

The following is a summary of Issues/Programs as presented on WHXR, Scarborough, ME

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The following topics/issues were addressed via the weekly “Community Connections” program in the first quarter of 2024.

“Community Connections” is a weekly, 30 minute community affairs program spotlighting organizations and individuals in Maine who address issues affecting citizens, work to improve the quality of life in Maine, and deal with human interest topics across many disciplines. Here is a rundown of the program contents for Q1:

Show: Community Connections                      Airdate 1/7/2024                      Airtime: 5:30 am

Guest(s):                      Jessica Sidiero, Director of Development and Communication, The Iris Network  
   Amber White, Certified Rehabilitation Specialist, The Iris Network

Topic:                      We get to know Portland-based The Iris Network, an organization serving Maine’s blind and low-vision population. We discuss programs that help citizens with blindness and low vision with living skills, job skills, and methods to help people in everyday tasks. The Iris Network also manages specialized apartments for eligible visually impaired Maine residents.

Show: Community Connections                      Airdate 1/14/2024                      Airtime: 5:30 am

Guest(s):                      Jennifer Costa, American Red Cross

Topic:                      Our guest discusses the recently-declared national blood emergency, the Red Cross’ first such declaration in 18 months. Weather events across the nation disrupted regular blood drive events at a time when regular blood donation usually resumes after a summer lull. We also discuss a multi-million dollar improvement project to modernize their Blood Donor Center in Portland, as well as the Red Cross’ disaster response efforts, locally and nationally.

Show: Community Connections                      Airdate 1/21/2024                      Airtime: 5:30 am

Guest(s):                      Dan Brennan, Director, Maine Housing

Topic:                      With heating season upon us, we chat with Dan Brennan, director of Maine Housing who administers the federal home heating assistance program LIHEAP on a state level. Maine Housing also administers a home weatherization program to help address energy

efficiency for qualifying Maine residents. We discuss Maine Housing's first-time homebuyer programs, as well as addressing the current housing crisis and growing homelessness issue in some of Maine's most populous areas, and Maine Housing's role in helping to find solutions to this issue.

Show: Community Connections                      Airdate 1/28/2024      Airtime: 5:30 am

Guest(s):      Jessica Sidiero, Director of Development and Communication, The Iris Network  
Amber White, Certified Rehabilitation Specialist, The Iris Network

Topic:              We get to know Portland-based The Iris Network, an organization serving Maine's blind and low-vision population. We discuss programs that help citizens with blindness and low vision with living skills, job skills, and methods to help people in everyday tasks. The Iris Network also manages specialized apartments for eligible visually impaired Maine residents.

Show: Community Connections                      Airdate 2/4/2024      Airtime: 5:30 am

Guest(s):      Jennifer Costa, American Red Cross

Topic:              Our guest discusses the recently-declared national blood emergency, the Red Cross' first such declaration in 18 months. Weather events across the nation disrupted regular blood drive events at a time when regular blood donation usually resumes after a summer lull. We also discuss a multi-million dollar improvement project to modernize their Blood Donor Center in Portland, as well as the Red Cross' disaster response efforts, locally and nationally.

Show: Community Connections                      Airdate 2/11/2024      Airtime: 5:30 am

Guest(s):      Dan Brennan, Director, Maine Housing

Topic:              With heating season upon us, we chat with Dan Brennan, director of Maine Housing who administers the federal home heating assistance program LIHEAP on a state level. Maine Housing also administers a home weatherization program to help address energy efficiency for qualifying Maine residents. We discuss Maine Housing's first-time homebuyer programs, as well as addressing the current housing crisis and growing homelessness issue in some of Maine's most populous areas, and Maine Housing's role in helping to find solutions to this issue.

Show: Community Connections                      Airdate 2/18/2024      Airtime: 5:30 am

Guest(s):      Jennifer Costa and Abby Kelley, American Red Cross

Topic:              We discuss a recent blood emergency and the response to that emergency in terms

of blood supply. We discuss how winter weather can adversely affect the operation of blood drives. We also discuss the Red Cross's work in disaster preparedness on a local and national level, and the programs to promote fire safety such as their free smoke detector program.

Show: Community Connections                      Airdate 2/25/2024      Airtime: 5:30 am

Guest(s): Sharon Fusco, CEO, Maine Veterans Homes

Topic:                      Maine's Veterans Homes are key factors in the treatment of Maine's veteran population. With six locations across the state, Maine's Veterans homes offer living situations and nursing home care for those who served in our state. We discuss the various programs offered to residents, how the homes are funded, and some of the funding and staffing challenges faced. We also discuss the unique small-home setup of the Augusta branch of MVH.

Show: Community Connections                      Airdate 3/3/2024      Airtime: 5:30 am

Guest(s):                      Dan Brennan, Director, Maine Housing

Topic:                      With heating season upon us, we chat with Dan Brennan, director of Maine Housing who administers the federal home heating assistance program LIHEAP on a state level. Maine Housing also administers a home weatherization program to help address energy efficiency for qualifying Maine residents. We discuss Maine Housing's first-time homebuyer programs, as well as addressing the current housing crisis and growing homelessness issue in some of Maine's most populous areas, and Maine Housing's role in helping to find solutions to this issue.

Show: Community Connections                      Airdate 3/10/2023      Airtime: 5:30 am

Guest(s): Sharon Fusco, CEO, Maine Veterans Homes

Topic:                      Maine's Veterans Homes are key factors in the treatment of Maine's veteran population. With six locations across the state, Maine's Veterans homes offer living situations and nursing home care for those who served in our state. We discuss the various programs offered to residents, how the homes are funded, and some of the funding and staffing challenges faced. We also discuss the unique small-home setup of the Augusta branch of MVH.

Show: Community Connections                      Airdate 3/17/2024      Airtime: 5:30 am

Guest(s):                      Megan Arsenault, York County Emergency Management Agency  
Sam Michaud, Good Shepherd Food Bank and Maine Voluntary Organizations  
Active In Disaster

Topic: Megan discussed the differences between local, county, state, and federal emergency managers. She shared that every disaster is a “local” disaster and outlined the ways the many agencies respond. We discussed “go bags” (backpacks filled with supplies in the event of an emergency) and she shared that preparation need not be complicated. Sam explained what types of non-profits make up Maine VOAD and how they come together to work with emergency management agencies following a disaster. He discussed the stages of disaster as well. Sam also shared ways that people could learn about trainings.

Show: Community Connections

Airdate 3/24/2024

Airtime: 5:30 am

Guest(s): Jeff Mears, Principal of the Young School (K-2) in Saco  
Ben Wilson, Principal of Auburn Middle School (7-8)

Topic: Principals Mears and Wilson discussed how their students’ needs have changed over the last five years. Both schools are “trauma-responsive schools” and have programs in place to assist students who have food insecurity and other needs. AMS is also a restorative justice school. Both principals stressed relationship-building and the need for providing social-emotional skills. Principal Wilson talked about being involved in the community and both administrators discussed the role of the Parent Teacher Organizations in their schools.

Show: Community Connections

Airdate 3/31/2024

Airtime: 5:30 am

Guest(s): Patrisha McLean, founder of Finding Our Voices

Topic: Patrisha explained that Finding Our Voices is about women survivors providing sister support to break the silence about domestic abuse. She discussed the various types of abuse and the number of people this affects. One of their priorities is education through talks and posters.

Respectfully submitted,

Leif Erickson  
Chief Operator