

# Editorial

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## No Dice

Faced with a stack of legislative proposals to expand gambling in Maine, the Legislature's Legal Affairs Committee called time out late in January and decided to contract with a consultant who would be charged with assessing the impact of more gambling venues in the Pine Tree State.

State Rep. Louie Luchini (D-Ellsworth) is House chairman of the committee. Though officially open-minded on the topic of gambling, he has voted against six bills to expand gaming and has asked whether Maine is at the point of saturation. Thus it was with seasoned prudence that he and his committee, in the face of pushes from Scarborough Downs and some of Maine's Native American tribes, called in WhiteSand Gaming Consulting to examine the trends and report on the prospects.

The consultant's report is due next month. It would be well if the consultant took into account an analysis in the Aug. 10 *New York Times* of New York Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's casino initiatives. Cuomo sees new casinos reviving stagnating parts of the state, such as the Catskills. New revenue! Thousands of jobs! Economic jump start!

But gambling industry analyst Harold L. Vogel said Cuomo is "15 years too late to the party."

Vogel, along with economists and other industry veterans, says the industry — especially in the Northeast — is at, or approaching, saturation. Too-big-to-fail Foxwoods in Connecticut is suffering the effects of new competition, cutting costs and jobs. Atlantic City

casinos are closing down. Closer to home, the Oxford casino is taking a bite of Bangor's Hollywood Slots.

It's true that a casino opening in an untapped market will create jobs and economic vitality (except among the bettors who stay too long at the table). Still, windfalls are just that — exhilarating but brief. And it's not a windfall: it's a wash. Study after study has shown that, rather than attracting nonresidents and new money, most players come from a 50-mile radius.

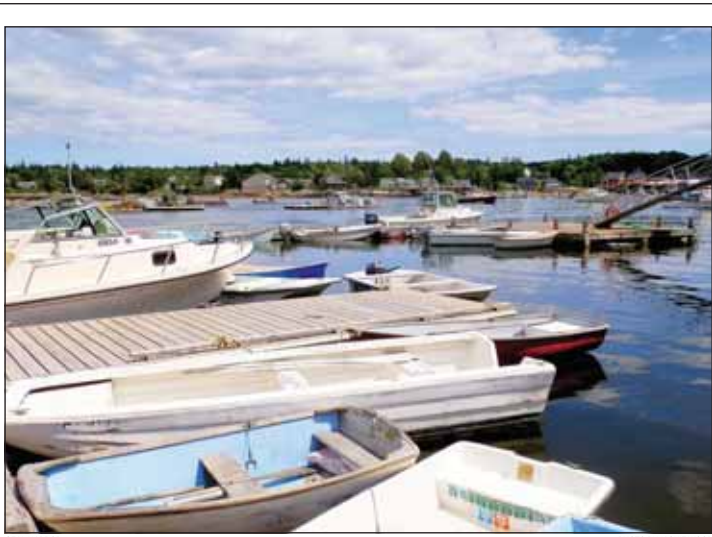
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Without even citing the damage expanded gaming would do to Maine's global image as pristine, ruggedly natural and unspoiled, the proposals before the Maine Legislature are short-sighted. The state, itself, undermines new gambling initiatives by beating the drum

for the Maine lottery. That, plus on-line gambling and office betting on point spreads and fantasy leagues doesn't paint an upbeat picture for casino expansion. The supply now has outstripped demand.

In November, Massachusetts voters will decide whether to repeal the 2011 authorization of casino gambling. In Delaware last month, legislators authorized a \$10-million casino bailout.

Gambling has not delivered on its many promises. The industry's one reasonable argument is that gambling attracts tourists who spend money on lodging, restaurants and visits to natural attractions. For that we don't need gambling. For that we have Thunder Hole, Mount Katahdin, Schoodic Point, lobster rolls and blueberry pie.



SEAL HARBOR

PHOTO BY JACKIE WOOD

*Now come the lazy summer weeks  
When every cove and harbor speaks  
From every float and dock and mooring  
Of Downeast Summer days alluring.*

*The morning sun in fog is wrapped;  
By noon its rays are all untrapped.  
By afternoon a rising breeze  
Disturbs the bay and stirs the trees.*

*A little rain may punctuate  
The perfect day, but those who wait  
Will see the storm clouds break away  
And sunlight end another day.*

*So go the lazy Summer weeks  
When Maine each Summer softly speaks  
Of life that's joyous, brave and free  
Upon a sun-lit Summer sea.*

BY JAMES RUSSELL WIGGINS  
REPRINTED FROM A PREVIOUS ISSUE

## Maine's Splendor Includes Its Geology

By Tom Walsh

Maine's natural beauty draws millions of visitors each year. Some enjoy the state's 3,478 miles of rugged tidal coastline. Others enjoy hiking and biking remote mountain trails or kayaking on Maine's abundance of rivers, lakes and ponds. Each autumn spectacular natural displays of fall colors attract visitors from throughout the world, many arriving by cruise ship.

There's another element of natural beauty in Maine that is seldom seen and even less seldom celebrated, although it once played a vital role in the state's economy. The Washington Monument, the Brooklyn Bridge and Chicago's Art Institute all were constructed with granite that was mined and cut in Maine, as was New York's infamous Sing Sing prison.

Granite is a largely underground repository of Maine's geologic history. Granite was formed when bits of quartz and feldspar emerged millions of years ago from the earth's magma, the hot "liquid rock" beneath the Earth's crust. The word "granite" is derived from the Latin word "granum" or grain, as it is largely comprised of small grains of quartz and feldspar. Granite is a very hard stone because it formed as hot liquid, making its molecular structure more complex than the layered structures of limestone, slate and other sedimentary rock. One of the best outcroppings of granite and its geological first-cousin basalt can be seen at Schoodic Point in Winter Harbor.

Maine has been involved in commercial granite production for more than 200 years. Initially, it was used within the state for building foundations, bridges and piers. The Industrial Revolution is credited with sparking a boom in construction of factories, banks, churches, libraries, government offices, monuments and bridges, with Maine granite often being the building material of choice. Maine's coastal granite quarries were able to offer inexpensive transportation by ship to the entire Eastern Seaboard.

Granite historians claim that as many as 170 Maine quarries once cut and fashioned building stone. One of the largest production centers was located on Vinalhaven Island, where granite from other Maine quarries was crafted by highly skilled stonemasons into columns, ornamental building details and monuments. Maine granite production peaked at the dawn of the 20th century, when historians say that as many as 3,500 workers were employed at 152 quarries. As steel and reinforced concrete emerged as less expensive building materials, the use of granite for buildings and bridges tapered off significantly. Granite is largely used today for building facades, kitchen counter tops and garden landscaping.

Today there are only a few working granite quarries in Maine. Regionally they include the Croth Island quarry in Stonington, Fletcher's quarries in Jonesboro

and Addison, the Freshwater Stone Quarry in Frankfort and Sullivan Memorial Stone Works in Sullivan. Nationally, most commercial granite now comes from Georgia, Idaho, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and South Dakota (home to the iconic granite monument Mount Rushmore).

Because of its hardness, durability and ability to be highly polished, granite remains a favored material for stone sculptors throughout the world. That artistic reality is locally reflected through the biennial Schoodic International Sculpture Symposium, which is now in its 10th year. Since 2004, the first four events attracted sculptors from around the world, artists who in a public setting spent weeks creating sculptures commissioned by communities large and small in Hancock and Washington counties. Collectively, they created 27 public art pieces that now make up the Sculpture Trail of Maine.

Now, in the final year of the symposium, seven sculptors from as far away as South Korea are at work on a baseball field in Prospect Harbor, where they will spend the next few weeks transforming huge blocks of Downeast granite into sculptures destined for Bucksport, Calais, Castine, Harrington, Jonesport and Surry. The free symposium is something of a crash course in Maine geology and history that also allows visitors to meet world-class sculptors and to discuss their work.

Tom Walsh of Gouldsboro is an award-winning science writer.

## Hard Look

## Welcome, Summer Friends

Since the post-World War II advent of the turnpike and better roads, millions of folks have discovered the hidden treasures of a Maine vacation.

This has been a busy summer. Like visitors, lobsters and blueberries have been plentiful. Throughout our region, the performing arts, galleries and museums are in full swing. And the parks have been teeming with hikers, bikers and folks just soaking up the stunning views and the generally wonderful weather.

Maine's favorite summer crop — visitors from away — is flourishing. The state has become increasingly dependent on tourism as traditional

manufacturing industries — first textiles, then shoemaking, now papermaking — have faded.

For generations, Maine has been blessed with friends from near and far who have put down summer roots here. Kennebunk, Casco Bay, Boothbay, Penaquid Point, Friendship, Camden, Penobscot Bay, Mount Desert Island, Schoodic

and hundreds of lakes and ponds have been annual destinations for families looking to beat the heat by returning to cooling Maine air and water.

Welcome, first-time visitors and old friends. We're glad you're here. Enjoy Maine. And return again soon.

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## Large Donors Fund the Best Candidates Money Can Buy

By Jill Goldthwait

Ahhh, summer in Maine. Hiking, swimming, sailing, picnics, lobster — it's all "Blueberries for Sal." It also is the time when every good cause lures friends in for a glass of wine and a gentle shaking of the money tree to support the work laid out for the coming year.

Gala season is a gauntlet of good works. Locals and summer people put on their best duds and gamely turn out to hear the Friends of Acadia, the Abbe Museum or the Maine Sea Coast Mission talk about the work they do, the people they serve and the value it all brings to Downeast Maine. One such event this August was a bit more ambitious. It was meant to inspire attendees to no less a task than taking back our government.

Maine Citizens for Clean Elections convened a local presentation on campaign funding by Larry Lessig, a professor at Harvard Law School who is a leading advocate of campaign finance reform with a penchant for exhorting the public to get that reform done. By the time he is through with an audience, they believe.

According to his data from recent elections, very few of us are making significant donations to campaigns. Just 0.26 percent (that's 26 hundredths of 1 percent) give \$200 or more. Only 0.01 percent give \$10,000 or more. And 0.000042 percent, or 132 individuals, gave 60 percent of all Super PAC money in the last election cycle.

This means that just 0.05 percent of us are what Mr. Lessig calls "relevant funders," people who have enormous influence over who runs for office in the first place, and who succeeds in primary elections. Then, and only then, do the rest of us get to weigh in, after these large donors have put their candidates in front of us.

The Supreme Court has supported unlimited money in politics because, say the Supremes, "the people have the ultimate influence over elected officials." Well, it's true that so far we are still allowed to vote in general elections, but by then our choices have been narrowed to the best candidates that money can buy.

Unlike the "founding fathers," the "funding fathers" have not gathered to hammer out a government of, by

and for the people. Instead, they are looking for a government finely tuned to their own private interests, and the heck with the rest of us.

Given the amount of time members of Congress must spend raising money (estimated at 30-70 percent of their working hours), how much time do you think they spend going after those

candidate as long as they do not coordinate with the candidate's campaign.

To this picture of doom and gloom, Larry Lessig brings a fervent call to action. This, he says, is "the issue to solve before we can fix anything else." Spreading out the influence by less fundraising, solicited from a wider segment of people, would do the job. He was in Maine because we are one of just a few states that have implemented what he calls "small-dollar-funded systems."

He is fighting fire with fire, creating the Mayday PAC to elect members of Congress who promise to take on campaign finance reform at the federal level. The parties, he says, think this is not a top-of-mind issue for the American public. He intends to prove them wrong.

"Mayday" the well-known universal distress call, originated in a French expression meaning "come and help me," and come and help they did. The Mayday PAC raised over a million dollars through crowd-sourcing in 13 days (having given itself 30 days to do the job), and another \$5 million in 30 days more. Matched by additional

contributions, the Mayday PAC is well on its way to being a player.

The irony of raising millions of dollars to tackle the influence of money in politics is not lost on Larry Lessig. What differentiates his PAC from the others is its commitment to resuscitating government to where it serves all the people, not just the rich.

If you listen to the political parties on this one, no elected official is ever, ever influenced by his contributors — no way! OK, here's another factoid of Larry Lessig's, from a TED talk he gave in February 2013. Between 1998 and 2004, 50 percent of the Senate and 42 percent of the House left to become lobbyists, at an average salary increase of 1,452 percent. They did not develop this career path by refusing to support their funders' causes.

You can get an instructive dose of Larry Lessig at [www.ted.com](http://www.ted.com). Just 1/50th of 1 percent of campaign contributors are having a profound influence on who we get to vote for come November. The other 99.95 percent of us should start making some noise.



of us who dutifully put \$50 behind our chosen candidate? If you're dialing for dollars, who ya gonna call?

Donations to candidates may be limited by law, but those limits are melting away thanks to political action committees (PACs), organizations that can aggregate money to benefit campaigns. PACs have certain restrictions, not Super PACs? They may accept donations of any size, from unidentified donors, to support or oppose a