

Cupcakes on the menu for Alzheimer’s research fundraiser

Senior Beat

Carol Higgins Taylor



Having just started a new diet in an attempt to spring into shape as it were, this topic is a challenge. The colorful, captivating confections that will once again be lined up around Westgate Center, Union St., in Bangor, with their peaks of frosting standing at attention, hoping to win the Cupcake Battles, a fundraiser for the Walk to End Alzheimer’s, are all I have been able to think about.

If you missed the fun any of the last four years, now is your chance to take part. Put on your favorite apron or get your wallet ready, because Cupcake Battles, 2016, will be on Friday, April 1, at Westgate Center for Rehabilitation and Alzheimer’s Care. I was a judge one year and can still remember the entries. Food Network worthy.

So join the fun. Along with your apron, grab

your thinking cap and lucky spoon (doesn’t every cook have one) and start planning your delicious and unique cupcakes for this fun April Fool’s Day contest.

“This event has been growing every year. Our residents and the community love to see the creative designs and enjoy our judging panel, including local media guests” said Kristie Miner, director of admissions and marketing at Westgate. “The shopping can also become competitive, with a line of buyers forming in the lobby, hoping to bring home a good variety to do their own judging.”

This delicious fundraiser is a culinary way for the Westgate’s Walk to End Alzheimer’s Team to raise much needed funds. There will be trophies presented to the cupcake receiving recognition for “Most Delicious” and “Most Creative.”

“We’d love to have bakers join us with their creations because it is really a great way for people to showcase cooking skills plus it is for a really great cause,” said Miner. “We also invite the public to come in and view the cup-

cakes and purchase their favorites.”

The cupcakes are all as different as the bakers who made them. Some bakers focus on the decorations and use a standard flavored cupcake while others are focused on developing unique and pleasing flavors, added Miner, remembering the baker who used Bailey’s Irish Cream in her cupcake.

Entries may be submitted up until noon and the judging begins at 1:30 p.m. At 2:00 p.m., the cupcakes will go up for sale.

The Cupcake Battles are just one more way to raise awareness and money for the 2016 Maine Walk to End Alzheimer’s, which will take place at seven locations across Maine, from York Beach to Fort Kent this September and October.

“Our statewide goal for the seven walks is to raise a record \$770,000 while bringing together 4,377 participants of all ages and abilities in the fight against Alzheimer’s,” said Miner.

So just where will this money go?

According to the Alzheimer’s Association, the money this year will allow the Maine Chapter to pro-



BDN FILE PHOTO

vide services such as a 24/7 helpline, care consultation, support groups, information and education, advocacy, safety services and more, to all Mainers affected by memory disorders.

To learn more about these services, visit www.alz.org/maine or call 1-800-272-3900. Having just celebrated its 28th year in operation, the Maine Chapter is the only statewide non-profit agency dedicated solely to individuals living with dementia and their caregivers. More than 86 percent of the Chapter’s revenue comes directly from individual contributions. Its services would not be possible without the generosity of dedicated community partners who are willing to work hard and even labor over a hot oven.

For contest rules, or more information, call Miner at Westgate Center for Rehabilitation & Alzheimer’s Care, at 942-7336. Then, dust off your cupcake tins and have at it. If you are looking to purchase some of these delectable treats but are having pangs of guilt given the caloric content, I have always lived by the notion that food bought to support a worthy cause is calorie free. The good deed factor and all. Enjoy.

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Brewer official says new trash program has saved \$370,000 in 5 years

BY NOK-NOI RICKER
OF THE BDN STAFF

Six years ago, the city’s finance director said the reason Brewer was implementing a controversial pay-as-you-throw program and zero-sort recycling was to reduce costs associated with sending trash to Penobscot Energy Recovery Co. in Orrington in anticipation of prices doubling after 2018.

The move, which upset some residents at the time, reduced the amount of trash sent to PERC and has resulted in \$370,000 in savings over the last five years, according to data collected by Finance Director Karen Fussell.

“I wasn’t surprised at all,” City Manager Steve Bost said Wednesday of the savings. “I wasn’t surprised because Karen has kept the City Council very informed on the issues. We know there has been significant savings.

“We know the program is a success,” he said.

The waste-reduction programs worked so well the city actually paid a

penalty to PERC for not meeting its guaranteed annual tonnage after the first year.

Brewer’s pay-as-you-throw program went into effect in January 2011, with residents paying for orange pay-as-you-throw trash bags imprinted with the city’s logo that they could fill and put out for curbside pickup. There are two sizes of bags, with 15-gallon bags costing \$1.25 each or \$6.25 for a roll of five and 33-gallon bags priced at \$2 or \$10 for a roll of five. They are sold at 11 stores in town.

To help residents reduce the amount of trash that goes to the curb, a zero-sort recycling program was put into place six months beforehand, in July 2010.

The result is that residents reduced the amount of solid waste collected curbside by half -- dropping from 2,919 tons in 2010 to an average of 1,455 tons per year since -- and recycling increased nearly six-fold.

Brewer’s recycling rate jumped from 5 percent the

year before the two programs went into effect to around 29 percent nowadays, according to Joshua Kolling-Perin, a spokesman for WasteZero, which operates the Brewer program and others around the state.

“These programs increase individuals’ awareness of the cost of their trash, reducing solid waste by an average of 44 percent and doubling or sometimes tripling recycling rates,” Kolling-Perin said in a press release about Brewer’s savings.

Brewer residents recycled 155 tons of plastic, metal, glass and newspapers in 2010 and now average 587 tons per year, city data shows.

“Since its inception, Brewer’s pay-as-you-throw and zero-sort recycling program has been a resounding success,” Brewer Mayor Bev Uhlenhake said in the statement. “Residents appreciate the enhanced recycling, and the savings from the PAYT program have had a positive impact on the city’s tax rate, which benefits all

of our taxpayers.”

Fussell estimates that “the savings equate to approximately 10 cents on the city’s [property tax] rate.”

PERC, which is where the city’s trash is currently sent to be burned to make electricity, will lose a lucrative above-market contract with Emera Maine in 2018. PERC’s latest post-2018 tipping fee price is \$84.36 a ton for a 15-year agreement or \$89.57 for a 10-year contract.

Over the last six years, city officials have been researching ways to save money when it comes to trash, as well as increase

recycling and reduce what goes into landfills, and at the end of January signed a 15-year contract to send waste to the Municipal Review Committee’s planned trash-to-energy facility in Hampden instead of PERC starting in 2018.

The Hampden plant will feature technology from Maryland-based Fiberright that reuses organic materials in trash to make bio-fuels after the glass, metals, papers and plastics are removed to be sold on the commodities market.

The contract with Brewer “provides a starting tip fee of \$70 per ton, an annual [consumer price index] escalator, a mini-

mum of a \$5 per ton reduction in the tip fee in the first three years, and provisions to share in profits of the facility above a certain level,” the council order states.

Hampden, Bar Harbor and Bangor have since followed suit.

“We have a really strong council. They are very informed on the issues and do not mind taking a leadership role on key issues,” Bost said.

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