

All Maine Matters

Because All of Maine **DOES** Matter!
Vol. 1, No. 10 October 2006

FREE

Maine: Where We Go From Here?

By Rep. Rich Cebra

Thirty straight years of one-party rule in the Maine House of Representatives have turned our great state into an economic “basket case.” Let me quickly review the record. We have the highest tax burden in America. We have the highest property taxes – as a percentage of income – in the country. We have second highest health insurance rates in the nation. We are ranked as one of the most hostile states for business. Our job creation rate is abysmal, forcing our young people to leave Maine to find work – after we spend a fortune to educate them. Consequently, we have the oldest population in America. As our kids leave to launch careers elsewhere, they are replaced by people who move here to live on our generous welfare benefits. We have the highest rate of people on Medicaid – free medical and dental care – in the country. We have a governor who has turned Maine into a “sanctuary zone” for illegal aliens. Our roads are in terrible shape, thanks to endless raids on the Highway Fund to finance even bigger “social welfare” programs. And we learned recently from the Federal Reserve that our economy actually went backwards last year – it got even smaller. We share that dubious distinction with only one other state – Katrina-ravaged Louisiana. Today we stand at a crossroads. If we keep moving in the same direction, we can expect even more socialism, higher taxes, a greater out-migration of our youth, more poverty, fewer good jobs, and an influx of illegal aliens who will feast on our welfare system. However, if we change direction, we can begin the job of taking back our state from the left-wing extremists who have hijacked Maine and seem bent on turning it into a full-blown socialist state. Reversing direction, and restoring our historic character of self-reliance,

hard work, and reasonable taxation, will require a long, tough fight against deeply entrenched and bitter adversaries. We have a choice. We can fight, or we can surrender our state and our future to the dark, destructive forces of socialism. I choose to fight. My vision is for a Maine where the economy can grow without the huge burdens the state places on it. These include staggering health insurance costs; oppressive income taxes, state mandates that drive up property taxes, and red tape and regulations that suffocate innovation. I envision overhauling the gigantic Department of Health and Human Services, and returning our Medicaid enrollment to the national average before this program devours the whole budget. The current DHHS is a bottomless, chaotic pit sucking the life out of the General Fund. I see the state returning to sensible levels of community support, taking care of the truly needy but expecting able-bodied people to work and contribute. We need to eliminate the terrible waste and stop the Baldacci administration from growing DHHS at the expense of all other departments. I see a re-prioritization of state government where we halt the slide towards “nanny state” socialism and rekindle the entrepreneurial spirit. I want a state government that pays its bills, and does not push billions of dollars of debt onto our children. We need a state government committed to building and maintaining our highway infrastructure, and equally committed to increasing the use of ethanol to replace gasoline. Ethanol can be made from potatoes. With some vision and common sense, we could become a major energy producer, to the great benefit of Maine farmers.

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Penobscot River, from behind a camp that is for sale on Clifford Lane.

Ham-Fisted, One Size Fits All, Meat-Axe Approach? From Whom?

by Pem Schaeffer

A group of lawyers around the state have declared the Taxpayer Bill of Rights citizens’ initiative “ham-fisted, one size fits all, meat-axe legislation.” And the Governor, Speaker Richardson, and others have spoken similar words. We’re supposed to ignore the possibility that since these lawyers earn all or part of their income from towns, cities, and the Maine Municipal Association, that their opinions and motives could possibly be compromised. I’m guessing these very same lawyers, not very long ago, were passionate advocates for Question 1A, which was supposed to lower our property taxes by 15%. You do remember those “promises,” don’t you? Question 1A was approved by voters, and spawned LD 1, the Governor’s very own approach to saving overburdened taxpayers from the effects of unbridled government spending and taxation. LD 1 was labeled “historic tax reform legislation” by the Governor, Speaker Richardson, Senator Edmonds, and those who follow their direction. Is there any doubt that our friends, the lawyers referenced above, were in the choir singing the praises of this bill, which has been proven grossly ineffectual where it matters...in the taxpayers’ bottom line. Perhaps a comparison of the “historic” LD 1 and the so-called “ham-fisted, one size fits all, meat axe” Taxpayer Bill of Rights would shed some light on things.

Let’s start with their purpose. LD 1 was enacted to reduce the tax burden for Maine citizens: it’s right there in the language. The Taxpayer Bill of Rights was initiated to reduce the tax burden for Maine citizens. Ok, so there’s not much difference on this count. Next, LD 1 sets caps for annual spending growth at all levels: state, town, county, school district. The Taxpayer Bill of Rights, on the other hand, sets caps for annual spending growth at all levels: state, town, county, and school district. Wait a second...what’s going on; is there an echo in here? Something must be wrong. Surely, further examination will clarify things! Alright, let’s continue. LD 1 is statutory legislation, rather than a constitutional amendment, and therefore cannot constrain state government (according to the legal experts), and can be ignored and/or changed at will by our “public servants” in Augusta. The Taxpayer Bill of Rights, on the other hand, is criticized by its opponents as statutory legislation, which cannot constrain state government, and can be ignored and/or changed at will by our “public servants” in Augusta. I think I hear Yogi Berra in the background; this is “déjà vu all over again.” Last, it turns out LD 1 provides for the override of its spending limits if conditions warrant. In fact, in the very first year it was in force,

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JOIN THE PAPER TRAIL (AND SAVE A TREE): IF YOU ARE CONCERNED LIKE WE ARE, READ THIS PAPER, CIRCLE A NUMBER, AND PASS IT ON TO A FRIEND.

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Swamps and Durable Laws

by Dr. Bill Reid

There is a swamp down the hill near the home place, which is, by some accounts, a bit dismal, snakes, frogs, spiders, mud, muck, dead trees, snags, mosquitoes, black flies, moose flies, tangles, and impenetrable except by deer in the hunting season. There are of course some interesting features, the birds, and some of the plants. But I rarely slip into my LL Bean rubber bottoms and go there. I don’t find it a pleasant place. I stumbled into an intellectual swamp the other day which is even muddier, muckier and murkier. This is a creation of Maine’s restless, busybody Legislature over many years. The key to the creation of this legal swamp is our legislators’ indifference to the wisdom of our fourth President, James Madison. In the sixty-second number of the Federalist Papers he wrote: *It will be of little avail to the people that laws are made by men of their own choice if the laws are so voluminous that they cannot be read, or so incoherent that they cannot be understood; ...or undergo such incessant changes that no man who knows what the law is today, can guess what it will be tomorrow.* Madison wanted a limited number of understandable and durable laws. Above all, he wanted laws which ordinary people would find accessible and understandable. Is this a bad idea? If anyone believes Maine has a legal system that meets President Madison’s criteria, slip into your mental LL Beans and take a little hike through Maine’s legal morass. You will discover that we

have we have tens of thousands of laws, and rules with the force of law, which no one—no one at all--- knows in their entirety. I’d estimate that only a handful of lawyers know even five percent of them. We have some really obscure wordings and flawed statements of legal matters. We even have a department dedicated to revising the laws, called the Office of the Revisor of Statutes! All of these facts fly in the face of Madison’s very practical advice---- have few laws, keep them understandable, and don’t change them incessantly. The average Mainer knows very little of what his legislators are up to. There is too much for even the most conscientious citizen to know. If you are ready for a lifetime of reading try the 41 volumes of MAINE REVISED STATUTES ANNOTATED and its supplements, then try the 180 volumes of LAWS OF MAINE, where the fruits of the legislative sessions going back to 1820 sessions are reported. Next, if you have a few years left in your life, try the 320 volumes comprised of MAINE REPORTS and MAINE REPORTER. These record refinements in the laws by the Maine Supreme Court. If you are up to it and have not yet succumbed to senile decay, skim through the twenty , three-inch-thick loose leaf binders called THE CODE OF MAINE RULES. These contain rules having the force of law which you are expected to obey. Even as you are trying to make sense of this stupendous mass of legislation, the Office of Revisor is busy revising—

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You may have noticed that our paper is a little thinner than it was. Please don’t worry. While we have reduced the number of pages to twelve, this is because we’ve reduced our font size slightly, allowing us to reduce our overhead while giving you the same amount of information as we always have.

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Democrats? Republicans? Does It Matter Who Controls the Maine Legislature?

by Scott K Fish

The Maine Legislature, elected every two years by Maine voters, is 185 men/women who make laws governing you and me. The political party with the most legislators controls Maine lawmaking, taxing, spending, and the huge network of government staffers, committees, and agencies that administer the making of laws.

IMPORTANT: Don't confuse Maine legislators with Washington, D.C. politicians. They're separate animals.

Excepting certain bond issues, the Legislature's majority party commands the ship of state. "People who vote for the person, not the party - they're crazy. The [majority] party controls everything," Senate Republican Leader Paul T. Davis told me.

A State House news reporter is more succinct: "If you ain't in the majority, you ain't s**t."

Especially since 1997, when Democrats and Gov. Angus King adopted the simple majority vote for Maine's biennial Budgets, the Legislature's minority party has no say in spending/taxing. Democrats, Maine's majority party for 30-years, have had votes enough to pass their State Budgets with no Republican (minority) votes.

Democrats, said one legislator, are giving Maine "fairly tale budgets that don't end happily ever after."

So, if you think Maine is on the right track - thank a Democrat.

If you're sick of Maine's direction on jobs, taxes, and health insurance - thank a Democrat. Then say "Yes" to a Republican majority in the Maine Legislature.

It's that basic. Republican ideas for governing will work. Sen. Paul Davis said the "first order of business" for a Republican majority "is twofold. Control spending and bring taxes down."

How? "The Maine Taxpayer Bill of Rights would be great" for starters, said Sen. Davis. "Cap government spending; use excess revenue to bring down Maine's tax burden."

Assistant House Republican Leader Josh Tardy cautions, "I can't emphasize enough. A Republican majority will not be able to wave a magic wand and fix all Maine's problems overnight. Maine is like a person suffering from morbid obesity. You can't cut off limbs to get to a desired weight. You need exercise, discipline. Maine needs fiscal discipline."

Sen. Davis agrees. "You have to have dedicated legislators."

Modern Maine Democrats' one idea is: recycle our money for their pet projects. Nothing on the Maine Democrat menu can return Maine to health. You can pre-pare-and-serve mush in all kinds of food molds - it's still mush.

Health care? Democrats are using the Dirigo Health Plan as a stepping-stone to total government control of Maine's health care system. If successful, one physician told me, "Maine will become a proving ground for marginal doctors."

Rep. Tardy: A Republican majority "will stop pouring money into failing programs like Dirigo Health. We will create choice and competition to drive down premiums for everyone who buys health insurance."

"The Democrat majority tells us when we can eat, when we can go home, and when we can go to the bathroom," a Republican Senator told me. She pauses, then adds, "I'm awfully sick of Democrats telling me when I can go to the bathroom."

Me too, Senator. Me too.

Scott K Fish has been active in Maine politics since 1989. He is founder/owner of the As Maine Goes web site, writes a monthly political column for Bangor Metro magazine, and is a consultant for the Maine Heritage Policy Center.

The Token Conservative

By Jon Reisman

Consequential Contests

My friend Rep. Doug Thomas (R-Ripley) is a passionate man of strong convictions. Last summer when he called this November's contests "the most important election in a generation", my initial reaction was a bit of doubting Thomas. But, believe it or not, the man from Ripley is a sage.

The referendum on the Taxpayer's Bill of Rights and the gubernatorial and legislative races could well set Maine's course for a generation. The sideshows of interest group electioneering, "Clean Elections" funding and the regulation of political speech add some spice.

If TABOR passes, the public sector will hopefully stop growing faster than the economy, encouraging innovation, entrepreneurship and economic dynamism. If TABOR is defeated the public sector will continue to grab a larger and larger share of the pie, a trend which bodes ill for economic vitality and Maine's place in a globalizing world.

The heart and soul of TABOR is that if the public sector believes it must have more, it has to ask. Based on the bond issues approved in Maine over the last twenty years, and the paucity of proposals rejected, I'm not sure that the left should be so concerned.

The University of Maine System Board of Trustees is worried, however- worried enough to pass a unanimous resolution trashing TABOR. It's a move that puts the University squarely in open opposition to GOP Gubernatorial nominee Chandler Woodcock and, if polls are to be believed, some 70% of the citizenry. The University System wants a \$37 million 20% bump in state appropriations. I think the Trustees are praying for Democratic victories in November. To underscore that belief, the search committee for a new Chancellor (salary above \$200,000/yr) has 4 Trustees on it, 3 of

them partisan Democratic players- former union boss Charles O'Leary, former Democratic Party Chair Victoria Murphy, and former State Senate candidate Marge Medd. After these stunts,

I hope the University doesn't need Republican support, because they don't deserve it. I can practically guarantee that embarrassing questions about the lack of intellectual diversity at UMS are going to be asked. I'll enjoy hearing the answers.

The Governor's race would be entertaining if the stakes weren't so high. John Baldacci is an uninspired and uninspiring leader. Barbara Merrill, Pat LaMarche and Chandler Woodcock each offer a credible alternative for different political niches. I believe Senator Woodcock will take the Blaine House with a narrow plurality. If the incumbent is returned to office, Maine will continue to drift without vision or honesty towards an ever greater nanny state and dysfunctional economy.

The State Ethics Commission is now regularly deciding not whether they will regulate political speech, but to what extent. Deciding what "independent" expenditures constitute "direct advocacy" requiring matching "clean election" funds is an exercise in hair splitting that belies a dismaying reality: the 1st Amendment's plain meaning that there shall be no law abridging freedom of speech, especially political speech, has been breached. Now bureaucrats respond to partisan interest group advocacy to regulate disfavored political speech. This bodes ill for freedom.

Jon Reisman is the University of Maine System's token conservative. He teaches Environmental Policy and Political Correctness in American Society.

TABOR: A Step Down the Road to Fiscal Sanity

by Jeffrey Messer, Town Councilor, Town of Scarborough

It was former Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes that stated, "taxes are what we pay to live in a civilized society." However, even Justice Holmes would agree that there must be some limitation on the tax burden being placed on the citizenry. Government spending is growing at an unsustainable pace.

Facts are a powerful tool. Maine is #1 in the country in tax burden. Maine is #50 in the country in disposable income, which is how much money you have left in your wallet after paying the average housing costs and tax bill. Maine also has the highest excise tax, the 6th highest gasoline tax, and is among the highest in electricity rates and the cost of home heating oil. In summary, Maine is in tough shape. Our citizens are struggling to make ends meet.

The Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) is a step down the road to fiscal sanity. TABOR does not mandate budget cuts as opponents suggest. It allows modest increases in government spending (usually inflation plus population growth). The TABOR formula would allow Scarborough's budget to increase up to \$3.4 million next year. Any increases beyond this amount would require voter approval. It's that simple.

That being said, there will be strong opposition to TABOR generated by the numerous organizations that are funded with taxpayer dollars. Keep this in mind when numerous points will be made by opponents to make folks scared and/or confused. These are the two oldest political tricks in the book. I believe Maine citizens are much to smart to be fooled when it comes to the spending of their hard earned tax dollars.

The first argument opponents will make is the loss of local control. I believe the exact opposite is true. How do we lose local control when our citizens must approve any additional spending beyond TABOR limitations? Keep in mind Scarborough's budget could increase \$3.4 million without voter approval!

A second argument will be made that TABOR will stifle economic development. Folks should be scratching their heads on this claim as statistics will show Maine can't get much worse in this area. Maine was the only New England state to have negative economic growth in the past year.

Maine was ranked #46 in the Small Business Survival Index and was ranked 49th in economic development in 2005. The only state ranked behind Maine was Louisiana, which was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. Common sense would dictate that lowering the tax burden would only help, not hinder, economic development.

The final argument will be that TABOR will devastate education. I heard the same scare tactics in Massachusetts in 1981 when Proposition 2 1/2 was on the ballot. Twenty five years after Proposition 2 1/2 became law, Massachusetts students test well above the national average, outperforming Maine students by a wide margin on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT).

SAT scores were recently released for the Class of 2006. Massachusetts students had a composite score of 1547. Maine students had a composite score of 1493. The national average was 1518. New Hampshire, with the lowest tax burden in the nation, scored 1553. Spending more on education doesn't guarantee better results as these tests scores clearly indicate.

Taxachusetts, as it was known back then, had the highest tax burden in the country. Recent data shows Massachusetts is #16 in property tax (Maine is #1) and #30 in top rate for personal income tax (Maine is #6) so Proposition 2 1/2 achieved the desired result of bringing the Massachusetts tax burden in line with the national average.

Maine can achieve similar results with the Taxpayer Bill of Rights. The Scarborough Town Council endorsed a resolution last week urging citizens to vote yes on TABOR this November (or earlier if you choose to vote by absentee ballot). We can control our own destiny or we can stay on the path of runaway government spending. Change is difficult, but change we must.

Information on the Taxpayer Bill of Rights can be obtained at www.TaxpayerBillofRightsVolunteers.com sign up to help at the website or write Mary Adams, Taxpayer Bill of Rights, P O Box 10, Garland ME 04939, or call 207-924-3835.

Jeffrey Messer is the longest-tenured councilor in Scarborough; first elected in 1996. During that time he has been elected four times by his peers as chairman. His email address is bymess@hot-mail.com



Resolution 06-11

TOWN OF SCARBOROUGH

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council of the Town of Scarborough, Maine, in Town Council assembled that,

WHEREAS, a citizen initiative know as the Taxpayer Bill of Rights has been proposed and presented as a prudent approach to the fiscal management of governments within the State of Maine; and,

WHEREAS, the Taxpayer Bill of Rights will allow voter participation in any decision to exceed the rate of growth established by this proposal.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Scarborough Town Council, in Town Council assembled, does hereby endorse the Taxpayer Bill of Rights as a practical and reasonable means of maintaining a sustainable rate of growth of government in Maine.

Signed and sealed this the 6th day of September, 2006, on behalf of the Scarborough Town Council of Scarborough, Maine.

Signed by: Steve N. Ross Council Chair Attested by: Yolande P. Justice Town Clerk



"No Really...

I support a strong Maine economy."

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“ It would be a hard government that should tax its people one-tenth part of their income. ”

Benjamin Franklin, Poor Richard's Almanac, 1758

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Don't Tread on ME - 2006

by Michael Beardsley

This November's election is not really about which party (Republicans) should control the Blaine House or the State House. It is not really about whether or not we should pass the Taxpayer Bill or Rights (we should). This election is really about whether the government should be able to ignore the will of the people, while reaching deeper into our lives. It is about whether or not we allow the government to continue



to encroach on our God Given rights to Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.

Like the Patriots who gathered in Philadelphia 1776, we face a tyrannical government, not from across the ocean, but right here in our own backyard.

Augusta continues to encroach upon our enumerated rights to private property under the guise of "Land for Maine's Future", "Increased Funding for Biomedical Research", and the ever-popular "(free) Health Insurance for All". They chip away at our rights to free association and free speech under such guises as tolerance, civil rights, and special rights.

Our local government's have also grown tyrannical through the local ordinance, the planning board, and oppressive zoning regulations. Infringing upon a person's right to own and dispose of private property as they see fit.

This year more than ever, it is incumbent on the Patriotic Citizens of Maine to beat back this rising tide of tyranny at the ballot box and boldly declare, "Don't Tread on ME".

Michael A. Beardsley is a Christian Conservative Activist. He runs a political website, www.mikebeardsley.com, and lives in Ellsworth with his wife, Leslie. Currently, Beardsley is running as a Write-In Candidate for the United States Senate.

The Professors Pitch In

by John Frary

Various professors are being heard from this campaign season and almost all of them are engaged in attacking conservative positions.

Let us take note, first, of Pseudoprof. St. John, Executive Director of the Maine Economic Policy Center. Christopher St. John is not exactly a professor, but he likes to present himself in professorial guise as an analyst of Maine's economic conditions and policies. It is not obvious how his law degree and study of African history suit him to deliver judgements on economic policies, but his habitual response to the work of conservative economists is to dismiss them as conservative economists. He imagines this to be a debate-winning tactic--what you might call assassination by classification.

His habit is to represent himself as a detached and pragmatic analyst--an ideological capon as innocent of partisan allegiances as a mushroom. Speaking frankly, he is a phony. His personal record from college on identifies him as a product of the Left-wing Robot factory. I'd guess that he has never had an idea in his life that was inconsistent with whatever enthusiasms are occupying the left-lurchers' minds at a given time. Read over his writings for any suggestion that such a thing as left-wing ideology even exists. You will find none. Does he expect us to believe that the economic debate is between conservative ideologues and the Truth. That fraud, alone, gives his little game away.

In truth, all debate over economic policy proceeds from either conservative or "progressive" assumptions. There is no ideologically detached position. St. John's pretense that there is, and that he occupies it, shows him to be a crude and obvious propagandist. I do not argue that leftist assumptions are automatically false simply because they are leftist. Nor do I claim that calling an idea conservative validates it. Neither assertion can be logically justified. I do assert that it is silly to try to make debating points by claiming that your opponents are ideologically tainted while you dwell in the Never-never-land of detached Truth.

I certainly make no such claim for myself. I am a conservative--philosophically, temperamentally and genetically. This is not the same as saying that I believe there are no objective truths in the debate over economics. Consider Prof. Robert Heilbrunner's judgement on the planned economy. Heilbrunner spent his entire career advocating economic coercion by central governments. Then the collapse of the Soviet Union forced him to conclude that the free market economy had, after all, proven its superiority in producing abundance. Mind you, he preserved his socialist faith by advocating government controls as a means of containing abundance. He ended by arguing that socialism was environmentally correct, i.e. it was suited to managing scarcity. That remains debatable, but the failure of the planned economy to deliver abundance may be taken as an objective truth when its most eloquent advocate concedes the point.

So much for the pseudoprofessor, now let's take a look at Prof. Christian Potholm. This member of the Bowdoin faculty wrote a letter to the Brunswick Times Record denouncing Chandler Woodcock as a dangerous extreme right-winger with a hidden agenda. When the press revealed that he is in the pay of the Baldacci campaign, he protested that he was offering his opinion as a concerned professor, not as a hireling. Can the fact that his professorial opinion exactly fits the Baldaccianisti

effort to depict Sen. Woodcock as the Mad Mullah of Franklin County be a mere coincidence? Well, no need to belabor the point. Nobody believes in Potholmian objectivity anyway.

Then we have Professors Vail and Hilliard with their column in the Portland daily defending Democratic legislators against the Maine Economic Research Institute's (MERI) low ratings for support of small business. These two identify themselves as "economists working on Maine policy issues and as citizens wanting our fellow voters to be well-informed." It appears that they don't think that well-informed voters need to know that they are leftist in their sympathies.

Google around a bit and you discover that Professor Vail describes himself as a "progressive economist." This adjective has been widely adopted by liberals, socialists and even communists to obscure their beliefs. I judge this pair to be socialists. Prof. Vail specializes in "socialist and post-socialist economic systems". Prof. Hilliard was a member of a commune dedicated to living socialist and feminist ideals in his younger years. Whatever their exact beliefs, we can take it as given that they are not merely economists eager to inform their fellow citizens. They are volunteer propagandists.

Susan Feiner writes her own attack on MERI's objectivity in the Lewiston Sun Journal. She too advertises herself as an objective spokesperson for the science of economics. This from a specialist in "feminist economics." This from the co-editor of Radical Economics and co-author of Liberating Economics. Both works follow the time-honored Marxist tradition of denouncing the existing economic system while advocating vast statist interventions for the purpose of foggy, ill-defined transformations.

I have no objection to professors having their say, I used to be a professor myself But I do object to this pretense of detached objectivity. Let the debaters come to the forum flying their true colors.

Apart from the virtues of full disclosure, it's instructive to find socialist economists springing to the defense of Maine's Democrats

John Frary was born in Farmington, where he now resides. He graduated from U of M, Orono. He did graduate work in Political Science and in Ancient, Medieval, Byzantine and modern history at U of M., Rutgers and Princeton, completing his Masters degree along with all courses and examinations for the PhD. He worked in administration and as a professor of history and political science at Middlesex County College in Edison, NJ for 32 years. He is associate editor of The International Military Encyclopedia, has been assistant editor of Continuity: A Journal of History as well as editor and publisher The LU/English Newsletter. After returning to Maine he was chosen to be the conservative columnist for The Kennebec Journal and The Morning Sentinel. He was dismissed from this position in December for refusing to drop his criticism of the Dirigo Health Plan. He is currently chairman of the Franklin County Republican Committee.



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Maine: Where We Go From Here

Continued from page 1

We need to fully fund departments like Conservation and Inland Fisheries and Wildlife so they can operate effectively. We can't ask them to keep doing more with less. These departments are cornerstones of our tourism-based economy. They must be outstanding in their fields to attract visitors to the state, while simultaneously focusing on long term conservation.

Maine's natural beauty is a tremendous asset. We must assure its protection to perpetuate the quality of life and economic benefits that flow from our spectacular coastline, our lakes and rivers, and our mountains and streams.

We need to terminate the mandates that have wrecked our health insurance market, and bring premiums down to the same rational levels that most Americans enjoy.

We need to stop all the nonsense in education, especially catering to the Maine Education Association. This organization has been part of the problem for years. While claiming to do it all "for the children," they have been pushing their own social agenda. One MEA official was recently asked when the MEA would start focusing on the children. His response: "When they are members of the union."

We need to stop equating dollars spent with good education. If this were true we would have a legion of geniuses. Instead, our kids are now scoring below the national average on the College Boards. Relentless increases in school funding do not mean better education, only more expensive education.

We need to fight for economic development for communities without the ravages of sprawl, assuring a good quality of life for our children. Similarly, we need to vigorously defend our individual rights. Our freedoms need to be protected and the best defense is to thwart any erosion of these rights and to promote the individual's Second Amendment right to self-protection.

We need to stop the outrageous proliferation of "blue ribbon" commissions and studies that suck up state revenue, create reports that no one reads and generate do-nothing jobs for political cronies at the taxpayers' expense.

We need to severely restrict the growth of government. Government is big enough. The Taxpayers Bill of Rights will help slow down the Augusta spending machine. Then we need to work for TABOR's inclusion to the Maine Constitution.

We need to actively educate the people of Maine on the real issues and expose the lies and misinformation designed to perpetuate big government.

I pray that the people of Maine will see the mess we're in and have the courage to change this state's direction and have the faith in us to make the changes. I also pray that, if given the chance, we won't let them down.

Representative Rich Cebra, a small business owner, represents the 101st House District, including Casco, Naples and part of Poland. www.steamboatlanding-minigolf.com. Married 14 years with two children, Rich is active in local affairs on the Naples Budget Committee and Naples Main Street revitalization committee. He is a charter member of the Naples Lions club, a life member of the NRA, a member of SAM and the Citizens Alliance of Maine, and is an active supporter of the Right to Life movement. He is active in supporting TABOR and promoting the idea of smaller more efficient government whenever he can.

The difference between death and taxes is death doesn't get worse every time Congress meets.

Will Rogers

We are also on the web at <http://allmainematters.com>

Letters to the Editor

Running As A Write-In Candidate

Fellow Christians and Conservatives:

Yesterday, I filed paperwork with the Secretary of State's Office to become an official Write-In Candidate for the United States Senate on November 7, 2006. Many of you may be asking why a write-in campaign now? Simply put, I cannot in good conscience vote for any of the candidates in this year's race as none is Pro-Life or Conservative. None represents traditional values. If you feel the way I do, I'm asking for your support, write in Beardsley, Michael A., Ellsworth and fill in the arrow or oval on election day.

This Write-In campaign is to give Conservative and Christian voters of conscience a real choice on November 7th. It is a campaign for all of those who realize, like I have, that a vote for the "lesser or three evils" is still a vote for evil but feel not voting is simply unpatriotic and dishonors the memories of those who shed blood to preserve our Constitutional Right to vote. There are many good candidates running for offices like Governor, State Senate, and State Representative as well as numerous local offices. I hope my candidacy will encourage Christians and Conservatives to come out and vote and not sit on the sidelines.

I'm not running as a protest vote or in opposition to any one candidate. I'm running in favor of conservative ideas and ideals. In a sense, my campaign is about fighting for an honest, reliable political language that has become almost extinct. The United States Constitution presupposes that words have objective meaning. Shared, reliable political language is one of the deepest preconditions of a free society (if you doubt that fuzzy language could lead to tyranny look around you).

I'm not going to raise any money (nor will I spend it) to have signs or bumper stickers. Word of the campaign will be spread via word of mouth, email, blogs and every day conversations. By people like you.

I encourage you to check out my website: www.mikebeardsley.com and read more about why I'm running & sign up to get updates or volunteer to get the word out. If you agree this is a cause worth fighting for, I would be honored if you would write in Beardsley, Michael A., Ellsworth & fill in the arrow or oval on November 7th.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Beardsley
www.mikebeardsley.com

Questions for Gary C. Foster

Gary C. Foster made a number of plausible points in his article on the Taxpayer Bill of Rights in your August issue. However much I agree that the government itself has no rights, and all the other highbrow philosophical mumbo-jumbo in the article, I would ask Mr. Foster to address the following considerations.

Firstly, that local control is fundamental to the tradition of democracy in America, especially in New England, and that TABOR erodes local control by imposing a state regulation on how municipalities and school districts can budget.

Secondly, that TABOR is unconstitutional. The Maine constitution stipulates that only the legislature can make tax policy. Maine's Attorney General has already issued an opinion to this effect, and TABOR, should it pass, will most certainly be challenged and defeated in court.

Thirdly, that the fixed costs that make up the vast majority of most municipal and school budgets rise faster than the Cost of Living Index, the figure upon which the TABOR limit is based. Consider how much health insurance and energy costs alone continue to rise. Consider that the industry standard for teachers, firemen, policemen, and other municipal and school employees is that the majority of health insurance costs are paid by the employer. No municipality or school would be able to find an employee without being willing to negotiate these costs into their collectively-bargained contract. Consider that school buses, heating of public buildings, plow trucks, public works vehicles, police cars, and countless other factors depend on these costs that are virtually impossible to control.

Consider how all of these costs increase much faster than the Cost of Living Index, and tell me how Maine cities, towns, and schools can survive TABOR without a massive education in services and thousands of public sector employees out of work. Countless studies have proven that class size is one of the most important factors in determining a child's success in school; are we willing to lay off hundreds of teachers and drive up class sizes?

Mr. Foster asserts that the spending limit increases allowed under TABOR would be "reasonable and sustainable," but he needs to get off his philosophical high horse and discuss the practical implications to local budgeting in order to prove it. For some reason, he and the other TABOR supporters seem suspiciously loath to do this.

Chuck McKay
Newport, ME

Getting the Truth Out!

Dear Editor:

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Finally a newspaper that is conservative and is compatible with my own beliefs/opinions. Keep up the good work of getting the TRUTH out to the public. Please keep printing and I will keep reading.

Letti Harvey

Ralph Dhuy Denture Arts

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TABOR: The Triumph of Minority Rule in a Democracy

Minority Rule. A thought that is not based on the American experience of democracy, which was founded on the premise of majority rule with the protection of minority rights. While well intentioned, the Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) referendum on the November 7, 2006 ballot could bring minority rule to the State of Maine, your local community, your schools, and even your utility district.

One of the ultimate ironies of TABOR is that it will not be applicable to its number 1 target: the State. Why? Because the Legislature cannot be bound on issues of spending by a referendum vote since they are empowered through the State's Constitution to set spending on State programs and services. Since TABOR is an attempt to enact a law, not a Constitutional amendment, on the control of government spending, the Legislature will not be bound by it unless it chooses to be. Given history, that is unlikely.

Unlike the Legislature and the State, local government likely will be bound by the proposal and it could bring serious consequences to local services. If the only consideration by a voter is the expectation to "save" money on taxes, he or she is going to vote "Yes" on TABOR. If one looks seriously at the many potential adverse impacts of TABOR, the vote will be "No".

Government at any level is nothing more than a provider of services to the public. The level of services provided is based on what people want and are willing to support. All such services are paid by taxes and other revenues. Government provides such services on a relatively large scale for the "common good" because individuals or small groups cannot afford to pay for such services by themselves. As an example, the cost of road maintenance, including winter plowing, is very expensive. Since vehicles are very important forms of transportation to most of us, the failure to maintain or plow our roads is not a viable option. But road maintenance costs need to be paid by somebody and that "somebody" is we the people. All our other key services could also be affected as well by TABOR such as schools, police, fire, libraries, recreation, utility services, etc.

The issue of high taxes has been with us for many years. At the local level, municipal officials have seen dramatic shifts from the State to the local level to provide legislatively mandated services to the public at the expense of the local taxpayer. The single biggest example of this is public K - 12 education. While the 1985 Educational Finance Act set the legislative intent to provide 55% of the cost of such education, the State peaked at about 50% in 1990. Following this, the 1991-92 recession saw the State shift school funding back to the communities to the point that State support bottomed out around 42% as little as two years ago.

The percentage is now increasing thanks to the efforts of the Maine Municipal Association and Maine Education Association to require the State to honor its 1985 commitment for 55% through the successful Question 1 referendum in June of 2004. Unfortunately, the Governor and the Legislature saw fit to effectively repeal Question 1 in favor of LD 1 in January of 2005 that stretched out the attainment of the 55% education level by four years through a convoluted formula that still has local property taxpayers picking up the lion's share of this expensive tab. TABOR will not help this situation. In fact, it will make it worse on many rural communities where student populations continue to decline because student population is a major component in establishing the TABOR limits on education spending.

Another major component of LD 1 was the expansion of the Homestead Exemption where the State actually decreased the amount of reimbursement to the communities while increasing the property exemption from \$7,000.00 to \$13,000.00. Guess who paid for that one? Local businesses and non-resident property tax owners. Oh, yes...the local tax mil rates went up as well as the funding mechanism to give this "tax relief".

On top of this, the State imposed its new school funding model, Essential Programs and Services, to implement the Learning Results program. This resulted in sharp reductions in education aid to those same schools that continue to lose population, leaving communities the horrible choice of either increasing property taxes to maintain quality schools or doing nothing and seeing our children poorly educated. Mr. and Mrs. Homeowner - you picked up this tab, too!

Frustrating? You bet it is. Not only to you as a property taxpayer, but to people like me who work for you in your local town offices or schools.

Since the Legislature may not allow TABOR to apply to State spending, what will its impact be on the other levels of government? Pro-TABOR supporters claim the worst that will happen is that those local governments who in fact experience negative growth factors under the TABOR capping formulas will have flat budgets, unless the override provisions of TABOR are passed in special referendum elections. Opponents claim that such municipalities could actually be forced to decrease their budgets if TABOR passes and the affected communities cannot successfully complete the override procedure.

This is where minority rule comes into the picture as well as additional, yes additional, costs to the local taxpayers. Under TABOR, a municipality, school department, utility district, or even county government can only exceed their growth factor formula through the provisions contained in the proposed law. This involves the need to receive a 2/3s super-majority vote of the appropriate legislative body of the town (council or town meeting) and a majority vote in a special referendum election. For a county, the legislative body is the Court of County Commissioners.

A minority of 34% of the legislative body can stop any attempt to override the TABOR limits and prevent a majority of voters from voting on the issue. For a town with a seven member Council, this would require 5 of the 7 (71% since 4 votes would only be 57%) to support such an override whereas a five member Council would require 4 of the 5 (80% since 3 votes would only be 60%) to do so. In a town meeting of 100 voters, 34 could stop such an effort from going to a public referendum vote. This is minority rule.

And it also requires the government entity to compose a 500 word essay in favor of the spending override and a 500 word essay against it that must be mailed to every registered voter in the affected voting district (obviously at taxpayer expense) prior to the election. Added expense. Added bureaucracy. Added red tape. Added staff time. Added confusion.

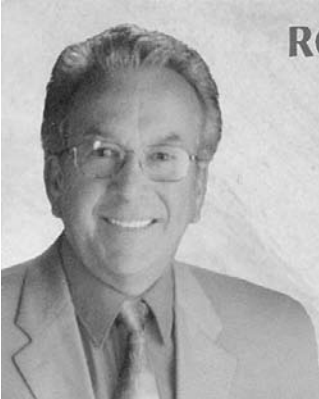
By substituting minority rule for majority rule in our democracy, TABOR also overrides any charter adopted by various communities around the State that provides the method for adopting budgets and setting tax rates and overrides the historic voice of the traditional town meeting where issues of budgets and taxes have been decided very ably for hundreds of years. TABOR basically says to the legislative bodies of any community that they can no longer be trusted to tend to their community's budget and tax concerns. This is a most dangerous premise that needs to be stopped now before TABOR becomes the law of the State.

Just about all of us are mad at Augusta for their antics over the last few years. A better way than TABOR to address those frustrations is to vote for candidates who we believe reflect our concerns through majority rule rather than for a referendum question that would replace our democracy with the specter of minority rule. Trust in our democratic tradition that is based on majority, not minority, rule. Please join me in voting "No" on TABOR.

Gene Conlogue, Town Manager
Millinocket, Maine

Letters to the Editor are most welcome and even encouraged! Email editor@allmainematters.com or send it via USPS to PO Box 788, Kingman, ME 04451.

We do publish anonymous letters to the editor, or those signed with a pseudonym.



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Assistant Director

We've had 32 years of Democrat rule in the Maine House of Representatives.

How's that working for you, Maine?

- Bernard Ayotte for House District 3

Peter Edgecomb for House District 4

Zachary Smith for House District 5

Tyler Clark for House District 6

John Churchill for House District 7

Dale Flewelling for House District 8

Henry Joy for House District 9

Kenneth Anderson for House District 10

Everett Mcleod for House District 11
- Jeffery Gifford for House District 12

Andrew Gavett for House District 13

Riley Donovan for House District 14

Scott Dunbar for House District 15

Tina Stimpson for House District 16

John Kasten for House District 17

John Simpson for House District 18

Lance Cowan for House District 19

Darren Hall for House District 20
- William Rogers for House District 21

Christian Greeley for House District 22

David Richardson for House District 23

Doug Thomas for House District 24

Joshua Tardy for House District 25

James Annis for House District 26

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Dean Cray for House District 28

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Michael Thibodeau for House District 42

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Ryan Harmon for House District 45

Stephen Bowen for House District 46

James Raye for House District 47

It is time we had a majority party that will listen to the Maine people

and make government work for them instead of making them work for government

- Christopher Rector for House District 48

Wesley Richardson for House District 49

Arthur Tainter for House District 50

Jonathan Mckane for House District 51

Bill McKeen for House District 52

William Sutter for House District 53

Kenneth Fletcher for House District 54

H. Cotta for House District 55

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Rachel Ellis for House District 57

William Browne for House District 58

Laura Soule for House District 59

Kerri Prescott for House District 60
- William Bailey for House District 61

Shawn Gethicker for House District 62

Amy Mckenna for House District 63

Chester Garrison for House District 64

Susan Wasserott for House District 65

Todd Rider for House District 66

Brian Hobart for House District 67

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Ronald Potvin for House District 69

Guy Carrier for House District 70

John Babine for House District 71

David Hughes for House District 72

Laurier Lachance for House District 73
- John Painter for House District 74

Scott Lansley for House District 75

Mark Tyler for House District 76

Christopher Duperry for House District 77

Kevin Purnell for House District 78

David Sirols for House District 79

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Gary Knight for House District 81

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Wright Pinkham for House District 88

Lance Harvell for House District 89

Nancy Bessey for House District 91

Paula Smith for House District 92

Randy Hotham for House District 93

Bruce Hanley for House District 94

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Brian Bicknell for House District 107

Meredith Strang Burgess for House District 10

Susan Austin for House District 109

Clayton Haskell for House District 110

Gary Plummer for House District 111

David Savage for House District 112

David Elowitch for House District 113

Vote Republican on November 7. We *can* do better!

- Sharon Forbis for House District 114

Melinda Loring for House District 115

Janette Gauger for House District 116

David Pelletier for House District 117

Jason Lavoie for House District 119

Jeffrey Ferland for House District 120

Jennifer Duddy for House District 121
- Paul Nixon for House District 122

Gary Crosby for House District 123

David Feeney for House District 124

Lyle Cramer for House District 125

Tatia Munday for House District 126

John McDonough for House District 127

Sylvia Most for House District 128
- Harold Freeman for House District 129

Ryan Harnden for House District 130

Donald Marean for House District 131

William Gombar for House District 132

Linda Smit for House District 133

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Stedman Seavey for House District 137
- James Campbell for House District 138

Lawrence Jacobsen for House District 139

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Kevin Rheame for House District 141

Robert Carr for House District 142

Debra Reagan for House District 143

Joan Nass for House District 144
- Oscar Stone for House District 145

Bonnie Gould for House District 146

Kathleen Chase for House District 147

Sarah Lewin for House District 148

Bradley Moulton for House District 149

Windol Weaver for House District 150

Glenn Shwaery for House District 151

Swamps and Durable Laws

(Continued from page 1)

searching for internal contradictions and conflicts with other laws on the books. The Office looks for numbering errors, clerical errors, spelling errors, punctuation mistakes, cross reference errors, formatting errors, etc.

Its activities demonstrate how little the legislators themselves know of their legislation. Even those who write the laws can't keep track of them—even though the citizens are expected to obey all that they enact.

There are other intellectual errors. Take for example the revision of the term "income" in the "Revisor's Report" for the 120th Legislature (MRSA 1012, Sub 7, #5). You can find it on the net. It is a two sentence piece, the first with 83 words, the second with 27 words. It would try the mental skills of lifelong students of Hegel, Heidegger, and Whitehead to comprehend it in two or three readings. The revisors use the term "income" nine times in defining income. Any student of mine taking "Introduction to Logic" could pick out the glaring logical error in this passage in a glance.

You cannot use the term you are trying to define in the body of the definition. If you had to know what "income" meant before one could understand its definition, what is the point of trying to define it? We call it a "circular definition." There are other examples of this problem in Maine's laws. They are full of legalistic words that themselves require study to begin to comprehend their meanings. Who has the time?

The problem of over-legislation and over-regulation is complicated by incessant revision and alteration.

A few days ago I talked with a former head of the state's Land Use Resources Commission (LURC). He described how the Legisla-

ture's repeated change in the definition of "subdivision" complicated the commission's work.

How many of you are up to date on the latest changes in the seat belt law, the auto inspection regulations, studded tire laws, wetlands laws, fishing laws, hunting laws, wood harvesting regulations, tree growth tax law, trucking laws, and the Dirigo Health program just for starters?

James Madison argued that the constant changing and multiplication of laws number leads to insecurity. Is his insight any less true today? No large organization dares to proceed without checking the latest alterations. Hence there are hundreds of lawyers and quasi-lawyers in our school systems, businesses, city governments, non-profits. The threat posed by incessant changes in the laws and rules, and the prospect of new laws require hordes of lobbyists to watch out for special interests.

The conclusion one must draw is that the Maine Legislature is too busy; doesn't consider the effects of the colossal mass of laws it promulgates, and somehow has no notion of when enough is enough. There is surely a practical limit to the number of laws of any state. The simple fact that the Legislature meets regularly and piles law upon law, rule upon rule guarantees that we will be burdened with ever more to learn, to remember, to try to figure out, and to obey.

Can this be healthy for our state and society?

Dr. Bill Reid, a resident of New Sharon, is a former professor of philosophy in the University of Maine system, a fisherman and a hunter, and Republican candidate for Maine House District 87 in 2006.

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Ham-Fisted, One Approach?

(Continued from page 1)

the Governor and the Legislature saw fit to exceed the so-called spending limits of LD 1 by approximately \$100 million, according to an analysis by the state's own Office of Fiscal and Program Review. But don't get all worked up over that; it's only \$80 or so per capita. You'll never miss it.

Pardon my repetition, but "the Taxpayer Bill of Rights, on the other hand," provides for the override of its spending limits if conditions warrant. With one small difference, that makes all the difference, when it comes to you, the taxpayer who pays for each and every bill in the state, county, town, and school district. In order to override, the public servants involved have to make a case for it, and secure your consent.


To recap, LD 1 is historic, according to those who spawned it. But according to the hiring attorneys for our governments, the Taxpayer Bill of Rights is a "ham-fisted, one size fits all, meat-axe" approach. I guess it

must be because, heaven forbid, you have to be part of the process and approve the override. Oh the horror of it all!

I'm left with only one conclusion. There is, very clearly, a "ham-fisted, one size fits all, meat axe" offering before the public. But it is not the Taxpayer Bill of Rights. It is the rhetoric coming from the hired guns for government interests that don't want you to have any say over what goes on with the finances they can take from you by force of law.

Too bad we don't have the freedom to simply ignore the law, the same way the governor and the legislature apparently can. That's a situation that needs some fixing if ever there was one.

Pem Schaeffer is retired, and does not receive a penny from anyone for expressing his opinions.



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We are also on the web at <http://allmainematters.com>

Profiles in Rural Maine

By Ken Anderson

Chester, Maine



Chester Baptist Church

Located along the Penobscot River and Route 116, north of Lincoln, south of Woodville, and across the river to the west of Winn, Chester is a town that many people couldn't even locate on a map.

Chester has grown by only a couple of hundred people since it was incorporated as a town in 1834, and remains one of the smaller towns in Maine. Common Chester surnames in the late 1800s remain so today, and include Archer, Bailey, Berry, Brown, Chesley, Davis, Faloon, Farrington, Fleming, Glidden, Gordon, Hall, Haynes, Ireland, Jordan, Kimball, Lancaster, Libby, Nichols, Reed, Savage, Scott, Shaw, Smith, Spencer, Stratton, Tash, Twist, Whitney, White, and Wyman. Other early Chester families who can still be found in the surrounding areas are Adams, Babcock, Bartlett, Beathem, Booker, Coombs, Cram, Jackins, Kyle, Runnells, Walton, and Weston.

With a population of 323 people in 1837, there were 552 people at the time of the 2000 census. Traffic through Chester's Main Road, also known as Route 116, consists mostly of people headed to Chester or Woodville, since I-95 takes most of the traffic to Medway, or points north.

Except for road maintenance in south Chester, traffic along Route 116 was peaceful, with houses, farms, and wood product businesses along either side of the road.

In the early 1800s, the land from Houlton to Passadumkeag, and from Fort Kent to Piscataquis Falls (now Howland), was wilderness, inhabited only by the various Indian tribes. Pioneers who came to Mattanawcook followed spotted trails where explorers had passed through, went by way of Indian trails, or paddled upriver by canoe. Henry David Thoreau camped there, along the banks of the Penobscot River, in August of 1857, and wrote of it in the record of his third trip to the Maine woods.

When the earliest settlers reached the area that is now Chester, Bangor was only a small village, Old Town hosted just a few families, and there were but a few scattered farms in Passadumkeag and Piscataquis



Chester General Store, also nown as Lori's Market.



Penobscot River, near Clifford Lane.

Falls. The Penobscot Indians had settlements in Old Town, on the islands, which they still own, and at Mattanawcook. The Penobscot islands of Snow, Gordon, Brown, and Five Islands are between Chester and Winn.

One of the first settlers, Frink Stratton, came to Chester from Albion in 1823. He built a house, on a lot later owned by Joseph Wyman, in North Chester, along the banks of the Penobscot River. Frink was married to Lydia Coombs of Albion, and was a member of the Society of Quakers.

Other Quaker families residing in Chester in the early days were Aurilla Stratton, who married Charles Thompson, settling on the top of Thompson Hill. Daniel Stratton settled on a lot later occupied by his son, Ernest Stratton. Wilbur Stratton built a house, that was later owned by Mrs. Joseph Wyman, on the corner of the Woodville Road. Harriet Stratton married John W. Coombs. Another Stratton daughter married Captain Nicholas Houston, who later built a large two-story house in Mattawankeag. Albertie Stratton, the youngest daughter, was drowned crossing the river in a canoe in 1872. Another Quaker family was that of Samuel G. Brown, whose son Abram B. Brown was to become a famous when, as a steamboat pilot, he grounded his boat in front of his house after the boat's owners refused to provide the necessary money for repairs. John, Charles, and Moses Brown cleared the land that Samuel Brown lived on as early as 1824. They built the Brown house, which is still standing, and gave the name to Brown Island. Samuel Brown also came from Albion.

Chester's second settler was Moses Babcock, who cleared land further down the Penobscot, about two miles from Frink Stratton's place. His first home was a log cabin on the riverbank, later replaced by a house.

John Weston settled in the area about 1824, as his children, along with those of Moses Babcock, are named as students of the school taught by Jeremy Nelson at Mattanawcook (later known as Snowville, then South Winn) in the winter of 1824-25, as well as the following year. Other members of the Babcock family followed, including James and Jesse Babcock.

James Scott came to Chester in 1824, bringing a large family, including a son by the same name, who had eleven children, some of whom settled in the Woodville area.

Another of his children became well known as Deacon William Scott, who was probably a member of the Chester Church when it was organized in 1831. He served as Deacon of that church for forty-two years. Deacon Scott was not only involved in the Freewill Church in Chester, but also in helping many weaker churches in the area.

Christopher Jackins moved into what later became known as the Jo Davis place, the first farm below the Brown Schoolhouse, within a mile and a half of Winn Village.

Some time in 1825, Ben Walton cleared land for a farm. John Weston, whose children settled in Molunkus, resided on the same property.

James Lindsay built a home and hotel in the lower part of Chester, while George and John Lindsay kept a store. Prior to moving to Chester, the Lindsays had built a dam and a mill, known as the Webber Mill, on the Combalasse Stream at Lincoln Center, but sold out to a man named Bemis.

In 1826, Jerry Bartlett cleared land for a farm near the mouth of the Woodville Road. That same year, S. Warren Coombs, a brother of Mrs. Frank Stratton, came to Chester from Albion. A carpenter and surveyor, he taught at several of the schools i town and built many of the houses.

Edward Bethame came from Pittston in 1827, first settling in the lower end of town, but later moving just above the David Ireland place at the Beatham ferry. The ferry was first operated by Lot Beatham, then John and Theodore Fleming, until a bridge was built in 1950.

Rice of Bangor, and Prescott of Boston, built a sawmill and a grist mill, in 1825 and 1826, along the Medunkeunk Stream, near where the Hatch place was later built. Still later, John Pratt was to operate a shingle mill near that location.

Walter Haynes came from Dover in 1829, clearing land in the lower part of town, near the James Wyman farm. A few years later, he built a large set of buildings in the center of town, at Raymond Jordan's place, which was to become the home of his son, Martin H. Haynes. He built a mill and dam on the Eber Horse Stream. It burned in 1843, but was rebuilt the same year.

Walter Haynes was a descendant of Deacon Samuel Haynes of Wiltshire, England, who emigrated in June of 1635 in the ship, "Angel Gabriel." On August 15th, the ship was caught in a fierce gale, and sunk off the coast of Pemaquid, Maine. Most of the passengers were rescued, including Haynes, who settled in New Hampshire.

Other early Chester residents included Samuel Chesley, David Bunker, Freeman Crocker, Ephraim Kyle, and Deacon John Boober, who became one of the original members of the Chester Church.

In 1827, Samuel Chester came from Chester, New Hampshire, and gave the name to the town, where he lived for many years. He built a large two-story house near the middle of town, and kept a hotel and large orchard there.

Early settlers lived in log cabins, mostly located along the banks of the river. Andrew Fleming built his cabin just below the spot where he was later to build a house, and most of his children were born in the cabin, with only the youngest girl being born in the house. Some of the cabins didn't have glass in the windows, the light from the fireplace being the only light available at night. The fireplace was used, not only to heat the cabin, but to cook all of the meals.

Later, candles were made by dipping wicks of cotton in melted tallow. Later, people began using lamps that burned fish oil, and kerosene came into use in the area about 1862.

Shoemakers traveled through the settlements, their tools and materials in a kit, sometimes staying in people's homes for a week or more, making and repairing shoes for the whole family. Children generally went barefoot throughout the summer.

As with most of New England, early settlers were rigid in their religious and social views. A strict observance of the Sabbath began on Saturday evening, and was enforced by Tything Men.

Money was scarce, and roads were difficult to nearly impassable much of the year. Hay and grain were transported by sled, or carried by two men on a couple of slender poles to a place where it could be stacked. Scythes were made so that men had to bend over almost at a right angle when mowing, and the hay was dried by tedding sticks, operated by boys using the right end of the stick, and then the left, throwing the hay into the air.

Bread was made of cornmeal, cooked either on a board before an open fire, blazing in a fireplace, or in an oven built of flat stones laid in clay mortar. Sugar and molasses was rare and seldom seen in most homes. Instead, maple sugar was made from the sap of rock maple trees.

People raising pigs for food usually marked them, then turned them loose in the early spring, not driving them home until it was time to fatten them up in the fall. Each year, Hog Reeves were elected to capture and impound any pigs found trespassing on settler's growing crops. It was the custom to elect newly married men as one of the Hog Reeves at the next town meeting.

Boards were fastened to frames by way of wooden pegs or pins, as nails had to be hammered out, one at a time, by the blacksmith. Newly built barns or stables were often used as meeting places for churches.



Pea Ridge Road, north of the railroad tracks.

Range 8 was surveyed by George H. Moore between 1827 and 1828, the front lots made into narrow strips with a river frontage of 60 to 70 rods, a rod being equal to 16.5 feet, while the back part was left in large lots.

In 1829, the Military Road (Route 2) was built, providing easy access and communication. Prior to that, getting to the area was difficult, with most goods having to be brought upriver by boat, while heavier items were hauled by oxen on the ice in winter. At that time, a man named Miller from Portland owned Chester, which was then still known as TIR8.

The town of Chester was incorporated by act of the legislature on February 26, 1834; and its first town meeting was held at the residence of Jeremiah Hildreth, near the center of town, on March 29th of that year. David Haynes was appointed Justice of the Peace for the town, while Samuel Chesley, John Lindsey, and Alvah Chesley were elected Selectmen, with Samuel Chesley serving as Moderator. David Haynes was elected Constable, and Samuel Chesley served a dual role as Treasurer.

On April 21st, a meeting was called and the Selectmen were named to serve on the School Committee, which formed six school districts, which were as follows:

No. 1: From the lower end of town to Pea Ridge Road; and from the southwest line of River Lot 13 to the west line of town (Lincoln Center, Ferry Road, the Wyman Road below Medunkeunk Bridge and the road from William Shaw's, on Shaw Hill, to Silas Smith's line of Lot 22). Lot 22 was owned by Seneca Kein, Elbridge Kein, and John Powers in 1894.

No. 2: From the southwest line of River Lot 13 to the north (or head) of River Lot 25 on the Ireland Road. River Lot 25 was owned by Nathan Ireland and David Cole.

No. 3: From the northeast line of River Lot 37 to County Road, near Eben Spencer's. In 1894, Lot 37 was owned by Fred Scott and William Whitney.

No. 4: From the southwest line of River Lot 38, belonging to Joseph Wyman, north to Lot 49, which was Charles Thompson's, at the upper end of Chester.

No. 5: From River Lot 25, in the center of town, owned by Nathan Ireland, to the north line of town, also the road from Temple Ireland's to Alfred Berry's in the Little Settlement.

No. 6: From the River Road near Andrew Heald's, in by Silas Smith's (Pea Ridge Road), to the Keene line, and from the bridge near Smith's Mill to the north line of Lot 17 (Pea Ridge Road).

Each district had a highway surveyor. In 1862, the surveyor for District 1 was Peter Chase; District 2, George Thayer; District 3, William Scott; District 4, Frink Stratton; District 5, Temple Ireland; and District 6, Silas Smith.



The Beaver Chester Power Plant, operated from 1986 to 1992.

Smyrna, Maine

When the first settlers came to Chester in the early 1800s, the only roads were scattered trails left by explorers, Indian trails, and the Penobscot River.

The first real road through Chester was the River Road, which followed the bank of the river from Howland to Medway, curving in back of Beaver Chester, coming out at the south end of what is now the Medunkeunk Bridge. Above the stream was a shallow place in the river, which could be crossed throughout the summer unless the water was unusually high. From there, the road went up a short way, then turned right and went down to the river once again, just across from Lincoln Center.

The lower end of Medunkeunk Stream was shallow and rocky, but there was a very deep place called Board Eddy, about a half mile from the road, which was used to hold pulpwood during the spring log drive.

The road followed the river up to the Libby place, where a bridge was built over the road with a stone abutment. It then came up by the Beathem Ferry, through Andrew Fleming's land to the Wadleigh woods, and up the hill to the Walter Haynes house. It was just wide enough for a cart or carriage.

When surveyed in 1859, the road was intended to run up behind the Walter Haynes house to the Blood place up on the hill. Haynes didn't want the road to run behind his house, so he bribed the road crew with cider each morning, prompting them to build the road in front of his house instead, making a curve in the road and leaving Blood with a long driveway.

The Keene Road, at the foot of Shaw Hill, went into Pea Ridge. Pea Ridge got its name after a winter in the early 1800s, when people would have starved without peas to eat, as killing frosts the previous summer left only peas and potatoes as surviving crops.

Once known as the Tash Road, the Pea Ridge Road goes to the railroad track, then continues onto the Dill Road, to connect with the Woodville Road, which was then known as the County Road.

The County Road started somewhere near Abram Ireland's place on the River Road and continued in near the Little Settlement.

About two miles in on the County Road, a Winter Road was built, coming through the woods to the Beathem Ferry Road, just below the Bridge Road. This road was used in the winter because the snow didn't drift as badly.

At one time, there were four Ferry Roads. The Beathem Ferry Road was just below what is now Bridge Road. The Lovett Ferry Road, at the lower end of Chester, was part of the River Road. The Scott Ferry Road was on the Moses Scott Farm; and the Stratton Ferry Road was at the northern end of town, across from Winn.

The Town Road, also called Main Road (Route 116), was built in 1859. A short length of road from the northern end of Chester to the Woodville line was called the Butterfield Ridge Road.

A highway tax was first levied in 1860, and Chester was divided into Highway Districts, with a surveyor elected for each. The job of the surveyor was to keep the roads in his district in good repair and the road open in winter, or get someone else to do it. When a road was cut through someone's property, the property owner was given six months to cut the standing timber and remove any line fences.

Temple Ireland built a road to the Little Settlement, which was no more than an ox cart road maintained by the people of Little Settlement, as the Town of Chester refused to take responsibility for it. It was a rough and rocky road, with tree roots that a traveler had to either go over or around.

A Singing School was organized in September of 1861, under the direction of George Hammond of North Lincoln. The school met once or twice a week in different schoolhouses and continued throughout the fall, dismissing for the winter. This school became a focal point for the social life of many Chester residents. Hymn Sings were a favorite social function in Chester, especially after people began to sing by note.

A Good Templar's Lodge was organized at the Kyle Schoolhouse in August of 1880, and quickly became a force for temperance, prohibiting the sale and use of intoxicating beverages. The lodge also provided entertainment for the people of Chester, including events and functions in which there were music, recitation, readings, etc. The charter of Chester Star Lodge No. 264, as organized August 15, 1880, lists the following members: George H. Haynes, Henry Whitney, C. E. More, Forest S. Whitney, Frank Wyman, Hattie Wyman, William M. Scott, Jackson Davis Kyle, Maria S. Kyle, Georgia J. Kyle, William E. Whitney, Elmer E. Haynes, Bradford Wyman, Milton H. Scott, Minnie M. Kyle, Alma Wyman, Clinton Haynes, Abbie Wyman, Clara A. Whitney, and Joseph L. Wyman.

When built in the late 1880s, the Lake Megantic Railroad connected Lake Megantic to Vanceboro, running through the towns of Greenville, Brownville, Chester, and Mattawamkeag, with a spur going to Milinocket.

Schools

1. Serving the lower end of Chest, the school building was built on the upper side of Medunkeunk Stream.

2. Sometimes called the "Hamilton District," the school building was generally known as the "Red Schoolhouse," although it was initially painted white. It was on the lot that was later owned by Joe Solomon.

3. The "Blood Schoolhouse" was located on the E. P. Blood farm, near the road.

4. The first schoolhouse built in Chester was the "Kyle Schoolhouse," located on the Robert's place. It was replaced in 1890 by a new building on the opposite side of the road, just above the Wyman Farm.

5. Serving the area from Temple Ireland's to the Little Settlement on the Woodville Road, a schoolhouse was built about a mile before the Woodville line.

6. From Andrew Heald's to Silas Smith's on Pea Ridge Road.

In 1831, a school was built on one of the Robert's lots near Mr. Kyle's in the upper end of Chester. Later, another was built where the Mattamiscontis and Wyman Roads separate near the Medunkeunk Stream, near Sylvanus Hatch's place. Another was built near Chesley's (Blood).

Another school was built in the Tash neighborhood, at Pea Ridge; and one in the Temple Ireland neighborhood.

Churches

The records of the Chester Church have been lost, but there is some history recorded by the families who made up the first congregation. When the Chester Church was organized in 1831, the Freewill Baptists were just beginning to function as a separate body.

The Free Will Baptist are distinguished from other Baptist groups in that they reject the traditional Baptist doctrine of eternal security. Instead, they hold to an Arminian tradition which holds that it is possible for a Christian to willingly reject one's faith. They also observe footwashing as a third ordinance of the church, along with baptism and communion.

It is believed that the majority of those who made up the initial body of the Chester Church were Freewill Baptists before they moved to Chester. Others, such as Elder Samuel Lewis and Elder Moses Stevens, were probably converts.

In 1831, a group of about fifty people assembled outside the John Kyle residence and organized the first church in Chester, called the Freewill Baptist Church of Chester. John Kyle was the first deacon, and it is thought that he was succeeded by Deacon John Booker. Rev. Samuel Haggett served as regular pastor of the church beginning in April of 1854 to May of 1858, when he moved to Springfield, but maintained close ties with the congregation until his death in 1878.



The old Wyman Farm on North Chester Road.

A church building was not built in Chester until 1911, however; the congregation alternating its meetings between John Kyle's barn and that of William Thom, an arrangement that appeared to have worked well. The records of the Springfield Quarterly meeting of September 1, 1894, includes the following item:

"Deacon William Scott, speaking for the Building Committee of Chester, reported that it was thought best to wait until some more favorable time to build a chapel in Chester."

That time arrived seventeen years later, in the fall of 1911. The lot on which the church was built was donated by John G. Fleming, a former resident of Chester then living in Lincoln. With prompting from a man known as Rev. "Cyclone" I.T. Johnson of Vermont and Rev. Frederick McNeill, a man who "saw visions and dreamed dreams," money was raised to build the chapel. Services were first held in the new chapel on October 22, 1911, and the Springfield Quarterly Meeting was held in the new chapel in June of 1812.

The congregation has since joined the United Baptist Convention, but remains active, its building and grounds well maintained.

Chester doesn't appear to have much in the way of a town center, but the church, municipal building, and the town's only store are near one another, in the area of Main and Bridge roads, where Route 116 turns north toward Woodville. That may be it; or you might consider Pea Ridge Road, north of Route 116, where you'll find a cluster of houses, farms, some mills, and the animal hospital, to be the town hub.

Chester is not without businesses, albeit not many of the walk in kind. With its offices along Access Road, Robin A. Crawford & Son Woods Company employs about fifty people. Other forest product companies include H.C. Haynes Woodyard, the Gardner Chip Mill, and Chester Forest Products, which originally operated under the name of Northeast Lumber Company, on Main Road, as well as a couple of wood mills along Pea Ridge Road. The Treeline Service Center serves the trucking industry from its location at the corner of Access Road and Route 116.



Home on Main Road at Pea Ridge Road.

Photographs of rural Maine taken by Ken Anderson. unless otherwise attributed.

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Islands on the Penobscot River.



The Beaver Chester Power Plant.

The Beaver Chester Power Plant, along Route 116, used biomass technology to produce energy by burning sawdust, chips, bark, and other waste wood. In operation for only a few years, from 1986 to 1992, it was closed after being fined \$134,000 for air emissions violations. As the long dormant facility has recently been purchased by Evergreen Energy Company, there is some hope that it might be revitalized, although it doesn't appear that anyone has been in there for a long while.

In north Chester, just past Bridge Road, the Chester General Store, also known as Lori's Market, has a nice selection of convenience store items, as well as a small restaurant.

According to the 2000 census, there were 206 households in Chester. More than half the residents of Chester earn more than \$75,000 a year, the median income being \$36,250. With Main Road following the Penobscot River, there is a lot of waterfront property in Chester, some of it for sale.

But the roads leading off of Main Road are very nice as well, especially the Pea Ridge Road; as is north Chester, especially if seclusion is important to you.

In Chester, one can have the privacy and seclusion of a very rural location, yet be near the Penobscot River and I-95, within an hour of Bangor.

Maine is full of lovely places, and Chester counts among them.

Ken Anderson is, among other things, the editor of the online news outlet Magic City Morning Star, on the web at <http://magic-city-news.com>.



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Paid for and authorized by Kenneth Anderson for State Representative

Secretive ‘Backcountry Project’ Threatens Access to Wilderness, Part 1

by Rep. David Trahan

For years, a bloodless but passionate battle has raged between land-use advocates inside the walls of the State House. The fighting pits two opposing camps. There are those of us who value our wild lands for such “traditional” uses as hunting, fishing and snowmobiling. On the other side those who desire that Maine’s backcountry be conserved and free from all human activity.

In an editorial published 25 years ago by the Bangor Daily News, entitled Speaking for Maine, editor V. Paul Reynolds wrote this: “Too many important decisions affecting all of Maine and its citizenry are being made in the Augusta vacuum. This is especially true of decisions that are rife with political overtones. Small, vocal co-teries of Augusta-savvy activists are constantly visiting their vogueish views upon government and convincing decision-makers that they speak for Maine. This is so much rubbish.”

Reynolds made this statement in defense of allowing snowmobile access on the perimeter road in Baxter State Park.

The results of these wars can be seen across the state with victories on both sides. Last March, Allagash-area residents revolted against environmentalists and wilderness advocates. Locals claimed they were being driven off their traditional access sites by elitists. The battle reached such a pitch that the Legislature responded with a new public law – LD 2077, An Act to Make Adjustments to the Allagash Wilderness Waterway.

The new law guaranteed that the historic local traditions of boat access, vehicular use and timber harvesting would be ensured as part of the future Allagash management plan. The Department of Conservation (DOC), along with a host of environmental organizations, united to oppose this important legislation, but in the end they failed to deny Allagashers access to their own backyard.

Again, during the recent Katahdin Lake debate, the DOC joined forces with state Attorney General Steven Rowe and environmentalists to object to hunters and snowmobiles on all of the proposed 6,000 acres of new state land. Against that backdrop, the Legislature crafted a compromise. It banned hunting and snowmobiling on 4,000 acres around Katahdin Lake, which the state hopes to acquire as part of the Katahdin Lake Land Transfer Bill, while allowing them on an adjacent 2,000-acre tract that is part of the same land transfer.

In the shadows of these two battles, DOC was quietly developing a potential new state policy with implications that could reshape the Maine landscape for advocates of traditional access. On March 22, 2006, in a letter addressed to Commissioner Patrick McGowan, State Rep. Rod Carr and I requested information on a newly created stakeholders group within the department called “the Maine Backcountry Project.”

What we received was a list of the committee membership and the minutes from their first meeting. The committee consisted of 26 members representing environmental or wilderness organizations and the DOC. Seven of these organizations were from out of state. Some of the high profile groups included the Sierra Club, Maine Audubon Society, the Nature Conservancy, the Wilderness Society, and the Natural Resources Council of Maine.

According to the minutes of that first meeting, the goal of this committee was to “review various backcountry parcels of land that may be available and that should or could be considered for management as wilderness.” There was discussion about “re-wilding,” “eco-reserves,” and “places identified for protection based on ecological values rather than human, social, or recreational values.”

Twenty-four special places from all corners of Maine were identified for purchase and protection. They ranged from the Kennebec Highlands to the White Mountain National Forest. They also included coastal islands and the Saco, St John and Roach rivers. Nearly every place one might identify as having unique natural beauty was included.

It was revealed in the minutes that the project was being funded by a grant from a Boston-based group – the Kendall Foundation – and was scheduled to last one year. The Kendall Foundation website lists the reasons for the \$100,000 grant. It is meant to pay for “support for professional staff to advance and implement conservation land acquisition projects across the State of Maine.”

Much of the first meeting was centered on the themes of the “human-powered experience,” the need to establish statewide standards for “non-motorized wilderness management,” and the “need to segregate user groups into motorized and non-motorized.”

The meeting concluded with discussions about the potential size of these protected areas. Several members responded with estimates ranging from 24 acres to areas that would require two-day trips to traverse. Cathy Johnson of the Natural Resources Council of Maine stated her preferred size was “Baxter State Park.”

It is not hard to imagine why Representative Carr and I were concerned with the secretive nature of this committee, as well as the very controversial policy discussions occurring with no participation by members of Maine’s traditional access community.

After learning of the existence of the Maine Backcountry Project, we met with DOC Deputy Commissioner Karin Tilberg and several of her staff within the Bureau of Parks and Lands to discuss our concerns.

We stressed our objections to these meetings in Department of Conservation facilities, without public notice, as well as the one sided make-up of the committee. We were assured that members of the “other” user groups would be contacted.

As one might expect, Tilberg downplayed the significance of the Backcountry Project. She went on to explain that the DOC was just trying to map out places in Maine that could be marketed as a wilderness experience. We were told that the project was small and was nothing more than an attempt to showcase Maine as a destination for non-consumptive outdoor recreation.

If only that were true.

To be continued in part two, Squeezing Out Traditional Users.

Rep. David Trahan, a fourth-term legislator from Waldoboro, is a woodsman.

Youth Exodus Indicates a Need for Change

by Dan Schuberth

A great deal of ink has been spilled over the past ten years as reporters, pundits and politicians have attempted to explain why Maine’s young people have been leaving the state in droves after completing their high school or college education. Some have suggested that a youth exodus is natural and even healthy as it is important that our young people get out, see the world and gain valuable life experience outside of the “shire”.

While this view is not without merit, it is also worth considering that most of the young people that leave Maine immediately after high school or college do not make it back. In fact, over 22% of Maine’s high school and college graduates leave Maine to pursue employment opportunities elsewhere compared to only 5.4% on the national average; only a fraction of these young people make it back to Maine (US Census Bureau).

The failure of Maine’s young people to return to their home, or for many, their decision to leave Maine in the first place is not rooted in a lack of interest in Maine and what it has to offer its young people. It is not due to a shortage of movie theaters or rock concerts as some would suggest. Maine’s young people are being driven out of Maine by a chronic lack of good paying jobs.

In order to make the decision to stay in Maine and eventually raise a family, Maine’s young people must be able to find jobs that pays them more and offer them more benefits than comparable jobs in other states. Time and time again, Maine’s youth are wooed away by higher salaries, more affordable healthcare and greater employee benefits in the neighboring states like New Hampshire.

There are three critical factors that have contributed to a consistent lack of good-paying jobs in Maine.

First, Maine’s state and local tax burden are the highest of any state in America according to the United States Department of Commerce. High taxes take money out of the pockets of young people and leave them with fewer options for spending and investment. When Maine’s small businesses are taxed, their employees receive fewer benefits and many businesses are forced to reduce their workforce, leaving young people to look to other states for employment opportunities.

Second, Maine is an “unfriendly” place to start and maintain a small business. In fact, the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council ranked Maine as the 49th worst state in America to start

and maintain a small business. When the cost of starting a small business, due to unnecessary state regulations and fees outweighs the potential benefit, small business owners look elsewhere to start their business, and they take the promise of good-paying jobs with them.

Third, Maine has failed to provide access to affordable healthcare to its citizens. Dirigo Health has failed to reduce the cost of healthcare for Maine’s small businesses and removed any potential for future cost reduction by eliminating competition in Maine’s healthcare market. When small businesses in Maine cannot afford to provide their employees with basic health benefits but employers in other states can, young people act in their own best interest by leaving Maine.

These economic realities have not appeared out of thin air, or come from Washington as Governor Baldacci and Majority Democrats in Augusta would suggest. High taxes, unfair regulations and unaffordable healthcare come as the result of real votes by real people that we elect to represent us in Augusta.

Majority Democrats have controlled Augusta for 32 years; hence, they are responsible for every tax increase, every unnecessary business regulation, and every increase in the cost of health insurance. Their votes against small business have lead directly to a lack of good-paying jobs in Maine, and directly to the youth exodus we desperately need to put an end to.

Maine’s citizens, especially our young people need a fundamental change of leadership in Augusta. Republican leaders like Senator Chandler Woodcock, Senator Carol Weston and Representative Josh Tardy offer a clear alternative to more empty rhetoric and more broken promises. In order for our young people to stay in Maine, we need leaders that will put Maine first and advance legislation to reduce our tax burden, decrease unfair business regulations and lower the cost of healthcare. Maine desperately needs a change; our future and the future of our young people depend on it.

Dan Schuberth serves as the Vice Chairman of the Maine Republican Party. He is currently the youngest serving state party officer in America at the age of 22.

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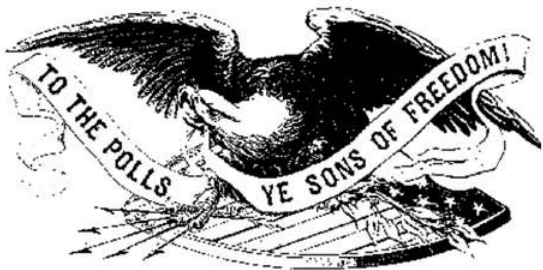


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The Real Question: What Will Happen If the Taxpayer Bill of Rights Doesn’t Pass?

by Pem Schaeffer

Some years ago, Wayne Gretzky, “the Great One” of NHL hockey, was in a TV commercial. In it, he said the secret of his hockey success was that instead of skating to the puck, he skated to where the puck will be.

I remembered this as I thought about the Taxpayer Bill of Rights. Committed proponent that I am, I won’t tell you that passing it will reduce the taxes we pay now. It does not “skate” to where our tax burden is. Instead, it is designed to address how our tax burden will grow under the status quo. It “skates” to where our tax burden will be.

We’re being bombarded by the organized and richly financed forces of opposition to this true citizen’s initiative. Their campaign of fear, uncertainty, doubt, and deception is based on frightening predictions of doom and gloom if the Taxpayer Bill of Rights passes. Given the state of our state, it’s far more important for voters to consider what will happen if it doesn’t pass.

Let me explain why. Kit St. John, and the Maine Center for Economic Policy (MECEP) that he heads, are the theological ground zero of the anti-Taxpayer Bill of Rights coalition and the religious devotion to big government that drives them.

St. John and his fellow travelers repeatedly emphasize two points about taxes in Maine. First, that claims we have a very high tax burden are false, no matter how many national organizations document the facts and compare all states in this regard. They argue that our state and local tax burden, ranked number one for the last decade or so, is reasonable and appropriate, and that we should stop complaining so much.

Second, St. John mourns that Maine’s lower income population pays a greater percentage of their income in taxes than do upper income taxpayers. It seems intuitively obvious that lower income residents pay a greater percentage of their income for a gallon of gas (and the taxes on it), a quart of milk, and a pack of cigarettes (and the taxes on it) than do higher income taxpayers. It’s true in every way

of their incomes. That is why people try to better themselves and make responsible choices in their lives; so they have more discretionary income.

These two points of theirs, coupled with the genetic makeup of the sprawling non-profit sector that dominates the political scene, set the stage for assessing our future. I am convinced that while our current tax burden is already oppressive, and has clearly devastated Maine’s economy and demographics, it’s where the non-profit sector will drive our tax burden that should terrify taxpayers and voters.

For sake of argument, let’s assume that Maine’s current local and state tax burden is 13%, a figure that appears in any number of reports and compilations. I will here assert that St. John and his colleagues would like to see that figure raised to something like 18 to 20%, or an increase of our tax burden by nearly 50%.

Why do I think this? Because of the very nature of the non-profit industrial complex headed by St. John, Anna Marie Klein, Joe Ditre, and all the rest. They make their livings asserting that critical services and social needs are going unfunded, and that as a result, “social and economic injustice” is rampant across the state. They constantly lobby for more spending at the state level for all sorts of new program, and expansion of existing ones. Their wishes know no bounds.

And I’m influenced by what I have witnessed at the local municipal level as well. I’ve watched school and town spending increase an average of nearly 6% a year, and sometimes as much as 9 or 10%, while those who do it mourn that “vital needs” are going unmet and necessary expenses deferred. Their appetite seems to know no bounds, and that is especially true of school authorities.

Combine these two effects, and you have a very noisy band earning their living by banging out a loud and incessant drumbeat for more and more spending, taxes be damned. After all, they say, our taxes aren’t as high as we think they are.

Here’s a scenario I can envision if these forces of spending growth have their way, Baldacci is re-elected, retains his senate and house majorities, and in particular, if the Taxpayer Bill of Rights does not pass. After the failure of the prior property tax referendum, the forces of big government expansion will believe they have a mandate.

State Income Tax: We’ll see a total restructuring of the rates and brackets. In keeping with St. John’s concerns for lower income residents, the brackets will be realigned so that the lower 50% of Maine residents pay no state income tax at all, and the lowest quarter actually receive a “refund” (or income transfer) even though they paid no tax to begin with. Residents in the upper half will find themselves taxed at 6% at the lowest bracket, 8% at the next bracket (up to \$60,000, let’s say), at 10% in the next bracket (up to \$100,000 let’s say), and at 12% above that level. Incomes over \$100,000 will have their deductions limited, and those over \$150,000 will have them severely limited, raising the effective tax rate even higher. (A nifty trick that allows rates to seem artificially lower.)

State Sales Tax: Democrats have been itching for several years to both raise the sales tax and broaden its base to include most goods, and services like haircuts, dentistry, undertaking, legal counsel, and psychotherapy. Several years ago, they were claiming that such changes would nearly double sales tax collections, which are currently in the \$1 Billion annual range. Doubling collections would provide major revenue for program expansion and creation. In keeping with St. John’s concerns for the lower half, once again, they would be compensated for the increase. Via the income tax filing process, residents who earn below a certain amount would receive a credit for sales tax paid, and since they owe no income tax to begin with, this credit would take the form of a larger “refund” when they file.

Miscellaneous State Taxes and Fees: These include the gas tax and auto registration, among hundreds of others. Since the Baldacci spending juggernaut has had no trouble raising these taxes by over \$1 Billion during his first term, without so much as a whimper from the public, or reporting by the media, there’s every reason to believe that once he and his majorities are secure in his second term, they’ll repeat this scenario with a similar new round of “no tax increases.”

Local Taxes: First, look for auto excise tax rates to increase, since this tax is seen as “progressive,” and because “critical local needs” can’t be met without the increase. And then look for a ramp up of “local option sales tax.” They’ll say it increases revenue “mostly on out of staters”, and will insulate Baldacci and friends from any responsibility.

It’s not too long ago we all began paying 7% sales tax on cups of coffee, meals out, and lodging, and the public rolled over easily on that. But remember: 7% here, 7% there, and pretty soon you’re talking real taxes.

As for property taxes, they will continue to rise largely unabated until the political class senses that a breaking point of resistance is approaching, and it threatens their jobs. Then they’ll come up with “son of LD 1,” a shifting/shafting facade of “more historic tax reform” that will lull all but the most informed back into their 24/7/365 slumber.

Through these and numerous other “revenue enhancements,” the forces of “justice” and social concern can reasonably expect to increase our tax burden to “notches unknown,” as a famous TV chef likes to say. And we’ll know the reforms offered by the politicians are nothing of the sort when the Maine Municipal Association, the MECEP, the Maine Council of Churches, the teachers union, and all the rest campaign for them, and somehow, never rise to the point of moaning over how the “tax reform” will make victims of the children, the elderly, and the other usual identity groups. Just like they supported LD 1, because they knew it wouldn’t harm their agendas one bit, and it played good on TV and in the papers.

If you think Maine’s economy and population profile is being devastated by the tax burden we have now, just imagine the “scorched earth” that will result if the tax burden is allowed to grow without a reasonable and effective limit on spending growth. The Taxpayer Bill of Rights was initiated to address exactly this concern.

The above, obviously, are my personal predictions, based on experience studying state and local budgets and taxes, and how they are manipulated, for years. No doubt St. John, Klein, Ditre and the other usual suspects will claim foul.

Fine. All they have to do is publicly declare that state taxes and local taxes should not go any higher, and that enough money is being “invested” at all levels to meet the needs of “social and economic justice.” Doing so, of course, would amount to admitting that they should close up their respective shops, since there is no additional government growth to advocate and lobby for.

But if they won’t give that public affirmation, then they should tell us just how much higher they think our tax burden should be allowed to rise, and what they will recommend as the tripwire, and the mechanism we’ll use to stop the tax burden growth.

To recap, in spite of the gloom and doom predicted by big government advocates if the Taxpayer Bill of Rights passes, your vote should not be influenced by thee fear, doubt, and deception they broadcast. The current political ruling class, and the army of non-profits who have their way with them, are frightened and desperate, and they will do anything to preserve their power and their control over our future.

Instead, your vote should be influenced by how much our tax burden will increase if the Taxpayer Bill of Rights doesn’t pass! That is really a frightening thought!

Change the balance of power in Maine; vote yes on Question 1, the Taxpayer Bill of Rights, and yes on restoring economic health to our state. Vote yes for your say in our future.



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Why a Fully Informed Jury?

By Bud Landry

In the 1690s, the Salem witch trials were brought to an end when fully informed juries of the day refused to convict fifty times. The government, finally seeing that the people thought little of the law, abandoned the law under which they were being prosecuted.

In 1670, William Penn was arrested in London for preaching a Quaker sermon, breaking a law that made the Church of England the only legal church. His jurors, led by Edward Bushell, refused to convict him, despite being held for days without food, water, tobacco, or toilet facilities-and being fined. The most defiant four of them were put in prison for nine weeks. The highest court of England, upon releasing the defiant jurors, both acknowledged and established that jurors could not be punished for their verdicts. Recognition of our freedoms of religion, peaceable assembly and speech can thus all be traced to the exercise of Fully informed jury power, wielded by juries unintimidated by government judges.

In 1735, John Peter Zenger was arrested for sedition when he printed the truth about the corrupt practices of the of the Royal Governor of New York. While the charges were true, the jury was told that under the law, truth was no defense. Zenger's attorney, Andrew Hamilton, argued to the jury that they were judges of the merit of the law and should not go against good conscience to convict Zenger of violating such bad law. The jurors agreed. Zenger was acquitted in about fifteen minutes, and his case, with a Fully informed jury, helped to establish the RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF THE PRESS.

In 1789, Thomas Jefferson said in a letter to Thomas Paine, "I consider trial by jury as the only anchor yet devised by man by which a government can be held to the principles of its Constitution.

John Adams, America's second president, said in 1771, "It is not only [the juror's] right, but it is his duty...to find the verdict according to his own best understanding, judgment, and conscience, though in direct opposition to the direction of the court.

Without the power to decide what facts, law and evidence are applicable, JURIES cannot be a protection to the accused. If people acting in the name of government are permitted by JURORS to dictate any law whatever, they can also unfairly dictate what evidence is admissible or inadmissible and thereby prevent the Whole Truth from being considered. Thus if government can manipulate and control both the law and the evidence, the issue of fact becomes virtually irrelevant. In reality, true justice would be denied leaving the people with a trial by government and not a trial by JURY,

In Oak Park, Illinois a few years ago, a gas station owner drew a gun to defend himself against an armed robbery. Oak Park has a handgun ban, so the prosecutor threw the book at the gas station owner. A Fully informed jury speedily acquitted him, although the facts seemed to clearly prove the station owner was guilty. Was the jury acting illegally? Not at all. The jury was simply exercising it's power to judge the law as well as the facts. The jury apparently determined that in this particular case, it would be unjust to punish the gas station owner for violating the handgun prohibition.

Which of the people in the examples above would our fourteen Judiciary Committee members in Augusta have found guilty?

Strange bedfellows.

The desire for Fully informed jury laws has created an amazingly diverse coalition of bedfellows nation-wide. It does include organizations such as the National Rifle Association, Gun Owners of America and other pro-Second Amendment groups, Anti-nuclear and pacifist groups, Tree-hugging Earth Firsters along with timber-cutting Wise Use advocates, Peace and Justice groups throughout the nation, Radical pro-abortionists sit along side Eagle Forum anti-abortionists at Fully Informed Jury meetings and the list could go on and on.

One group that is conspicuously absent from this list are the Anti-gun groups. They apparently fear that fully informed juries would become a significant obstacle to enforcement of repressive gun control laws. Could this be the reason the Judiciary Committee in Augusta voted unanimously against Fully informed juries?

It is easily understood why the state sends high-powered people to argue against fully informed juries at the hearings and workshops. If there were ever to be Fully informed juries in the State of Maine, the courts would lose the power to inform juries that they must judge only the facts in a case and the court WOULD judge the law. The juries would then know of their Constitutional Right to judge the law as well as the facts and reach a verdict according to their conscience. As John Adams, America's second President said in 1771: " It is not only [the jurors] right, but it his duty...to find the verdict according to his own best understanding, judgement, and conscience, though in direct opposition to the direction of the court." The courts today would look on former President John Adams as a wild eyed radical and would jail him for jury tampering.

If the people of Maine would like to be able to protect their friends and neighbors from unconstitutional, unfair, unjust and oppressive laws they should get behind the Fully Informed Jury movement. Talk to your friends and neighbors. Write and call your state Representatives and Senators. Ask these people why they do not trust their constituents.

Until the people act to nullify these bad laws our untrusting, untrustworthy politicians in Augusta will keep passing more and more laws that create more and more crimes against the state.

Bud Landry lives in Abbott, Maine and can be reached at Landry@midmaine.com

What's Next?

by Michael Fundalewicz

We just got through eulogizing the fifth anniversary of the losses we suffered on 9/11/01 and now we have the latest outbreak of hostile intentions, by radical Muslims, over something the Pope repeated from a historical document. WHAT'S NEXT?

Is there anything anyone can say without tripping the trigger of these savages into a fanatical frenzy that threatens the very safety of all who are non-Muslims?

That innocent bodyguard and the nun, who had nothing to do with what the Pope said, died a horrible death just because she wore a habit. Are we going to sit back, allow psychopaths like Mahmoud Ahmadinijahd, and sadists like him, dictate what the world is allowed to say or who we should , as Christians, worship? The answer is a flat out NO!

Their open declaration, as of this morning, that all non-Muslims are to be targeted for assassination is a clear and outright declaration of a world wide war; a "Jihad", in their words.

Yet, we've cordially allowed Mr. Ahmadinijahd into this country to attend and address the U.N., in our city of New York, the very place his miserable cohorts tried to level on 9/11, so he can have his say. I say this: I'd gladly pay for the front row tickets to see the bullet hit his head!

And with the openly made death-threat against all non-Muslims having been made, I'm inclined to suggest to Mr. Bush and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, BRING ALL OF OUR BOYS HOME NOW; we're gonna need 'em! NOW SEAL THE BORDERS....TIGHT!

And if that ain't enough, we're passively debating the issue of "torture" to extract information from suicide bombers and terrorists. Does anyone out there have a change of mind now???? I DON'T THINK SO!

I say put the screws to them as they would us and be as unrelenting as they are. They know no other way so let's deal with them on their own grounds and terms and make them feel comfortably at home in their own type of misguided, unscrupulous, demented, twisted and sadistic environment which THEY created.

I've always been told, be careful of what you ask for, you might just get it! So be it. It's their time to ride the gauntlet.

NO ONE THREATENS AN AMERICAN ON HIS SOIL!!!

This will not be tolerated in any way, shape or form.

We've debated the issue of "torture", regarding the "savages" we've captured because we're trying to be politically correct and adhere to the Geneva Convention regulations. I don't recall them being in effect during the Revolutionary War nor the Civil War. ...do you?

This wasn't established until later. And the reason was to secure the decent treatment of all "SOLDIERS" while being held captive during a military campaign.

This is NOT the case now. There is no "campaign". These are just radicals without morals or constraints or borders or nations or uniforms. They have no value of life itself and will never attain it until a "45" is stuck up their nose and the trigger pulled. It's quite plain and simple folks; "World War III" is on and the only way to stop it is by "cleaning house"!

Michael Fundalewicz moved to Ashland with his wife and four kids in the early '90s to escape the dictatorial confines of the State of Massachusetts' taxation policies and the mayhem of drugs and crime for the protection of his kids' futures. He has, in recent years, come to see that those very same issues have followed him in the form of self-serving governing officials and the reluctance of the citizens of northern Maine to stand up and speak out for themselves before they wind up in the same mess.



Answer this single question correctly and win!

John Baldacci is to good government as...

- 1) E. coli is to good health.
- 2) a lottery ticket is to solid investment.
- 3) an epileptic seizure is to graceful poise.
- 4) a bucket of moonshine is to sobriety.
- 5) all of the above.



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Eclipse of the West

by Fritz Spencer

No sight is more welcome than the sight of the bright, beaming sun. The light of the sun makes the world knowable; and its warmth sustains the life of all living beings. We cannot conceive of a world without light, since as the Book of Genesis teaches us, and as science confirms, light was the first thing in God's universe to be created and seen. Yet on rare occasions, even the light of the sun is blotted out, as the moon moves ever so slowly to cover over its radiance and glory.

No day is as fixed in my memory as the day I stood alongside my father and mother outside our home in Orono and watched as the sun was plunged into total darkness. I peered through a double fold of photographic film, as the shadow of the moon slowly bit out a black crescent from the face of the sun. In an hour, the darkness was dispelled, and the light of day returned.

I learned in later years that there is an eclipse more frightening than a total eclipse, because it has consequences which are real and terrifying. That is the eclipse of human reason.

The belief that reason is a divine gift which enables man to rise above the natural world and the limitations of his own nature is the fundamental principle of Western civilization. The divine gift finds symbolic expression in the metaphor of light. Lady Liberty holds aloft a torch, and is called "Liberty Illuminating the World." But it is not liberty that illuminates the world. It is the divine gift of reason which acts in and through the human personality to light our path to freedom.

That is why I view the reelection of John Baldacci with the utmost trepidation. The forces behind Governor Baldacci, through their belief in secular humanism, are committed to the principles of atheism and materialism, the twin pillars of Marxism. These ideological and politi-

cal forces stand outside, and are opposed to the Western tradition, for the simple reason that they deny that human reason has a divine origin. As such, they imperil our freedom.

Those who object to portraying the upcoming election as a contest between the West and it adversaries, simply do not understand the ideological forces at work in Maine. The photos of John Baldacci and other Democratic leaders standing cordially alongside Fidel Castro make clear the severity of the threat confronting our state. It was after all, Fidel Castro who became the foremost enemy of the West following the death of Yasser Arafat.

Under the administration of John Baldacci, the Left has opposed virtually every core belief of Western civilization. The Left has undermined the right to personal property by imposing confiscatory taxes, in an effort to redistribute wealth according to a socialist model of the economy. The Left has violated the principle of the sanctity of human life by supporting abortion under the guise of "reproductive freedom." The Left has undermined the institution of marriage by enacting a law protecting homosexual rights.

But by far the worst offense was John Baldacci's executive order empowering illegal aliens to obtain all the benefits of citizens, at the expense of citizens. Such a law, if followed to its logical conclusion, will have the effect of abolishing Maine as a separate political and social entity.

That is why the upcoming election will be the most crucial in our history. If Governor John Baldacci is reelected, the eclipse of the West, which even now is racing over all the earth, will at long last reach Maine, blotting out forever the beauty and brilliance of our own native land and culture.

USFWS Lynx Critical Habitat Proposal - Includes Maine

by William Jud

President Richard Nixon's greatest crime was not the Watergate burglary.

Watergate was like failing to say "Excuse me, please" when you sneeze while you rob a bank. The far more heinous crime, the bank robbery itself, was Nixon's signing of the Endangered Species Act.

Money and political power attract the worst elements of society. Without oil revenue, Islamic terrorists would still be a small and essentially powerless fringe group of desert nomads of little danger to anyone but themselves. Without federal welfare handouts and corporate wage cheats, we would not have the huge a swarm of Illegal Aliens breaking into these United States.

Political power created by passage of the Endangered Species Act, and access to a vast amount of money provided because of the Endangered Species Act, has enabled radical Tree-Huggers and their activist judges to terrorize American citizens and to impose their own unworkable visions of Utopia as national policy.

Tree-huggers take tax revenue provided by American citizens and use that money to steal the land and livelihood of those same citizens. The Spotted Owl and salmon fiascoes in the Northwest are two well-known examples.

Now we have an attempt by Tree-Huggers and their federal judge enablers to shut down the U.S./Canadian border in Washington, Idaho, Montana, Minnesota and Maine, and extending far into these United States, for the supposed benefit of the Lynx, which is a wild cat that nobody who lives and works in rural areas would willingly invite into their daily living. Lynx are considered varmints among rural people trying to raise small livestock.

It's not that Lynx are dying out. In Canada, Lynx are hunted for their pelts. Canada Lynx are distributed throughout forest and tundra regions of Canada and Alaska. Lynx population rises and falls on an approximately 10-years cycle that follows the natural population cycle of the Lynx's principle food, the snowshoe hare. Lynx south of the Canadian border are at the extreme southern limit of their natural range and are not ever likely to colonize the territory and establish stable populations.

Corruption authorized and funded by President Nixon's Endangered Species Act has reached the point at which Tree-Hugger lawsuits are actually harming species recovery work.

Money and resources that could and should go toward real conservation activities are diverted by unending Tree-Hugger lawsuits. Instead of forest and wildlife management, the Forest Service devotes substantial resources to battling Tree-Huggers in court. A reasonable person would ask, "What do judges and lawyers know about managing forests and wildlife?" A reasonable person would answer, "Nothing."

Tree-Huggers have nothing to lose. Win or lose, Tree-Huggers get their pound of flesh paid by the U.S. Treasury.

Congressional environmental malpractice that began when President Nixon signed the Endangered Species Act ensures that government money is available to pay Tree-Huggers for the cost of their lawsuits against government agencies. Suing the government, businesses and private citizens is a highly profitable Environmentalist cottage industry. It is the rest of we American citizens who pay the bill for this outrageous extortion, both to pay for all those direct cash grants to environmentalist lawyers, and also in lost productivity and lost property value resulting from successful Tree-Hugger lawsuits.

Tree-Huggers demand that a minimum of 18,000 square miles of U.S. land be set aside as Lynx habitat. This immense area includes federal, state and private land.

Designation of land as Lynx Habitat imposes severe and very expensive restrictions on land use. Productivity will be smothered, jobs lost, logging and forest management denied, mining disallowed, town and county governments deprived of much-needed revenue, and more, all to support the fantasy that a couple of hundred Lynx living unsustainably at the extreme southern limit of their natural range ought to be given priority over all other land uses in five or more States. Estimated project cost is more than a billion dollars, which is in the range of \$1,000,000 to \$2,000,000 for each Lynx cat.

Lynx Habitat Designation was a done deal. But land closure of this magnitude must, by law, include economic impact analysis, which the original Designation failed to address. Now, there is some information on the economic impact of the Lynx proposal. The Lynx Comment Period has been reopened until October 11.

As usual, property owners are to be punished if their land includes Lynx Habitat. There is no reward or incentive for a property owner to cooperate in the recovery of any Threatened or Endangered Species.

The landowner will lose the right to use his land and will be subject to Draconian fines and regulations that supposedly will benefit the Lynx, but which actually will have no effect on Lynx recovery and reestablishment at the extreme southern limit of the Lynx's natural range. The proposal is another ploy to drive landowners from their land so that government agencies and Tree-Hugger organizations can buy distressed land on the cheap. Government is supposed to protect citizens from theft, not be part of the extortion process.

The Lynx proposal is another Greenie land grab. The Lynx is a vehicle, not a beneficiary. The Lynx is to northern States what the Ivory-billed Woodpecker is to Arkansas - a boondoggle for Tree-Hugger organizations to grab huge amounts of government money to buy huge acreages of land using the excuse that driving people away will benefit an obscure critter that doesn't even live there. The proposed 18,000 square miles is just a start. Tree-Huggers plan to extend the Lynx reserve to an area approaching the size of Europe.

Lynx recovery is one more in a long line of irresponsible and destructive actions coming from Tree-Huggers and their activist judges and Congressional toadies. If any good is to come from this, it will be the decision that the expired Endangered Species Act is counterproductive, unworkable, unsuccessful in recovering species, horribly expensive, blatantly Socialist and destructive of American society, and must be formally REPEALED immediately along with all of its derivatives, treaties, regulations and cancerous outgrowths.

The Lynx Project needs to be fully defunded and ended. Now.

You can send your comments on the Lynx recovery project to the Fish and Wildlife Service. Deadline for receipt at the Fish and Wildlife Service office is 11 October 2006. Be sure that your address is readable and that you PRINT as well as sign your name. Your comments do not count if the person who reads your letter can't tell who you are.

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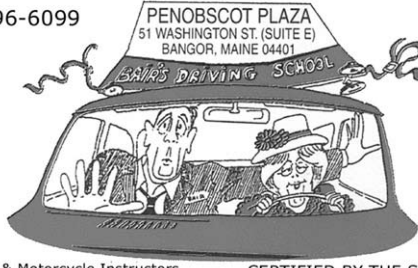
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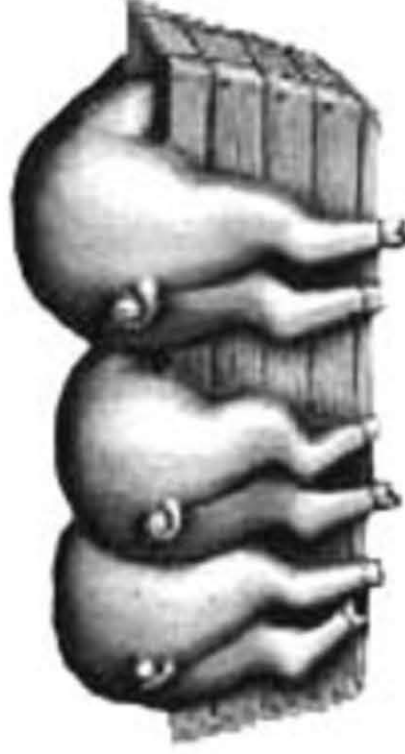
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