The Story of Us
Perspectives on immigration

Letters about Literature: an Exploration in Three Parts
I How Your Writing Has Moved Me
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Benedict Arnold’s March
History Camp-inspired reflection

Discovering Ernie’s Ark
Stories for Life as opportunity for incarcerated women to read and talk about literature

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Earlier this fall, a pair of state-of-the-art medical patient robots arrived in Portland. Straight out of Asimov, just a little bit creepy, these humanoid machines can be programmed to present symptoms, demand different treatments, moan and groan, and otherwise challenge medical students to sharpen clinical experience without risk.

I’m not sure anyone has tried to link medical robots to the world of literature beyond science fiction, but I’ll try by suggesting that stories, in creating an illusion of aliveness, can offer much of the same learning—and the same type of safety. It is, after all, hard to harm or mistreat a fictional character! Yet by understanding that character’s life and experience, by moving into a story’s time, place and culture, one can often develop new perspective on one’s own life and values.

That of course is the chief premise behind our Literature & Medicine program, in which health care providers use literature to reflect on their own work. And it is equally true, as you will read in this issue, for discussions around immigration, or in our programs that use stories to help prisoners see beyond the walls of their own experience.

Public debate, especially in times of economic hardship, sometimes pits the humanities as a trade-off to “real life” vocation-themed academic subjects. I could talk for hours about the errors of this false dichotomy. Instead, I’ll simply point to our programs. There, over and over again, with a wide range of audiences, I see the humanities providing real utility in real lives.

Erik C. Jorgensen
Executive Director
THE STORY
OF US

BY ANNALIESE JAKIMIDES

Earlier this year the Council organized a public conference that explored the history, ethics, and current status of immigration in both Maine and the United States. Held in Portland, Coming to America: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Immigration attracted more than 250 students, teachers and members of the public, to look at this topic, reflecting the current interest in the role of immigrants, past and present. This story is the result of conversations with the historians and others who helped shape and develop this program.

Fact: The majority of Americans are immigrants or descendants of immigrants. So what is it about immigration that raises the hackles of so many people?

Although today’s world is much more connected than it was a generation ago, with knowledge about distant places and cultures ever-present in people’s minds, Americans still get nervous with every wave of immigrants who knock on our door, step over our threshold, and settle in the “land of the free and the home of the brave.”

“IT is a problem of perception,” says Edward O’Donnell, Associate Professor of History at College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts. An historian and author who opened the conference, O’Donnell is an expert on immigration. “Every generation has sat up straight and proclaimed their current immigrants utterly and completely different from any other immigrants in our history—more dangerous, less assimilating, more invasive—whether in the 1840s or 1890s, 1965, or 2010. The same 300-million who hate immigration love its great American legacy. The second-most-profitable enterprise on the Internet—the first is pornography—is genealogy.”

According to O’Donnell, the past is safe; those immigrants have largely assimilated.

Today’s immigrants have legal protections that past generations did not have, but they can still encounter the same fear, underlying uncertainty, and often outright dislike as their predecessors. According to the Brookings Institution, eighty-five percent of U.S. immigrants today live in the one hundred largest metropolitan areas in the country. It is always much easier,
“Although the established members of a community sometimes see the influx of people from somewhere else as a threat to their economic well-being, facts rarely bear out that fear.”

According to O’Donnell, to be a foreigner in New York City or Boston. In rural or less-developed areas, someone who is different becomes an easy target.

In Lewiston, where recent immigration has garnered much attention, it is important to note that the Somalis and other Africans who have come into the community were a secondary migration—meaning they were already in the United States, and resettled. In a secondary migration, it is always more of a challenge for the receiving community, according to Heather Lindkvist, a visiting instructor in the Department of Anthropology at Bates College who has been conducting ethnographic fieldwork with the Somali Muslim community in Lewiston. No federal resources are allocated to a secondary migration, she says, and the “growing pains” can be intense.

When it comes to immigration, in general, O’Donnell notes the problem of “misinformation and half-truths.” During the program, O’Donnell explained how in many places across the country—and Lewiston has been no different—rumors abound: free cars, and checks for tens of thousands of dollars. In Lewiston, these are all untrue.

What has been true, however, is that social programs have been established to make the transitions easier—something that did not happen for the many Franco-Americans who moved into the Lewiston area in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. They passionately wanted to maintain their culture and their language, but then there were no English as a second language or English Language Learner programs, no programs at all—except, perhaps, an implied “stop speaking French” program.

Lewiston is a community of about 38,000; the Somali population is now estimated at 5,000, or about 13 percent of the city. “The ethnic, religious, and national identity of the Somalis has also challenged the receiving community’s ability to accept [them] with open arms,” says Lindkvist. Further complicating acceptance was the timing: 9/11 had already become part of our collective history, and that many Somalis are Muslim added a layer of distrust.

Lewiston’s Somalis are intent on both making their way in this country and holding on to their cultural identity. And according to Lindkvist, case study results indicate “the Lewiston School Department and the high school have successfully balanced assimilation and accommodation.” Not an easy assignment.

Although the established members of a community sometimes see the influx of people from somewhere else as a threat to their economic well-being, facts rarely bear out that fear. Across the country, immigrants have been credited with breathing new life into communities whose economic infrastructure had already suffered: the Bosnians in Utica, New York; the Hmong in Fresno, California; and the Somalis in Lewiston, which in 2007 was named an “All-American City” by the National Civic League, the first Maine town to have received the distinction in forty years. This award recognizes cities for the quality of their civic life, their inclusiveness, and their innovation in meeting community needs. It suggests that Lewiston’s efforts with its new Mainers are working.

With the second-lowest birth rate in the country, the highest median age, the lowest percentage of residents under eighteen, and recent census figures
indicating a drop in the population, immigrants may be key to Maine’s economic survival.

As the nation’s population has grown, Maine has had the lowest percentage of change in its foreign-born population in the country (1.1% versus North Carolina’s 273.7%, Georgia’s 233.4%, New York’s 35.6%, and Vermont’s 32.5%), but Milbridge, a town of approximately 1,300 in Washington County, has “one of the most diverse populations in the state,” says Ian Yaffe, director of Mano en Mano, an organization that grew out of a “group of community members getting together at the local library” in order “to build a stronger community in Downeast Maine by working with diverse populations to provide affordable housing and educational opportunities, remove barriers to health and social services, and advocate for social justice.”

Migrant workers have been major contributors to the state’s blueberry, apple, and broccoli harvesting industries for decades. And Latinos had been part of that workforce for a long time; in Washington County, that means primarily harvesting Maine’s wild blueberry crop (Maine is the largest producer of wild blueberries in the world). In recent years, the migrant workers began to stay, to make a home, a few families at a time. The town is now fifteen to twenty percent Latino, with more families living in the surrounding communities. “No other communities...”

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companies have foreign-born cofounders. According to Wheeler, sixty percent of postdoctoral fellows in biology nationwide are foreign-born.

Also in Bar Harbor, the College of the Atlantic has the third-largest percentage of international students in its student body of all private colleges in the United States. All of these components add up to a community that is quite different from a Lewiston or Milbridge, a Portland or an Orono, even the coastal towns that attract foreign workers every summer to make the beds, serve the food, and staff the shops.

Given that every community has a different history, Heather Lindkvist says that you have to contextualize immigration, and that a community facing the need to weave another element into its societal fabric can maximize the possibility of a less stressful experience by “reaching out immediately.”

“What we need in this country is a healthy debate on immigration policy,” says Edward O’Donnell. “The problem is everybody is so freaked out and easily inflamed that we can’t. I don’t know how we will have a rational conversation.”

We must. And it’s conversations like the ones that occurred as part of this Council program that can serve as a starting point.
In *Letters About Literature*, students connect with a book, a poem, a short story, an essay, a speech, or a play in a very personal way, and then write a letter to the author about their experience with his or her work.

For eighteen years, students from all over the country have been writing letters to writers, dead and alive. They have no expectation of an answer, although Cindy Duguay, a teacher in Maine’s RSU 52 (Green, Turner, and Leeds), says that often a student will ask whether a writer—living, of course—will read the letter if the student wins. (Answer: It’s possible.)

The “winning” part refers to the *Letters About Literature* (LAL) competition. Last year 69,000 young readers nationwide submitted letters. *Letters About Literature*, a program of the Center for the Book at the Library of Congress, presented in partnership with Target, has been offered to Maine students for ten years through the Harriet P. Henry Center for the Book at the Maine Humanities Council, and recently has been funded by the David Royte Fund (see story on page 8).

Each participating student writes a letter to an author whose work has moved or changed him or her. Within this letter, the sky’s the limit. With extensive curriculum materials developed at the national level, easy access to it, and ready guidance, teachers across the state have recognized LAL as an extraordinary resource for their students, and so they create an environment in which students really invest—in the ideas, books, letters, and in their own reflections.

Teachers with many years in the classroom under their belts, like Debra Bishop of Orono Middle School, now in her fourteenth year of teaching, and new teachers, like Kate Friesland, who...
Kate Friesland reflects upon the impact of Letters About Literature on her students.

PHOTOS: DIANE HUDSON

shared LAL with her students last year when she was at Lewiston Middle School in her first year of teaching, both praise the benefits of the program for their students and for themselves.

Bishop received an informational notice in her school mailbox three years ago and immediately recognized it as a great resource for her language arts classes. Even her most reluctant readers, she says, “are motivated by the idea of the contest.”

Although Friesland anticipated that students might have trouble choosing books, she had no idea that the challenge would come from “too many books.”

“When I first said pick a book, any book,” she says, “initially they went to popular culture books. Then we talked—and someone would say, ‘Oh, I forgot about…and I forgot about that…’ Next thing you know we had Shel Silverstein and Robert Frost and many others in the mix.”

Along the way, Friesland’s students to shine. Friesland says that too often the same students receive recognition. “Here there was no bias, no expectation. And that’s a great thing.”

Cindy Duguay, the teacher for gifted and talented classes in RSU 52, has been participating in LAL for over ten years. “I love the program,” she says. “Students get really excited about the power of their own voices, their own stories. Part of my role [as a gifted and talented teacher] is to encourage them to challenge themselves.” Since Duguay goes into all classes, she introduces LAL to all students in five different schools, and then the teachers take over.

“What I do [with LAL],” Duguay says, “is encourage the students to deal with higher-level questions, to explore self-reflection, to grow as an individual. Their own personal stories are unlocked through the books, the poems.”

And with the key turning in the lock, they walk through a door that connects them in a conscious, thoughtful, meaningful—and fun—way to the bigger world.

For the last five years, after teaching in East Harlem, Queens, and Brooklyn, Glenn Powers has been the fifth- and sixth-grade teacher at the Center for Teaching and Learning, a small demonstration school in Edgecomb. The school was founded by teacher-researcher-writer
Nancie Atwell, the “first teacher,” Powers says, “to use a workshop format for teaching students how to read like critics, and write like published authors.”

And so, he says, “*Letters About Literature* is a perfect fit. I have been using LAL as a place to publish the literary letters that we write every other week throughout the year.”

In those biweekly letters, students have an opportunity “to share their thoughts, opinions, feelings, and ideas that the book directly inspired with evidence from the text itself. LAL is a natural extension of those letters.”

Powers teaches LAL as a “genre in writing.” “We look at past winners,” he says, “the difference between our literary letters, what makes a good lead, middle, what makes a good closing.”

The *Letters About Literature* website has teaching materials with lesson plans and worksheets. Some teachers use them, and some don’t. Kate Friesland says, “Make it your own project; use the lesson plans that work for you.”

What all of the teachers appreciate is the way LAL allows for, and respects, many different voices in the same class in a meaningful way, thereby recognizing that books change us, both student and teacher, both child and adult.

Powers says that it is powerful to see students connect with books that really change their beliefs. It is something every one of these teachers is grateful to have experienced, and wishes for every student they have.
Good books hit hard. And especially when we’re young, books can hit really hard. Kids can draw out, tease out, or wrench out meaning from just about any book. I’ve seen this often as a Letters About Literature judge for Maine.

I’ve been on the panel of judges for our state’s portion of this national contest for the last four years, annually reading more than 50 letters, the finalists drawn from more than 1,500 Maine entries written by students from grades four through twelve. Students write letters to authors living or dead, describing how the author’s book changed them, helping them learn, grow, or better understand the world around them. Letters are supposed to be heartfelt and show, not tell (good training for budding young writers). Enthusiastic readers with soaring language and reluctant readers who struggle to find their words compete equally; the field is emotion and connection.

It’s fascinating to see what students come up with. Some remember The Little Engine That Could or other books from their childhoods, reliving their first moments of conscious literacy. Others chose their favorite books—Twilight or the whole Harry Potter series—to write thoughtful, compelling stories about the agony of lost love and the importance of imagination.

These students show how well they can connect the pages of popular works with their lives.

Young people are smart, and many take this contest as an opportunity to reflect on a personal experience: Terry Trueman’s Stuck in Neutral helped one girl realize that much was going on in her cousin’s head, despite his cerebral palsy; Sharon Creech’s Walk Two Moons made another student understand that in facing her grandfather’s death, her progression from grief to fury to quiet acceptance was normal. Other students discover how a school-assigned book like Lizzie Bright and the Buckminster Boy (Gary D. Schmidt) can make them obsess over how much the characters seem like themselves, turning historical figures into real people worthy of respect.

Some students, especially from high school, use this project as a cathartic experience. Several years ago, a girl who had been raped wrote about Laurie Halse Anderson’s Speak. She was amazed to find in a character’s voice a realistic reflection of her own thoughts amid misunderstanding and verbal abuse from peers and family. Speak was the only connection she had with someone who understood. She said it gave her strength. That was a hard letter for judges; it was bleak, intense, and brilliantly written.

This year, a girl whose friend was contemplating suicide wrote about Thirteen Reasons Why (Jay Asher). She had just finished the book when her friend told her that she was cutting herself. The writer said Thirteen Reasons Why made her instantly understand what her friend meant when she told her how the accumulation of small acts of unkindness had led her to this stage. The writer described how she used this understanding to help her friend get through that day, and the days ahead.

Many letters describe how books helped them deal with bullying. Stargirl (Jerry Spinelli) has taught kids to value themselves for who they are. The Angel Experiment (James Patterson) opened a bully’s eyes to his behavior and helped him find the courage to leave his clique and join the unpopular students’ table at lunch. A sister who was in the habit of bullying her little brother realized from Drums, Girls & Dangerous Pie (Jordan Sonnenblick) how harmful her behavior was. It is heartening to hear about how these stories are changing lives.
When Merle Nelson and her brother Paul Royte decided that the time had come to add to the legacy of their father, David Royte, there was absolutely no question what that would be. Not only did the siblings know that supporting a Maine Humanities Council program was a good choice, but they also knew their father would think so, too. Established in 2006, the David Royte Fund will support the *Letters About Literature* program for at least ten years, “a perfect match for a man who loved reading, cared about children, and recognized the difference books make in our lives. It couldn’t have been a better match,” says Nelson.

An immigrant whose parents fled a devastating pogrom in Russia, Royte was born in Liverpool, England, en route to the family’s new life in the United States. They settled in the Roxbury section of Boston. Royte’s father had been a doctor, but because he lacked the necessary English language skills, he became a barber. David Royte grew up in a community filled with many languages, stories, music, hard work, and laughter, all of which shaped the culturally diverse lens through which he saw everything and everyone.

In 1942, David Royte became the editor/publisher of *The Yardbird*, the official newspaper of the South Portland shipyards, and moved his family to Portland. He later founded *The Labor Record of Maine*, the AFL-CIO Building Trades Council newspaper, and went on to be a major contributor to his community and the state. The Maine Humanities Council was one of the many boards on which he served.

“We’re grateful,” says Merle Nelson, “that the Council enabled us to honor our father in a way that would bring him great pleasure as well as honoring what he stood for. His days on the Council’s board in the 1980s were a real joy to him.” Her father, she believes, may have been the only Council member to have never completed high school.

“He finished the ninth grade and then went to work to help support the family,” says Paul Royte. Paul’s earliest memories of his father include him telling jokes and reading. “He read all the time. Books were everywhere throughout the entire house—novels, autobiographies, biographies. Education was important to him, and this was his ‘education.’”

And so David Royte came to the Council in a very natural way, a man who was always juggling at least three books, an inquisitive man, a man “learned and righteous—and funny—just like his dad,” his daughter says. And as the Council’s first non-academic member, he brought a fresh, new perspective to the board, evaluating statewide proposals, recognizing the need to diversify funding sources, and forming the Council’s first development committee.

Royte was very much a part of what was going on in the world right up until his death in 1990—politics, the environment, movies, theater. Whenever an author came to town, he would be the first one to arrive for the reading. He believed in a life of inquiry and discovery, and has passed that forward: His daughter was in the Maine State Legislature; his son is a psychologist; his grandchildren include the actor Judd Nelson (*The Breakfast Club, Suddenly Susan*) and the writer Elizabeth Royte (*Garbage Land, Bottlemania*).
“He lived life,” Paul Royte says of his father. “Sometimes people ask about our ‘inheritance,’ and I like to say he left us good teeth, strong hearts, low cholesterol, and an exuberance for living. Establishing this fund was the most fitting thing we could do to preserve that spirit.”

“I can’t think of a more meaningful way to honor our father,” adds Nelson. “I’d encourage anyone looking for a way to honor someone’s life, a way to establish a real legacy, to establish a fund like this. The impact is ongoing, and huge. My father was a man ready to step up and be counted, and now, through this fund, he is helping children throughout the state learn to put their voices into the room as they step up and are counted, too.”

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**THROUGH A HOWLING WILDERNESS, BENEDICT ARNOLD’S MARCH**

*By Brian Wardwell, 10th grader, Massabesic High School*

To be performed to the tune of *The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald.*

Learn the story behind this ballad on the back page.

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The Patriots were poor, and their ammunition store, Was going and nearly empty, So Washington said, c’m on let’s move out today, And go seize the fort Québec City To take what they had, and then claim the land, He assigned the young Benedict Arnold, To march up through Maine, through the snow and the rain, And take Québec from Governor Carleton’s control Colburn the carpenter, lived on the river, Was told to make 220 boats, But the wood it was wet, next to the old Kennebec, He had just enough nails to make bateaux Then two weeks later, through backbreaking labor, The boats were ready to be ridden, The march then began, down the Kennebec in Maine, In the boats with the soldiers rowin’ The wet wood was heavy, and the soldiers were steadily, Portaging through the Maine wilderness, Through cold swamps and up hills, the march gave quite a chill, But they kept marching on still relentless When rowing through rocks, Arnold’s boat took a fall, Holding all the pay for army, The money planned for the use, of buying the men food, But now the army would go starving Unless the Québécois, would share their crop, With the starving American army, So the men rowed along, on the trip they’d forgone, With nothing to eat but moosemeat When they’d nearly reached a town, they all turned their heads around, To Frenchmen with provisions ample, There was a feast that day, and the soldiers’ lives were saved, By the kindness of the Québécois people That night the army stayed, at the Québécois’ places, Preparing to seize the city, They’d cross the St. Lawrence, through the naval defense, The attack they planned was very witty 250 men, would create a diversion, On the western end of the city, Montgomery and Arnold, would attack the lower stronghold, But first, they held a committee To attack upon crossing, or wait for Montgomery, The officers voted to delay it, They would have seized the town, had they gone then and now, Québec had nearly no defenses Then 300 men, came to help the defense, While the Patriots awaited the General, The reinforcements came, and Colonel Maclean, Organized the chaos with the locals The battle began, and the 250 men, Failed to create a diversion, Arnold was shot, and Montgomery’s life lost, And the outcome became more uncertain Montgomery’s men fled, with no word to be said, Arnold’s leaderless men stood there helpless, They tried the same, but their efforts were in vain, As they were captured in the midst of the distress The battle was done, and British reinforcements, Came to the battered city’s aid, But when Arnold was well, he then felt compelled, To engineer an effective blockade Québec’s resources blocked, gave the British a knock, The city’s soldiers had to be reinforced, But most importantly, Washington’s army, Was now safe in Valley Forge This odd solution, saved the Revolution, By diverting the reinforcements from England, Had they gone to Valley Forge, they’d have taken the war, And we’d still be under British command.

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**LEFT:** David Royte displaying the love for life that he embraced through all of his years.

**ABOVE:** David Royte with daughter Merle Nelson, wife Lillian Royte and son Paul Royte, circa 1985.

**PHOTOS:** COURTESY OF THE ROYTE FAMILY
In the dining room, six small oak tables are pushed together to form a big rectangle. Pitchers of ice water and drinking cups are set out to help deal with the heat.

Twelve women sit around the table. Their conversation is animated. They talk about the people and the town as if they know them. And actually, they do, because the characters in this book resemble their neighbors, relatives, even co-workers from towns and cities across Maine. These twelve women are talking about Ernie’s Ark, a collection of nine stories by Maine author Monica Wood, who has created a place, situations, and characters that these women feel as if they know and want to understand.

This workshop is part of Maine Humanities Council’s Stories for Life series and provides incarcerated women at the Maine Correctional Center (MCC) a unique opportunity to read and talk about literature. Participants are encouraged to talk about the author’s writing style, plot and characters, and the importance of place in her stories. They also discover ways to talk about literature, including such techniques as symbolism, diction, point of view, and sensory details.

The title story, “Ernie’s Ark,” introduces Marie and Ernie Whitten in the fictitious town of Abbott Falls, Maine, home to Atlantic Pulp & Paper. There, workers, including Ernie, a pipefitter, are on strike. The small town setting, the tensions of the local labor conflict, and the long-term marriage of Ernie and Marie are the keys to the nine interrelated stories; these elements set the stage for lively discussion—and occasionally disagreement—about the motives, attitudes, and personalities of the characters.

One participant, for instance, doesn’t understand all the fuss about the Whittens’ 45-year marriage. Why? Because she knows marriages like Marie and Ernie’s where she grew up in northern Maine, and a couple staying together for decades through adversity and joy is what people did. She doesn’t know why their lives seem so extraordinary to some members of the group.

A few other women nod in agreement. All of them realize that these stories are very much about relationships: within families, between citizens and the town, between generations, between management and labor, even between strangers. They realize that their life experiences inevitably influence the way they respond to the text.

And thus begins a four-week conversation about Ernie, Marie, and James Whitten; Dan Little and his family; Henry and Emily McCoy; Francine Love, Tracey Martin and the rest of the folks who live in or have ties to Abbott Falls. In the course of the discussion, the women share their curiosity about the writer’s techniques and her ability to create engaging stories that make readers care about what happens to these people. They wonder whether the ark has special symbolism. They ask why the author takes so long to reveal the relationship between the Whittens and their son and wish that Mr. McCoy could somehow understand his daughter better. They admire the imagination and spirit of Francine.

When I tell them that they can ask the writer herself these questions, they don’t believe me. But, as luck would
have it, Monica Wood’s schedule allows her to join our discussion for our third workshop session—and for many of the participants, she will be the first author they meet in person.

To prepare for her visit, they generate a list of questions:

- How did you decide to pull these particular stories together? Did you write the stories in the order in which they appear in the book?
- How do you decide what point of view to use for each story?
- You create believable male characters. How do you explain that?
- We love the “happy scale” in the story “Temperature of Desire.” How did you create it?
- Where do your characters come from? Have you met people like these?
- How do you work with your editor? Has your work ever been rejected? If so, how did you feel?
- What’s your daily writing routine?
- Do you have to go on book tours when you have a new book released? What’s that like?

From the moment she arrives, Monica Wood is gracious and enthusiastic, talking about her life as a writer and revealing genuine interest in what the women have to say about her stories. During part of the session, two women read dialogue between Marie and Tracey in the story “That One Autumn.” Monica seems very pleased to hear her words come to life: “That was good dialogue there, wasn’t it?” The entire group laughs, enjoying her lightheartedness and authenticity. She is warm and engaging and generously provides personal insights about her work and her life as a writer.

Without the programs of the Maine Humanities Council, these women at the MCC would not have had the opportunity to read and discuss the stories in *Ernie’s Ark*, nor would they have had the opportunity to talk with Monica Wood. Finding ways to think and talk about literature and making connections between literature and life opens doors, which is most essential for those behind closed ones. This is at the heart of *Stories for Life*.

Carol A. Kontos is Associate Professor of English at the University of Maine at Augusta and chairs the Board of Visitors at the Maine Correctional Center.
**SELECTED GRANTS: SPRING THROUGH SUMMER 2010**

**MILBRIDGE**

$500  Mother’s Day Event and Cultural Celebration
This cultural celebration commemorated El Dia de las Madres (Mother’s Day), a major holiday in Latin America. Events included a community potluck, plus the presentation of a variety of traditional Latin American dances, folk music, poetry, and plays put on by Latino youth to share their culture and heritage with the wider Milbridge community.

- *Mano en Mano*

**BELFAST**

$3,000  1968: Gone But Not Forgotten
This multi-media project aimed to increase knowledge and understanding of the events and issues of the 1960s, both in the Belfast community at large and among a targeted group of under-achieving high school students. The project used role playing to immerse students in the issues of the era and featured an oral history component and community-based learning events.

- *Spurwink Services / The Game Loft*

**NEW GLOUCESTER**

$1,000*  In the Shaker Tradition: Shaker Music and Historical Commentary
This grant supported the transcription of traditional Shaker hymns. This allowed them to be performed live and authentically by a professional Maine vocalist. The public performance was recorded for the permanent library collection of the United Society of Shakers, an organization dedicated to preserving and studying the history and artifacts of the Shaker community.

- *United Society of Shakers*

**LEWISTON**

$1,000*  Shoemaking Skills of Generations
This yearlong interactive exhibit opening in the fall of 2010 will focus on the huge shoe-manufacturing industry that strongly influenced Lewiston and Auburn from the mid-1800s to the early 1900s. Through art, artifacts and oral histories, the exhibit will provide insight into the work, family, and daily life of factory workers in Maine during this time period.

- *Museum L-A*

**NORTH HAVEN**

$1,000  Piecing Together: The Quilts and Quilters of North Haven, 1830 to Today
This exhibit, featuring ten historic island-made quilts and five modern island-made quilts, was an interdisciplinary effort to re-imagine history on the island of North Haven. The exhibit, which ran from May through August 2010, traced nearly 200 years of quilt making on North Haven and examined the lives of early female settlers through historic photographs, artifacts, and explanatory text.

- *North Haven Historical Society*

*Awarded in partnership with the Maine Arts Commission.*
### Orono

**$3,000  Wikawame: The Wigwam Project**

This grant supported the creation of a birchbark wigwam that will become the centerpiece of the Hudson Museum’s Maine Indian Gallery. Barry Dana, a Penobscot Master Artist, helped create the wigwam expected to be a long-term focal point in the gallery for education programs with elementary and secondary school students.

*Hudson Museum, University of Maine*

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In early August, Barry Dana, a Penobscot birchbark artist, along with his wife Laurie and daughter Sikwani, created a traditional birchbark wigwam in the Hudson Museum’s Maine Indian Gallery. Barry completed the wigwam with an etched door panel that features a dragonfly and double curve designs. **Photo courtesy of the Hudson Museum, the University of Maine**

### Portland

**$1,000  Maine Festival of the Book 2010**

The fourth annual Maine Festival of the Book, held in Portland, was a celebration of reading and writing which also provided the opportunity for literary discourse between authors and readers. Presenters included Tess Gerrisen, Anita Shreve, Neil Rolde, Wes McNair, and other favorites. Most of the programs were free to the public and designed to appeal to a range of audience interests and age groups.

*Maine Reads*

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Almost 2,000 people enjoyed the free literary discussions, workshops, signings, and performances at the Maine Festival of the Book. It will return to Portland April 1-3, 2011. **Photo: Kristina Mugnai**

### Waterville

**$1,000  Downtown Waterville History Mystery Tour**

This project created a child- and family-friendly self-guided tour of historical and cultural sites within easy walking distance of the Waterville Public Library. A series of clues leads participants to various stops on the tour where they have opportunities to explore what life was like for children in Waterville at other times in history.

*Waterville Public Library*
THE GENEROSITY OF OUR FRIENDS

Have you ever noticed how the humanities can take hold of people? Recently, a sophomore from Massabesic High School in Waterboro was so inspired by his experience with the humanities.

Brian Wardwell attended the Maine Humanities Council’s 2010 History Camp on Benedict Arnold and his expedition to Québec. The 18th century exploits of Arnold in the “howling wilderness” of Maine inspired Brian to compose an epic ballad. In twenty verses, he tells the story of the expedition, revealing his knowledge of its details, context, and significance.

History Camp inspired a deepened passion for Maine and U.S. History among its students. Participants in all MHC programs, whatever their background or educational level, have similar experiences of inspiration and growth. The humanities, at their best, offer opportunities to try on new ideas and new perspectives, to challenge oneself, and to become more open to new ways of thinking.

Benedict Arnold and his men relied on the generosity of strangers for their very survival. We, in contrast, rely on the generosity of our friends, who contribute to our operations and keep the programs going during these uncertain times. Please consider making a special gift to the Maine Humanities Council this holiday season. Thank you.

You can read Brian Wardwell’s ballad on page 9.

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Environs de Quebec: Bloque par les Americains du 8 decembre 1775 au 13 mai 1776.
MAP BY GEORGES-LOUIS LE ROUGE, COURTESY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS