

Bedworks of Maine celebrates 40th anniversary

In October 1975, two new University of Maine graduates started a small waterbed store in Orono. Today, it has grown into a renowned national furniture manufacturer.

Stephen Hammann and George Moran first built and sold waterbeds in a small space located downstairs from where Stephen was living, but soon moved to a larger location called at that time The Waterworks, at 53 Park St. in downtown Bangor, now the location of Pepino's. It was the heyday of waterbeds and the business flourished. They soon had several employees, both building and selling waterbeds. By 1985, they split the business into separate retail and manufacturing facilities. They also opened new retail locations in Augusta, Lewiston and Portland.

As business grew, so did their furniture line, eventually offering a complete selection of solid hardwood beds, bedroom furniture such as bureaus and chests, and futon frames, built by local craftspeople right in Bangor, with lumber harvested and milled in Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont. In 1991, they decided to rename the business The Bedworks of Maine, to reflect their roots. Soon after, they began wholesaling their Maine made bedroom furniture and gained a reputation for well-built, value-priced products. They had expanded to their current factory in Bangor and were ready for the increase in business when they got a call from the furniture buyer at L.L. Bean, for whom since 1992 The Bedworks of Maine has supplied beds, futons and bedroom furniture to more than 100 other furniture stores across the country.

The Bedworks of Maine currently runs a retail store in the Twin City Plaza Brewer, which also houses its national sales office and employs five people. The Bangor factory currently employs twenty five people and ships beds and bedroom furniture to stores and individuals throughout the United States. For more information or to see a selection of furniture, visit thebedworksofmaine.com.

Orono Adult Education offers CNA course

Orono Adult Education will offer a Certified Nurses Aid (CNA) course starting Monday, Nov. 2. The deadline to turn in applications is Friday, Oct. 23. The cost of the course is \$900 and there is a payment plan option. There is space for ten students in this course.

The class meets Monday and Tuesdays from 2:30 to 9 p.m.. All classroom and clinical work takes place at the Orono Commons Nursing Home. The class is a 180 hour State of Maine approved course. Students can expect to finish the

Broadway's Best in Bangor sets 2015-2016 season

The Cross Insurance Center announced last week it's 2015-2016 Broadway's Best in Bangor series, featuring three touring Broadway shows at the Cross Center over the winter. The concerts include

- Kenny Rogers: Once Again It's Christmas, 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 13. Join country legend Kenny Rogers for a night of Christmas magic.
- "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat," 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 26. Andrew Lloyd Webber's classic biblical musical.
- "Beauty and the Beast," 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 25, the beloved Disney "tale as old as time" returns to the Cross Center.

Tickets for all three shows can be purchased at varying price levels via crossinsurancecenter.com, by calling 207-561-8333, or at the Cross Center box office. Single tickets to individual shows will be available a few weeks before each performance.

Volunteers needed for October 2015 Fright at the Fort

Fright at the Fort organizers are seeking a few volunteers to help scare up fun to celebrate Halloween at Fort Knox State Park in Prospect. The theme of the event is "Water Over the Dammed," which will pay homage to all creepy things associated with water, though volunteer chainsaw maniacs are still welcome. The Fright this year is set for, 8:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct.17; Friday and Saturday, Oct. 23-24; and Friday and Saturday, Oct. 30-31. It is geared towards older children, teenagers and adults

Volunteers are asked to commit to a minimum of two nights of work or performing, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., and must be at least age 18, or accompanied by an adult. Volunteers who prefer to remain out of the terrifying fray may help out by serving as group tour guides or as security helpers.

Those who wish to volunteer are encouraged to contact the Friends of Fort Knox at fofk1@aol.com or fill out a volunteer form at fortknox.maine.gov/ Fright.

To purchase tickets in advance for Fright at the Fort, go to FrightXTix.com.

course in 13-14 weeks. Students who earn their CNA certification are almost assured of employment in the health care field, given the increasing demand for CNA's in eastern Maine and across the state.

For more information or to receive an application for this program, please contact the Orono Adult Education Program at 866-4119 or at mtardie@rsu26.org.

**In the Know**

Find out what folks are thinking in

**THE WEEKLY QUESTION**

Penobscot Theatre installs new assistive listening system

Penobscot Theatre Company recently installed a state-of-the-art assistive listening system for patrons that are hard of hearing. With personal transmitters and radio wave technology, patrons who are hard of hearing may now sit anywhere in the house and fully enjoy the show. The devices are available at the box office upon request.

"Accessibility is a priority and our old assistive listening devices were increasingly problematic," said PTC production manager Bob Rogers. "The new system includes a stationary transmitter that connects to our main sound system, so we can now broadcast a high-quality audio signal to users' receivers. They can listen through the ear buds provided or through their hearing aids."

"We're working constantly to improve our audience's experience," said producing artistic director Bari Newport, "We invested heavily in our sound system this year, a crucial component. Each season is a blend of rich musicals and dramatic works with layers of intricate sound, and we don't want our patrons to miss a beat."

New business seminar set for Bangor

Those thinking about starting their own business, or new business owners looking to grow and try new things are invited to a free seminar from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 22 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Bangor.

This seminar will offer breakout sessions on business planning, financing, marketing, insurance, tax incentives, legal matters and more. Additionally, Abe Furth, co-owner of Woodman's, Verve and Orono Brewing Company, will talk about his experience starting businesses here in Maine. This seminar is free, but space is limited and advance registration is required. Please RSVP by calling Leslie Poake at 207-945-4540 or emailing lpoake@lghcpa.com.

This free seminar is being offered by the professionals at Loiselle, Goodwin & Hinds, Certified Public Accountants, Bangor SCORE and SBA.

Bangor concert revenue increases despite fewer shows

**BY EVAN BELANGER OF THE BDN STAFF**

Waterfront Concerts hosted fewer shows in Bangor this year than it did in 2014, but despite the decline, it also attracted more concertgoers, which put more money in the city's coffers.

The decline to 11 shows in 2015 from 15 in 2014 had some wondering if the company was scaling down its local operations or looking to pull out in favor of its other venue, the Maine State Pier in Portland.

But according to city records, the company sold 81,594 tickets this year, up 4,597 from last year.

Since the city gets \$1.25 per ticket, that accounts for just over \$101,992 for the city for 2015 compared with \$96,246 for 2014 -- not including reimbursements to the city for police and fire protection.

The change is largely because of bigger acts that attract more fans coming to Bangor this year, said Alex Gray, the founder and principal owner of Waterfront Concerts. As the venue becomes better known, it is more likely to attract big-name acts, he said.

Gray said Tuesday that the larger Bangor venue is more expensive to operate, so his company tends to

focus on bigger shows such as Kenny Chesney, sending smaller shows elsewhere. In August, he said, in response to noise complaints, his company has actively avoided bringing louder acts to Bangor.

The uptick in concert attendance comes on the heels of a conceptual study by FTL Design Engineering that highlights permanent improvements to the concert site such as a covered seating area, public restrooms and backstage improvements for performers.

The study, commissioned by the city at a cost of \$65,000, also calls for improvements intended to help contain sound to the site thus reducing noise complaints.

Bangor Community and Economic Development Director Tanya Emery presented to the City Council on Monday 10 items from the FTL study that city staff will focus on first.

Those include arrayed speaker towers to more appropriately focus sounds toward concertgoers and away from neighbors, the addition of a themed play structure for children, additions such as skating rinks and walking trails intended to create seasonal use of the waterfront, bathrooms, improvements to make Rail-

road Street more like a plaza for food trucks, replacement of the existing tarp-covered chain link fence with temporary coated chain link and privacy fabric, a community stage and artistic lighting under the Dutton Street bridge.

Emery advised the council against FTL's proposal for a pedestrian footbridge crossing Main Street, calling it cost prohibitive.

"It's a neat idea, but I just don't see it being very realistic," she said.

City officials still say they have no cost estimates or timelines for the project. Establishing costs and negotiating with the concert promoter to see who will pay for the improvements will be part of the process, Emery said. Other improvements identified by Emery include backstage improvements to aid performers.

Gray said the FTL study made good proposals, but it will not be a cure-all for the concert site. Among other items, he called for improved wheelchair accessibility.

Following a model set by other businesses, Gray said he would hope to recoup investments his company makes to the city-owned site through reduced payments to the municipality.



BDN PHOTO BY ASHLEY CONTI  
Concert goers sing along as Fall Out Boy plays during their Boys of Summer tour at the Darling's Waterfront Pavilion in Bangor in June 2015.

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