very, very long hours," Whitney said. "The more hardcore tippers are a group of individuals that make seasonal work a full-time job. People in Washington County for generations have made full-time jobs out of seasonal jobs."

One reason why Washington County has such an abundance of fir tips and fir tippers is because it is used to be home to many dairy farms. Now, lots of those farms are defunct, with the former pastures taken over with balsam fir.

"I think there were a lot of homesteaders that came in the 1970s and kept the pastures open for 20, 25 years," she said. "A lot of their kids weren't interested in that very hard life of subsistence farming, and you have the constant growth of the new baby trees."

York said that she is just returning to wreath making and fir tipping after a long hiatus, and that the tipping

"You're out in the woods alone, and that's nice. You've got the constant smell of balsam on your hands and clothes and everything."

DAVID WHITNEY

grounds she co-owns are overgrown. Before, she and her now-ex husband had spent a lot of time maintaining their acres so that the trees were trimmed to be dense and conical, with the bottom of the tree "shaped like a drum."

First, she said, a good tipper has to wait until the frosts come so that the needles are set and will keep their green, fragrant qualities throughout the holiday season.

"We had such a long, warm fall, I just waited," she said. "We finally got that first really cold snap, and I was dancing around. Yip-pee!"

Secondly, tippers have to get written permission from the landowner, if they are harvesting on someone else's land. Those who do not are engaging in illegal activity, and can be charged accordingly.

York said that the lack of snow this season has made for an easier harvest. Traditionally, tippers cut down a small spruce tree and remove all the branches except several at the bottom, making a two and a half foot long stick. Then they start gathering as fast as they can and thread the tips on the stick. A good harvester can fill a 75-pound stick in an hour.

"You do as much as you can as fast as you can," she said. "It's kind of like making hay, only you don't it when the sun shines, you do it when the frost is on the ground."

Seeds

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bound gardeners and farmers is both an art and a science, with a little bit of luck thrown in for good measure.

Pete Zuck, a vegetable product manager at Johnny's Seeds, an employee-owned company, said that not that long ago, gardeners were pretty limited in what they could plant in their garden. Just a few varieties of even the most popular vegetables, such as tomatoes, beans and peas, were available. But in recent decades, the seed landscape has made a dizzying about-face. Now, the numbers of vegetable varieties available for sale seem limited only by imagination, and space in the various seed catalogs.

"You get to the point where there's only so much you can fit in one catalog," Zuck said. "We live in this world where customers expect choices. Breeding has become so sophisticated and competitive, there are an overwhelming amount of varieties ... there are hundreds of companies breeding new things all the time. It's a real race to develop the best stuff. Oftentimes things that people have come to trust get passed over for something better."

It can be hard to tell growers that the cherry tomato

they have loved for years is going away, he said, and so the company spends a lot of time communicating with customers and letting them sample new offerings when possible, he said.

Johnny's breeds some of its own seeds, including those for pumpkins, winter squash, summer squash, tomatoes and peppers. They also purchase sample seed from vendors, which they plant in the spring and keep an eye on.

"The big thing about Johnny's is that we don't put anything in the catalog unless we feel we know it pretty well," he said. "We want to give our customers enough information so they can be successful."

By the end of the growing season, in late August and September, it is also crunch time for the catalog. Johnny's employees work to figure out what types, and how much, seed to order, and then get ready laying out and printing the 1.3 million seed catalogs. Zuck said that even in this era of Internet shopping, a lot of people still rely on the printed version.

"Our catalog has a lot of information in it," he said. "People use it as a kind of resource. It'll be on the front seat of the truck. Farmers might want to place an order from the field."

Over at Fedco Seeds, a cooperatively owned company

that specializes in cold-hardy varieties that do well in the Northeast, division coordinator Roberta Bailey runs the seeds division. On a day when the Fedco warehouse smelled deliciously of butternut squash because a trial of that vegetable was being done, she said that taste is the number one trait that she looks for when it comes to ordering seeds for the catalog.

"It has to taste good," she said. "That's what growing food is all about."

Choosing the best-tasting offerings is a long process. All fall, Fedco employees have been trying tomatoes, melons, carrots, daikon and kale.

"We taste all of them, cooked and raw, side by side," she said. "We try to find varieties to replace the ones that are no longer available. If something didn't do very well, we find other varieties and replace it."

One time that taste wasn't the deciding factor in carrying a line of seeds was when a company called Seminis was purchased by Monsanto, the world's largest developer of genetically engineered crops.

"We decided not to buy from Seminis anymore," Bailey said, even though that seed company had some of the best vigorous hybrid varieties in the world. "We spent years try-

ing to replace them."

She also said that vegetable trends can be challenging. A few years ago, for example, there was a sudden craze to grow celeriac, and Bailey had to reorder celeriac seeds from suppliers five times. Another year, a type of Italian polenta corn got some good press and suddenly started

flying off the warehouse shelves.

"We couldn't get enough," she said. "Trends always surprise us. We'd be very wealthy if we could see the trends coming out of the gate. I don't know what the next craze is going to be. It would really help me in my job if I knew."

Bailey said that Fedco

often will drop a variety of seed if they simply don't sell very much of it and it doesn't pay for the space it is taking up in the catalog.

"We try to give people a warning if it's possible," she said of the seed varieties that will get the ax. "One in a while, there's enough of a hubbub that we bring it back."

Monday prime time

MOVIES

	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM
BROADCAST	2 NBC 207 Inside Ed. The Voice The remaining nine artists perform. (N) [2]						Telenovela Telenovela [2]	News	
	4 CBC Rudolph, the Reindeer This Life (N) The National (N) CBC Coronation Rick Mercer								
	5 CBS Big Bang Broke Girl Supergirl (N) (HD) [2] Scorpion (N) (HD) [2] (9:59) NCIS: Los Angeles News								
	6 NBC 207 Inside Ed. The Voice The remaining nine artists perform. (N) [2] Telenovela Telenovela [2] News								
	7 ABC Wheel Jeopardy! The Great Christmas Light Fight (N) (HD) News Great Holiday News								
	8 ABC Wheel Jeopardy! The Great Christmas Light Fight (N) (HD) News Great Holiday News								
	9 IND Michael Bublê The Voice The remaining nine artists perform. (N) [2] News-Lisa CTV News Daily Show								
	13 CBS Ent The Insider Supergirl (N) (HD) [2] Scorpion (N) (HD) [2] (9:59) NCIS: Los Angeles News								
	22 FOX Mod Fam Mod Fam TV's Funniest Animated Stars: A Paley Center FOX 22 News at 10 (N) Law-SVU								
	38 IND M*A*S*H M*A*S*H Andy Griffith Andy Griffith Father Dowling Mysteries Hogan Hero Hogan Hero C. Burnett								
KIDS	NICK Talia Thunder Henry iCarly [2] Full House [2] Full House [2] Full House [2] Friends [2]								
	DISN K.C. Under. Jessie [2] ** Happy Feet Two (2011) (PG) (:35) Jessie Best Fr. Austin Girl Meets								
	FAM National Lamp. Christmas (45) *** The Santa Clause (1994, Comedy) Tim Allen. (PG) 700 Club								
LEARN	HIST Alcatraz: Search for the Truth [2] America's Greatest Prison Breaks [2] Alcatraz								
	DISC Street Outlaws (ESP) [2] Street Outlaws: Full Throt Street Outlaws Big Chief hosts a "Cash Days." (N) [2] Outlaws								
	TLC Hoarding: Buried Alive [2] Hoarding: Buried Alive [2] Hoarding: Buried Alive [2] Hoarding: Buried Alive [2] Hoarding								
	A&E The First 48 [2] The First 48 [2] The First 48 [2] (:01) The First 48 [2] The First 48								
	ANPL Yukon Men [2] Yukon Men [2] Yukon Men [2] Yukon Men [2]								
SPORTS	CSNE Patriots Celtics Pre. NBA Basketball Boston Celtics at New Orleans Pelicans. (L) Celtics SportsNet								
	ESPN Monday Night Countdown (:15) NFL Football Dallas Cowboys at Washington Redskins. (N Subject to Blackout) (L)								
	ESPN2 Interruption High School Basketball Championship Drive: Who's In? (N)								
NBCSP FLW [2] Fishing Hunter Hunter Hunting TV Bluegrass Premier Blazers									
NESN NHL Hockey Nashville Predators at Boston Bruins. (N) (L) Bruins Sports Instigators Sports									
NEWS	CNBC The Profit Shark Tank [2] The Profit The Profit The Profit								
	CNN Erin Burnett OutFront (N) Anderson Cooper 360 [2] Anderson Cooper 360 [2] CNN Tonight Cooper 360								
	FNC Greta Van Susteren The O'Reilly Factor (N) The Kelly File (N) Hannity (N) O'Reilly								
	MSNBC Hardball Chris Matthews All In With Chris Hayes Rachel Maddow Show The Last Word All In With								
	AMC The Karate Kid Part II (PG) ** Christmas With the Kranks (2004) Tim Allen. ** Jingle All the Way (1996) (PG)								
BRV Vanderpump Rules [2] Housewives/Atl. Vanderpump Rules (N) [2] Après Ski (N) [2] Happens									
CMT Last Man Last Man Last Man Last Man ** Billy Madison (1995) Adam Sandler. (PG-13) Last Man									
COM South Park South Park South Park South Park South Park South Park Archer [2] Archer [2] Daily Show									
EI EI News (N) [2] Kardashain Kardashain The Royals [2] EI News [2]									
FOOD Diners Diners Unwrapped 2.0 (N) [2] Cake Wars (N) [2] Guilty Pleas. Top 5 Diners									
FX *** Captain Phillips (2013, Docudrama) Tom Hanks, Barkhad Abdi. (PG-13) Fargo (N) [2] (:11) Fargo [2]									
GAC Alaska Alaska Alaska Alaska Alaska Alaska Alaska Alaska Alaska									
HALL A Princess for Christmas Crown for Christmas (2015) Danica McKellar. (NR) Christmas Under Wraps (2014, Drama)									
HGTV Love It or List It, Too [2] Love It or List It [2] Love It or List It (N) [2] Hunters Hunters Int'l Hunters									
LIFE (:60) The Santa Con (NR) 12 Men of Christmas (2009) Kristin Chenoweth. (NR) (:02) Dear Secret Santa (2013) (PG)									
MTV Follow the (:45) Follow the Rules [2] Follow the Follow the Follow the Follow the Follow the Done Yet?									
OXY Sex-City Sex-City Sex-City Sex-City Sex-City Sex-City Snapped [2] Snapped [2]									
SPIKE Cops [2]									
SYFY *** Zombieland (2009) Woody Harelson. (R) **** Raiders of the Lost Ark (1981) Harrison Ford. (PG)									
TBN Rodriguez Potters Trinity End of Age Franklin J. Duplantis TBN Presents: Jubilee Christmas									
TBS Family Guy Family Guy Family Guy Family Guy Amer. Dad Amer. Dad Big Bang Big Bang Conan (N) [2]									
TCM (:30) ** December 7th *** The World of Henry Orient (1964) (NR) Where Angels Go, Trouble Follows (NR)									
TMC (:00) ** The Jackal (R) (:05) * Vampire Academy (2014) Zoey Deutch. Scar Tissue (2013) Danny Horn. (R)									
TNT Castle [2] Major Crimes [2] Major Crimes (N) [2] Legends (N) [2] Crimes									
TRAVEL Bizarre Foods America [2] Rev Runs Rev Runs Bizarre Foods/Zimmer Boozie Traveler [2] Mysteries at									
TRU truTV Top Funnies [2] truTV Top Funnies [2] truTV Top Funnies [2] Funniest Super Into [2] Funniest									
TVL Facts-Life Facts-Life (:12) The Facts of Life [2] Raymond Raymond Raymond Raymond King									
USA Mod Fam Mod Fam WVE Monday Night RAW (N) (L) [4] Chrissy									
VH1 Love & Hip Hop Love & Hip Hop VHI Big in 2015: Entertai. Love & Hip Hop VH1 in 2015									
WGN-A *** E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial (1982) Henry Thomas. (PG) * The Santa Clause 3: The Escape Clause (2006) (G)									
PREMIUM	ENC (:50) *** Fury (2014, War) (ESP) Brad Pitt. (R) ** The Beach (2000) (ESP) Leonardo DiCaprio. An aimless traveler journeys to a secret island utopia. (R) (ESP) Bruce Willis, Bonnie Bedelia. (R)								
	HBO (:10) ** Focus (2015) Will Smith. A con man's former protegee/lover throws him off his game. (R) U2: Innocence and Experience Live in Paris The band performs in Paris. (N) [2] (:15) The Leftovers [2]								
	MAX (:05) *** Edge of Tomorrow (2014) (PG-13) The Knick (ESP) [2] ** A Perfect Murder (1998) (ESP) Michael Douglas. A man plots to have his wife murdered by her lover. (R) (:10:50) The Knick [2]								
	SHOW (:45) *** Good Will Hunting (1997) (ESP) (R) Homeland A new threat emerges. [2] The Affair [2] The Affair [2]								
	STARZ Flesh and Bone (ESP) [2] (:05) ** Never Been Kissed (1999) (ESP) Drew Barrymore. A reporter poses as a high-school student. ** Pearl Harbor (2001, War) (ESP) Ben Affleck, Josh Hartnett. (R)								

Smith

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It's a slow going process, but that speaks to Smith. Like slow food, that's the point.

"I am helping to preserve the trade that's been handed down generation to generation," he said. "I carry the torch for that knowledge."

Homesteading generations in Maine depended on iron implements forged by the local smith. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem called "The Village Blacksmith" captures their importance.

It begins: "Under a spreading chestnut-tree / The village smithy stands; / The smith, a mighty man is he, / With large and sinewy hands; / And the muscles of his brawny arms / Are strong as iron bands."

Coal, which Smith still uses, sat in a bucket by his side. The fossil fuel is necessary to turn the iron malleable.

Like the 400 pound anvil in front of him, Smith is holding still in a rapidly gentrifying neighborhood. Rooted in this timeless craft he is stable in the midst of uncertainty.

With the future of Portland Forge in limbo — the building where he operates at 58 Fore St. is slated for redevelopment as mixed-use retail and residence — will Maine lose its singular full-time blacksmith?

This fall, the city's planning board voted to sustain portions of the complex as a local historic district. But Smith fears his days may be numbered.

"I don't know if that pertains to its historic use. ... This could become another Eventide [restaurant]," he said with a grimace. "I want to be the city's blacksmith."

Now owned by developers CPB2, building owners could not be reached for comment on the Portland Forge's future.

Before setting up shop in the building, he was an itin-

erant blacksmith. Smith's mobile demonstrations on the streets of Portland caught the eye of the building's previous owner, Phineas Sprague, who put him up in the space, Smith said. The chamber that originally was a forge was used for storage for decades. Smith resurrected the forge and still uses original tools from blacksmiths who came before him.

With his future tenancy in doubt, he has forged a fall back plan. Smith is looking at Sweden and Amsterdam.

"I am trying to justify my existence in a world that doesn't understand me," he said. "If I lose the fight here at the Portland Forge, I'll build a new shop in Europe. I must go to a society that will embrace me."

Keeping the original blacksmithery alive in the city center, where wagons and ships could be repaired, matters to Smith.

"To live in 19th century life was to live or die by the blacksmith," he said. "We represent that seed of civilization."