

the power & pleasure of ideas

MAINE HUMANITIES

TAXING MAINE: DAVID GREENHAM

BY BRITA ZITIN

FALL
2006

INSIDE

HUMANITIES FESTIVAL

LETTERS ABOUT

LITERATURE:

LACIE CRAVEN

[MAINE'S FIRST PRIZE
WINNER IN NATIONAL
WRITING CONTEST]

A CULTURE

OF SURVIVAL:

ALLEN SOCKABASIN

GRANT AWARDS

W

HEN you open the program for *Taxing Maine* and see pie charts and a glossary, you may suspect that this is no ordinary play. Less than five minutes into the performance, your suspicions will be confirmed as the actors inform you that “after the show, we’re going to ask what you think about taxes and the common good.”

Wait: don’t we go to the theater to sit back and watch while the actors do the work? Don’t we discuss plays (if we discuss them at all) in the privacy of our homes?

Not if the theater is the Theater of Ideas; not if the play is *Taxing Maine*. David Greenham, the Director of the Theater at Monmouth, has worked with the Maine Humanities Council on two previous Theater of Ideas projects, exploring issues of importance to Maine in a short play followed by a discussion. The first, in the late 1980s, addressed out-migration through the character of a returning Civil War veteran; the second, in 2003, centered on environmental concerns for the Androscoggin River.

Knowing that a discussion will follow a performance causes audience members to shift in their seats, sitting up a bit straighter and glancing at their neighbors. You can almost hear their minds opening. In 30 years of engaging the people of Maine in the power and pleasure of ideas, the Maine Humanities Council has come to recognize that shift. It heralds the approach of a thoughtful, honest conversation. In this anniversary year, the Council sought to encourage that kind of conversation about a public policy issue in communities across the state, and David’s Theater of Ideas seemed an ideal vehicle.

David does not claim to be an expert on taxes, but after the extensive research he completed while writing *Taxing Maine*, he can certainly pass for one. David spent hours in the state archives, poring over legislative transcripts from income tax debates and circuitous explications of the sales tax system, and more time interviewing legislators (on both sides of the aisle) and historians. And the arduous process is not complete: he is committed to keeping the play current by following tax-related events throughout the summer and fall. Thrilled to be working on a long-running show that will be continually refreshed, he and Dennis Price, the Theater at Monmouth actor who also appears in the show, discuss breaking tax news with something approaching glee.

The actors’ passion for their unusual subject shows through in *Taxing Maine*. The civic leaders they portray during the performance are a motley bunch: blustering, zealous, alternately jolly and gloomy. Their speeches—drawn verbatim from primary sources—are pure drama. “Taxation to the body politic is like blood to the human body,” proclaims Obediah Gardner at a Grange Convention in 1908. But when Dennis and David bring them to life on the stage, it’s hard to ridicule these characters, or blame them for any flaws in the current system. They were earnest and informed (or as David puts it, “they weren’t any dumber than we are”), and they agonized over every decision they made. *Taxing Maine* therefore reveals how little has changed in nearly two hundred years of tax debate. Perhaps the biggest difference is that in previous centuries, the average citizen was much more likely to enter into the fray. *Taxing Maine* invites us back in.

Upcoming *Taxing Maine* venues on page 3



David Greenham (top, middle) and Dennis Price (middle, bottom) in action as they present *Taxing Maine* at the McArthur Public Library in Biddeford.

PHOTO: DIANE HUDSON



D

EAR Friends,

As you may know, I plan to retire from my position as executive director of the Maine Humanities Council at the end of 2006. A thorough national search for a new executive director has recently been completed, and I am so very pleased to announce that the Maine Humanities Council board unanimously selected Erik Jorgensen as my successor.

Erik has served as Assistant Director of the Council since 1999, and several years before that was a member of the board. You are likely to have met Erik through his work advising applicants on their grant proposals, or testifying before the Legislature on behalf of the Cultural Affairs Council, or visiting your community library, museum, and school. If you have ever had the opportunity to meet this energetic, good-humored, wise, and creative man, you will be as confident as I that he is the right person to lead our organization into a bright future.

In this issue of the newsletter, you will find articles about many special programs being organized by the Humanities Council during our thirtieth anniversary year. The next few months will be a celebratory time for me, too, although the transition that will take place through December 31 is something quite new. I'm now what is known as a lame duck, and (with disregard for mixing metaphors!) I must confess to feeling a bit like the Cheshire Cat, who "vanished quite slowly, beginning with the end of the tail, and ending with the grin, which remained some time after the rest of it had gone." I hope my own "grin," prompted by many happy memories of working with a superb staff and board in a most wonderful state, will remain long after I leave this office.

With great affection for the people and institutions of Maine,



Dorothy Schwartz
Executive Director



A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Maine Humanities Council brings people and ideas together to encourage a deeper understanding of ourselves and others, fostering wisdom in an age of information, providing context in a time of change.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair

Richard E. Barnes
Kennebunk

Vice-chair

Robert L. McArthur
Auburn

Peter J. Aicher
Falmouth

Charles B. Alexander
Ellsworth

Jill M. Goldthwait
Bar Harbor

Kathryn Hunt
Bangor

Sheila Jans
Madawaska

Theodora J. Kalikow
Farmington

Lincoln F. Ladd
Wayne

Thomas K. Lizotte
Dover-Foxcroft

John R. Opperman
Portland

Stephen Podgajny
Brunswick

Patricia D. Ramsay
Yarmouth

Joel H. Rosenthal
Fairfield, CT

Ann Staples Waldron
Southwest Harbor

Peter B. Webster
South Portland

Jean T. Wilkinson
Cumberland

Douglas E. Woodbury
Orr's Island

Robert L. Woodbury
Harpwell

STAFF

Victoria Bonebakker
Associate Director
Director of the Harriet P. Henry
Center for the Book
vbonebak@mainehumanities.org

Trudy Hickey
Office and Grants Manager
trudy@mainehumanities.org

Tricia Currie Hunt
Administrative Assistant
info@mainehumanities.org

Erik Jorgensen
Assistant Director
ejorgens@mainehumanities.org

Diane Magras
Director of Development
diane@mainehumanities.org

Dorothy Schwartz
Executive Director
dorothys@mainehumanities.org

PROGRAMS

Charles Calhoun
Teachers for a New Century
charles@mainehumanities.org

Denise Pendleton
Born to Read
dpendle@mainehumanities.org

Elizabeth Sinclair
Let's Talk About It
Literature & Medicine:
Humanities at the
Heart of Health Care®
lizz@mainehumanities.org

Carolyn Sloan
Let's Talk About It
Literature & Medicine:
Humanities at the
Heart of Health Care®
New Books, New Readers
csloan@mainehumanities.org

Julia Walking
New Books, New Readers
Stories for Life
walking@mainehumanities.org

Brita Zitin
Born to Read
Newsletter Contributor
brita@mainehumanities.org

ADDRESS

674 Brighton Avenue
Portland, ME 04102-1012
T 207 773-5051
F 207 773-2416
info@mainehumanities.org
www.mainehumanities.org

The Maine Humanities Council is an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Editor: Diane Magras
Design: Lori Harley



CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The Maine Humanities Council maintains an ongoing list of potential nominees to fill future openings of its Board of Directors. The Council seeks a wide geographic representation and range of civic and/or academic experience. To notify the Council of your interest, please send a letter and curriculum vita to:

Governance
Committee Chair
Maine Humanities Council
674 Brighton Avenue
Portland, ME 04102-1012



HUMANITIES FEST: FOOD FOR MINDS AND HEARTS OF ALL AGES is a gift to the people of Maine in commemoration of the Council's 30th Anniversary. Plan to attend this **FREE** celebration of the humanities, highlighting some of our favorite Maine scholars, poets and musicians during a day of readings, demonstrations, workshops, performances and lectures that will offer something for every interest and taste.

The Humanities Fest will be held on Saturday, October 21, at Bates College from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Programming especially for families will take place at the Franco-American Center from 12:00 to 3:00 p.m. You will receive more information in the fall by mail, or visit our web site, www.mainehumanities.org. We hope to see you there!

"Taxing Maine: David Greenham," continued from page 1

SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING TAXING MAINE VENUES, AS OF AUGUST 21, 2006:

Do join us—all performances of this 30th Anniversary commemoration are free and open to the public. For the most current schedule, call the Maine Humanities Council at 207-773-5051, or visit www.mainehumanities.org/taxingmaine.



September 7 Rockland Public Library Steve Donoso, 594-0310	6:30 p.m.	September 22 Eastport Arts Center Joyce Weber, 853-2358	7:00 p.m.	October 12 Wells: York County Community College Dianne Fallon, 646-9282 x206	4:30 p.m.
September 8 North Haven: Waterman Community Center Keely Waterman, 867-2100	7:30 p.m.	September 23 Lubec: American Legion Post #65 Dennis Corso, 733-2538	5:00 p.m.	October 13 Winthrop Performing Arts Center Bill MacDonald, 395-4279	7:30 p.m.
September 9 Dover-Foxcroft: Center Theatre Patrick Myers, 564-8943	7:30 p.m.	October 4 Portland Public Library Kristi Belesca, 871-1700 x759	noon	October 20 Gorham: White Rock Grange, Wilson Road Ann Rust, 839-3946	7:00 p.m.
September 13 Springvale Baptist Church Anna Ashley, 324-4183	7:00 p.m.	October 4 Brunswick: Curtis Memorial Library, sponsored by the League of Women Voters Lou Brown, 833-6810	7:00 p.m.	October 21: Humanities Fest Lewiston: Mays Center, Bates College Victoria Bonebakker, 773-5051 x206	1:00 p.m.
September 15 Bethel: Gould Academy Vicki Rackliffe, 824-3575	7:00 p.m.	October 10 Machias: Performing Arts Center, UMM Naida L. Pennell, 255-1289	7:00 p.m.	October 23 Scarborough Public Library Catherine Morrison, 883-4723	7:00 p.m.
September 16 Bath: Winter Street Center Thom Watson, 443-1606	7:00 p.m.	October 11 Bar Harbor: Jesup Memorial Library Nancy Howland, 288-4245	7:00 p.m.	October 28 Auburn Public Library Rosemary Waltos, 333-6640	7:00 p.m.
September 19 Portland: Children's Theater of Maine Brenda Peluso, MANP, 871-1885	7:00 p.m.				

This project is funded by the We the People initiative of the National Endowment for the Humanities.



LETTERS ABOUT LITERATURE: LACIE CRAVEN

BY BRITA ZITIN

L

ACIE CRAVEN'S family owns and operates Wild Wind Farm on the coast of Maine, in Bucks Harbor. It's a long way from there to the Florida hamlet where *The Yearling* is set, but Lacie has no trouble imagining a farm dotted with citrus trees rather than pines. Both are "wild country," where families live off the land and children grow up with animals as their closest companions. When asked if *The Yearling* would appeal as strongly to children raised in cities, Lacie responds with an emphatic yes. "Before Flag dies," she explains, "Rawlings has already made you feel close to the characters and animals. You're right there with them

in the story. That's what good writers do."

Since she is educated at home, Lacie selects her own reading material for her curriculum. "Mom has never had to push me to read," she says. "I'll read anything that's written down." After watching the film adaptation of *The Yearling* last summer, Lacie spotted the novel on a bookshelf in her house and tore through it, sensing from the beginning that "Jody was pretty much like me." ("It was much better than the movie," she says. "Books always are.") She mentions *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* as another recent favorite, but she certainly doesn't limit herself to coming-of-age stories set in the

WRITING CONTEST WINNER

The Library of Congress Center for the Book (Washington, D.C.) has named Lacie Craven, an eighth grade student from Bucks Harbor, Maine, as one of six national first prize winners of the *Letters About Literature* writing contest, sponsored nationally in partnership with Target. To enter, young readers write a letter to an author, living or deceased, describing how that author's work changed the student's view of the world or of himself or herself. Approximately 48,000 young readers across the country entered the competition this year.

The Maine Humanities Council's Harriet P. Henry Center for the Book provides local funding and program support necessary to bring *Letters About Literature* to Maine. The Council's panel of judges selected three first place state winners, out of about 700 entries, to advance for national judging. Lacie's letter to Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, author of *The Yearling*, was the state winner in the competition for children in grades 7 and 8. She is the first-ever national winner from Maine in the six years that the *Letters About Literature* contest has been held in Maine. Lacie will receive her national award during the National Book Festival in Washington, D.C. on September 30, 2006.



Dear Mrs. Rawlings,

I live near the ocean, under a mountain, on a farm. We raise a lot of different animals, but mostly sheep. We also hunt for our food. These things made me feel very close to the characters in this book. If you have sheep, you have orphaned lambs, if you have orphaned lambs, you have true friends. They get into a lot of trouble (A lot like Flag!) but it's all worth it to have a little lamb that follows you and is dependent on you.

I remember Mattie, a lamb whose mother had refused to take her. I had heated up her bottle and fed her every two to three hours every day of her life. She would kick up her heels and run with me down the road, then push her little plush head into my hand. We would lay in the grass, and I talked to her about everything, and she listened as I felt her fragile little hoof and followed her tiny, warm curls. One day she got sick. I kept watch over her the whole day, praying hard and making her as comfortable as possible. I picked her up and held her tight, tracing a little swirl on the side of her face. I hoped to feel her lean her head against me. She didn't. She was dead. I reluctantly put her down and looked at her for the last time, covered her with a towel, stepped back, and said goodbye through tears to my lifeless friend. Afterwards I ran to the barn in secret and cried into my sister's lamb until it was time to feed him. After each death it feels like you lost a child. It is so devastating, I cry and feel like I did something wrong, like I could have prevented their death. I felt like I had trusted in God and he let me down, like He had forgotten about me. Why did He give me something only to take it away? Why didn't He heal her when I asked?

Top left: Overlooking the bay from the Craven family farm. PHOTO: THE DOWNEAST COASTAL PRESS;
Bottom right: Lacie with her sheep. PHOTOS: RHONDA CRAVEN

rural United States. She feels equally at home in a Missouri river town and in the forests of Narnia. Last year, her entry in the *Letters About Literature* contest was a letter to J.R.R. Tolkien.

As the deadline for this year's contest approached, Lacie did not review a list of Pulitzer Prize winners to find the perfect subject (though *The Yearling* did win the Pulitzer for fiction in 1939). She did not research Rawlings' life or read her other books. She simply consulted her handwritten list of Favorite Books and set out to thank the writer. Below is Lacie's winning letter:

The answer came in your book. When I read about Jody and his fawn at first I asked the same question. Why does this happen? Then I saw what Flag taught him. All my lambs had been working unintentionally to help make me who I am today, and who I will be. They taught me how to deal with challenges in my life, how to overcome, and when it seems like I'm all alone, I'm really not. If I could have changed the past and brought Mattie back to life, I wouldn't. I look back now and I only smile. I continue to raise sheep, and always happiness prevails over death. In every way when it seems like there is no good left in the world, you see it displayed in indirect ways. For every sad thing, there's a happy reason behind it and it makes us stronger people. We can find rest in this. Thank you for writing this book.

Lacie

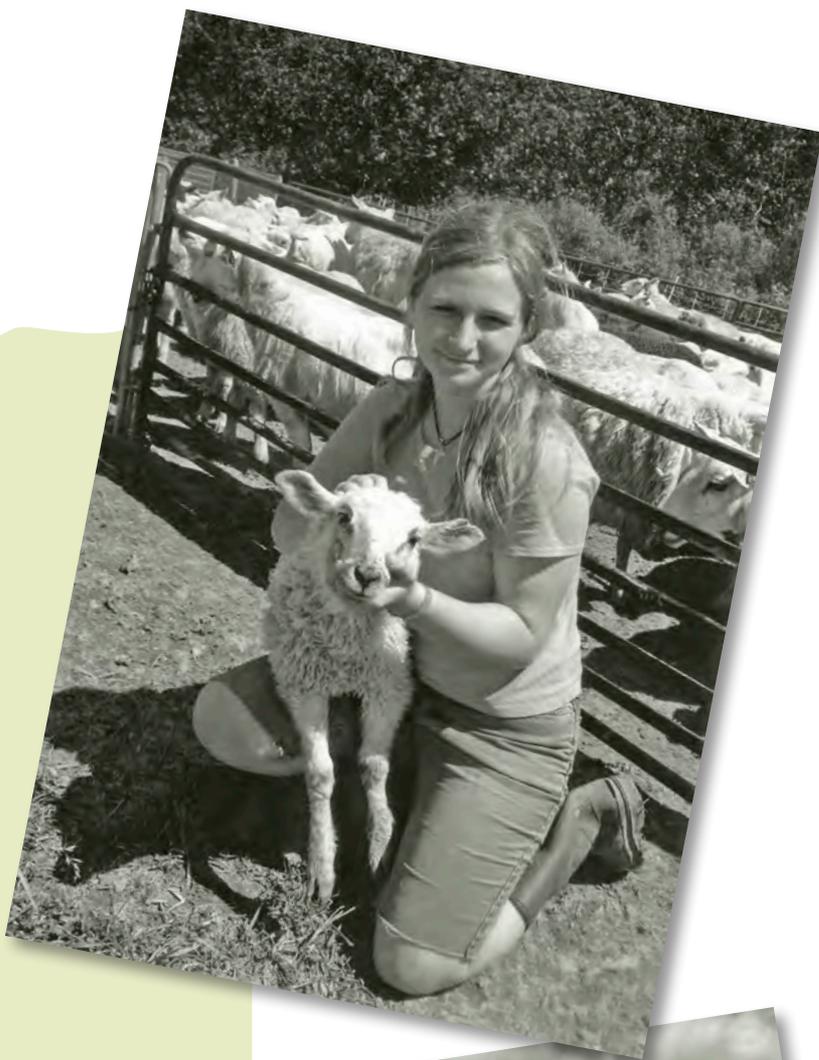
Lacie mailed the winning letter without showing it to anyone. In fact, Lacie admits to stashing most of her writing under her bed. She works after dark, tucking songs and poems and entire books away from prying eyes. Is she uncomfortable now that the entire country is reading a letter too personal for her own parents to see? "It's different when it's people I don't know," Lacie clarifies. It's a felicitous distinction for a young writer to be able to make, especially one who is already receiving significant accolades. While Lacie envisions writing in her future, she doesn't count on it

as a career. "Writing wouldn't seem like a job to me," she says. "I could have a normal job and still do it."

In fact, Lacie has other plans entirely. Prior to any "normal" job, she hopes to travel the world as a missionary. When she does eventually settle, she can't imagine doing it anywhere but in Maine. "Maybe I'll keep on with the family business," she muses. "Improve the land a little, cut down some trees." She's already a talented farmer. This year, she bottled seven lambs, all named after characters in books—and all survivors. (For the record,

Lacie has friends who are neither fictional nor four-legged: Mattie was named for the Cravens' 95-year-old neighbor, who lives alone and enjoys Lacie's company when she drops by for tea and candy.)

This fall, Lacie will enter the ninth grade at Washington Academy. For the first time, she'll have assigned reading, but she's determined to continue to read in her own time. "I'll read at all hours of the night if I have to," she vows. "Reading is top priority."





A CULTURE OF SURVIVAL: ALLEN SOCKABASIN

BY BRITA ZITIN

Allen Sockabasin
PHOTO: BRITA ZITIN

IN 1999, the Maine Humanities Council's *Born to Read* program convened a committee of librarians and educators to select books for its new initiative, *Many Eyes, Many Voices: Talking About Difference Through Children's Literature*. The committee's mandate was to cull twelve picture books from the multitudes in print, striking a perfect balance of topics and styles without compromising quality. Unfortunately, there was one notable gap in the otherwise bountiful field of contenders: no suitable children's book about Maine's Native American population could be found. The few titles available were either too stereotypical or too distant—tales populated by warriors in headresses, set amidst Plains buffalo or Southwest deserts. With extreme regret, *Born to Read* decided to launch its initiative without Native American representation.

That all changed last year, when Tilbury House Press in Gardiner, Maine, published *Thanks to the Animals* by Passamaquoddy storyteller Allen Sockabasin. This tale—about a baby who is sheltered from a harsh winter storm by gentle animals—has resonated with many readers. It was the top seller in the book department at L.L.Bean's flagship store during the holiday season. *Thanks to the Animals* is not a traditional Passamaquoddy story, but rather, a family story that Sockabasin heard from his mother. It does not attempt to explain or encapsulate an entire culture, but its setting and characters present an opportunity to talk with children about Maine's Native American population.

Since adding the book to its *Many Eyes, Many Voices* collection, *Born to Read* has heard

about preschool classrooms captivated by the story, curious about the animals, concerned for the lost baby, and eager to tell their own stories of moving between winter and summer homes. Building on this interest, educators have introduced children to animal names in the Passamaquoddy language, either using the index in the book or the Tilbury House website. Sockabasin is thrilled by these accounts, for every child who hears his language becomes another potential advocate for its restoration.

The characters in Allen Sockabasin's picture book, *Thanks to the Animals*—Joo Tum and his wife, Zoo Sap and his brothers and sisters—are based on his own large family, which his father struggled to support after his mother's death. Sockabasin recalls sharing a single sleeve of saltine crackers with ten brothers and sisters. At the age of eleven, he started his first business: hauling garbage for 25 cents a load in a 55-gallon drum he'd lashed to a wagon. "Something magical happened when I earned those first quarters," he recalls. "I got control over my hunger." Sockabasin attributes his work ethic to the "culture of survival" in his village, in which self-sufficiency and ingenuity were highly valued. By way of illustration, he launches into an archetypal story of American boyhood: a neighborhood baseball game interrupted by a ball shattering a window, children dispersed in an effort to avoid blame. From his hiding place, Sockabasin watched a local craftsman gather the shards of glass, which he would later use to plane white ash for axe handles.

SELECTED MHC GRANTS MADE BETWEEN SE

BINGHAM

Heritage Guide Training

\$1,000: The Old Canada Road is a 78-mile stretch of northern Route 201 with a rich history all its own. Area recreational guides have captive audiences who are eager to learn about the road and the river that follows it, yet the guides are not formally prepared to disseminate historical knowledge. This summer, with help from the National Scenic Byway Program and a Kennebec-Chaudière outreach grant, the Old Canada Road Historical Society presented a class and curriculum to train the recreational guides to present the history of the region to the sports enthusiasts and tourists in their charge. To learn more, please contact coordinator Bob Haynes at oldcanada@verizon.net. > Old Canada Road Scenic Byway, Inc.

MONHEGAN ISLAND

The Hermit of Manana

\$750: Ray Phillips, the famous hermit of Manana Island, rejected a career in New York City in favor of an isolated life on a tiny deserted island. In doing so, he attracted an enormous amount of voyeuristic attention until his death in 1975. In a new documentary, filmmaker Elisabeth Harris uses his life story to explore questions about solitude, connectedness, and eccentricity. "The Hermit of Manana" made its world premiere on May 30, as part of the City Visions Film Festival in New York City, where it won awards for Best Editing and Best Cinematography. On July 6, the film was shown at the Monhegan Island Ecology Seminar; it was also a part of the Maine International Film Festival in Waterville. To learn more or order a DVD, please visit www.thehermitofmanana.com. > Monhegan Museum



Top: Ray Phillips, circa 1950s–60s. PHOTO: YOLLA NICLAS © MONHEGAN MUSEUM, Bottom: Elisabeth Harris and Ira Blanchard filming on Manana Island. PHOTO: JOE SPIES

PORTLAND

Maine-Aomori Bilingual Picture Book

\$500: The First Lady of Maine, Karen Baldacci, who takes a particular interest in literacy and the education of young children, has initiated a bilingual book project involving the sister states of Maine and Aomori, Japan. The project's goal is an illustrated children's book that will introduce children from each country to the cultures of Maine and Aomori. Maine's representative, Scott Nash, traveled to Aomori in November 2005 to meet with Toshiki Sawada, an Aomori-born artist of considerable renown in Japan. When Sawada-san paid his reciprocal visit to Maine in May 2006, he worked with students at the Maine College of Art and in Maine elementary schools. Publication of the book, with an introduction co-written by Mrs. Baldacci and Mrs. Mimura, the wife of the governor of Aomori, is tentatively set for the fall of 2006. To learn more about this collaboration, please contact Elizabeth Adams of the Maine-Aomori Sister-State Advisory Council, eadams1@gwi.net. > Maine College of Art and the Maine-Aomori Sister-State Advisory Council



Governor Mimura and Karen Baldacci exchange gifts at their initial meeting.

PHOTOS: SALLY BAUGHMAN



Sockabasin traces the loss of this culture of survival to the disappearance of the Passamaquoddy language. He does not agree with all the methods used in the attempt to rescue his language (he speaks with scorn of the scholars who devised an orthography before realizing that most native speakers could not read or write), but he is a steadfast supporter of restoration efforts that involve a genuine understanding of oral culture. He teaches immersion courses to Passamaquoddy students at the University of Maine and incorporates the language into all of his performances. While he instructs them in grammar and pronunciation, Sockabasin's first priority is to leave them with a sense of pride. "No one will remember words or sounds of a language they are ashamed to speak," he reasons.

His dedication to Native language is inextricably linked to his love of music. He remembers listening to his mother sing traditional songs; then, after she was gone, playing his only cassette recording of a girl singing in Maliseet over and over. Music and stories remind us who we are and where we come from, and Sockabasin believes that the true purpose of education is to illuminate these mysteries. He's not concerned about the multitude of other cultural influences competing with traditional music for the attention of the youth in his community. After all, his mother's melodies competed with his father's singing in Latin, and in the evenings, all singing was supplanted by the strains of country music broadcast from West Virginia on WWVA radio.

Every summer, Sockabasin puts his educational theories into practice when he invites 35 Native American children from the most disenfran-

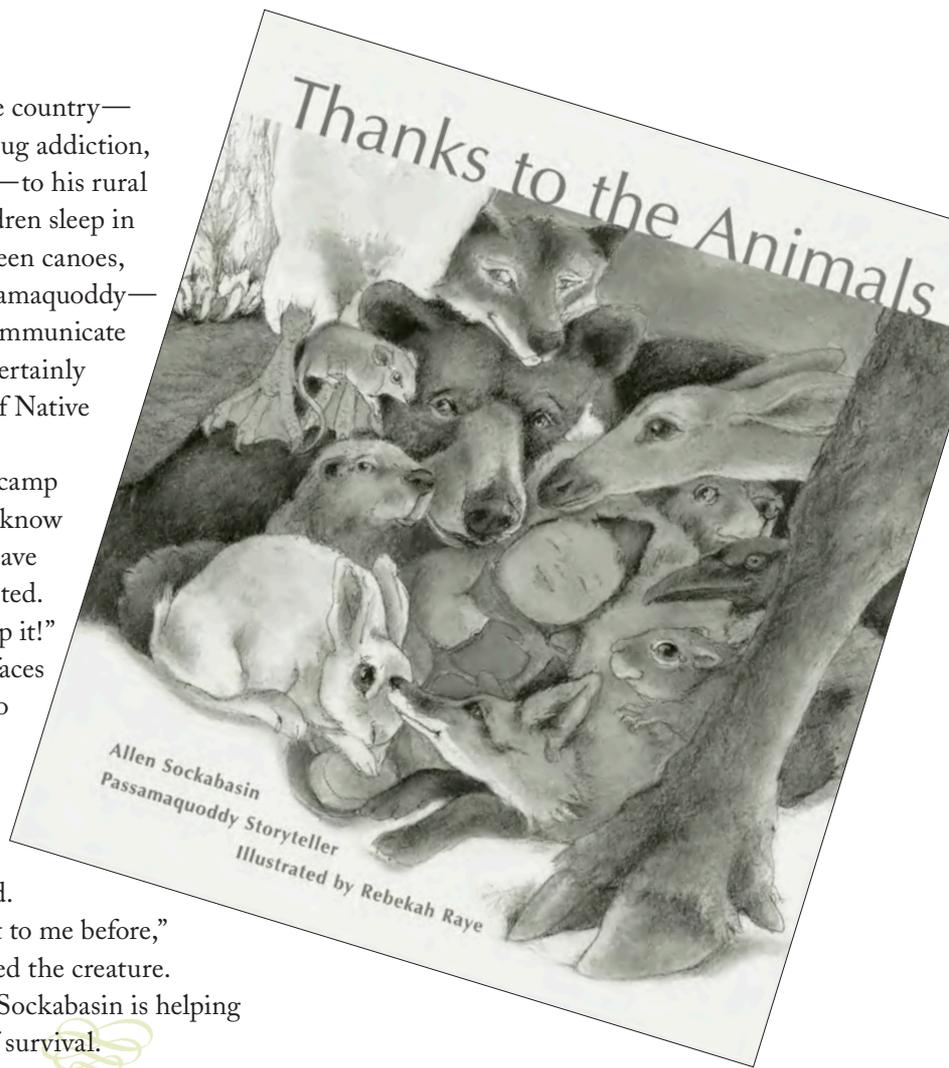
chised communities in the country—afflicted by alcoholism, drug addiction, poverty, and HIV/AIDS—to his rural camp in Maine. The children sleep in tents, paddle a fleet of fifteen canoes, and meet speakers of Passamaquoddy—who cannot necessarily communicate with every child but can certainly communicate the power of Native language.

One summer, a boy at camp caught a turtle and didn't know what to do with it. "You have to let it go," his peers insisted. "It's against the law to keep it!"

Thirty-five expectant faces turned to Sockabasin, who looked directly at the boy who'd made the catch. "It's up to you," said the former tribal chief.

The boy's eyes widened. "No one has ever said that to me before," he said quietly, and released the creature.

Shard by shard, Allen Sockabasin is helping to reconstruct a culture of survival.



HUMANITIES FEST

Allen Sockabasin will appear at the Maine Humanities Council's Humanities Fest in Lewiston on October 21, 2006. His performance will be appropriate for all ages—please bring your family! For more resources on Native American children's books, please visit the *Born to Read* website and click on "Links and Resources." To hear Sockabasin reading *Thanks to the Animals* in Passamaquoddy, visit www.tilburyhouse.com.

SEPTEMBER 15, 2005 AND JUNE 1, 2006

THOMASTON

Teen Reading Center

\$1,000: The Thomaston Public Library opened a Teen Reading Center and graphic novel collection late last year. Since then, circulation of graphic novels has increased from five books in two weeks to nearly 200.

Poster for Teen Pizza Party, created by Debby Atwell. Jon Bogdanove, a nationally-known artist who has worked on "Superman" and "The Fantastic Four," brought the cartooning clubs he directs at the local public schools to the Teen Reading Center. Following their visit, he wrote, "the middle-schoolers did their best work ever after their field trip to the library. Clearly a direct result. The air of scholarly legitimacy with which you've endowed the genre, mixed with feelings of unhindered fun and self-expression, has encouraged students to think more seriously about their own writing and drawing—and maybe even the broader range of options open to them in life." For details and upcoming events, please contact the Thomaston children's librarian, Debby Atwell, debby@thomaston.lib.me.us.

> Thomaston Public Library

WATERVILLE

Lebanese Heritage Mural

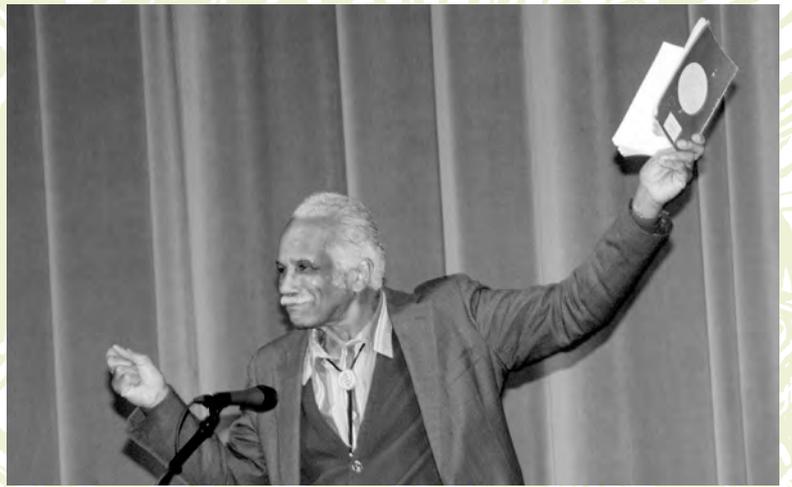
Waterville's Lebanese population, the oldest and largest in the state, was established over 100 years ago and has had a tremendous influence on the city's social, cultural, religious, and economic development. This summer, Maine artist Kevin James will create a mural celebrating this distinctive Lebanese heritage. The mural's design has been shaped by one-on-one interviews, extensive research, and public meetings with the Lebanese community. Kevin's work on the 25 x 60 foot mural at 51 Main Street was unveiled during the Waterville In-Town Arts Fest on July 29, and community members stopped by to observe the process and ask questions of the artist. For details, please call 207-680-2055.

> Waterville Main Street

Through the window rises the steeple of Saint Joseph's Maronite Church, one of the original and current centers of the Lebanese community in Waterville. The basketball represents Waterville's 1944 New England Championship team, the majority of whose players were Lebanese. Among the other items on the desk are a map of Lebanon, a map of the Lebanese neighborhood in Waterville, a gavel representing the many Lebanese who pursued careers in law, a spool of thread for the textile mills that brought many of the Lebanese here, and a selection of Lebanese food.



A typical reaction to a *Born to Read* volunteer reader.
PHOTO: BRITA ZITIN



Ashley Bryan presents for a packed audience in Portland.
PHOTO: DIANE HUDSON

PAMELA BELLIVEAU: SEPTEMBER 30

Storyteller Pamela Belliveau of Lewiston will present nursery rhymes and tales with appeal for all ages (especially preschoolers) at a **free family program at the McArthur Public Library in Biddeford**. Librarian Vicky Smith will then speak about the importance of stories, and the role of books and libraries in the art of storytelling. The free event is scheduled for 10-11:30 a.m.

This event is part of a new family outreach component of the *Born to Read* Volunteer Reader Program, undertaken in partnership with the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program of Southern Maine (RSVP). The project is funded as a community service by residents of Hills Beach in Biddeford, Maine.

ASHLEY BRYAN: OCTOBER 20 & 21

Artist, writer, and storyteller Ashley Bryan returns to Portland on Friday, October 20, 2006 at 5:30 p.m., for a free performance at the Reiche School Auditorium. This event is jointly sponsored by the Maine Humanities Council, the Maine College of Art, and Portland West. Learn more about Ashley Bryan on the *Born to Read* website: www.mainehumanities.org/programs/btr-bryan.html.

HUMANITIES FEST

Ashley Bryan will ALSO appear at the Maine Humanities Council's Humanities Festival from 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. on October 21, 2006. His performance will be appropriate for all ages—bring friends and family for an afternoon of song and poetry with this one-of-a-kind Maine treasure! Keep your eye on the MHC website and your mailbox for more information!

MHC FALL 2006 NEWSLETTER

TAXING MAINE: DAVID GREENHAM

Who's taxing Maine? A new play commissioned and presented statewide by the MHC explores this issue, past and present, with discussion!

HUMANITIES FEST

A day of ideas and activities for adults and families—join us in Lewiston October 21!

LETTERS ABOUT LITERATURE: LACIE CRAVEN

Lacie Craven's idyllic and thoughtful letter won her a national prize in the Library of Congress's *Letters About Literature* competition. Read not only Lacie's letter but her own thoughts about the importance of reading and writing in rural life.

A CULTURE OF SURVIVAL: ALLEN SOCKABASIN

A Passamaquoddy storyteller shares his thoughts behind a new book that opens up the world of Maine's native peoples to children statewide. Don't miss Sockabasin at the Humanities Fest on October 21!

GRANT AWARDS

Documenting the famous hermit of Manana Island who rejected a career in NYC in favor of an isolated life on a tiny deserted island... Adding area history to tours in western Maine... Involving the sister states of Maine and Aomori, Japan, in a bilingual book project... Introducing scholarly legitimacy with graphic novels in Thomaston... Unveiling a Lebanese Heritage mural in Waterville.

PAMELA BELLIVEAU
September 30!

ASHLEY BRYAN
October 20 & 21!!



T 207 773-5051

F 207 773-2416

info@mainehumanities.org

www.mainehumanities.org

MAINE HUMANITIES COUNCIL

Home of the Harriet P. Henry
Center for the Book

674 Brighton Avenue
Portland, Maine 04102-1012