UMaine Franco American Programs receives $350K from National Endowment for the Humanities

We're proud to announce that we were just awarded a grant from National Endowment for the Humanities to digitize nearly 40,000 pages of French-English family correspondence, historic scrapbooks, manuscripts, artworks, personal diaries, songbooks and other personal papers for the Franco American Digital Archives/Portail franco-américain

https://shorturl.at/BGKR7

Congratulations! We are so proud of our student Joey LeBlanc who will be starting his PhD in Franco American Studies this fall

For his internship, Joey created a digital collection comprised of barn photos from the St. John Valley, and explored how the structure/methods used to build them were unique to the region and its Acadian history. Joey created a digital exhibit on Maine Memory Network.
Calling all Franco-Americans and Franco-enthusiasts aged 18 to 35! Come to the Young Franco-American Summit, the only Franco-American event for young voices to share ideas, discuss their experiences, and network within their age group while celebrating Franco-American culture.

Interested in attending or presenting?
Contact
Melody Desjardins at melody@modernefrancos.com

DATE: October 14, 2023 (attendance at NH PoutineFest to follow)
LOCATION: Nashua, New Hampshire (venue to be announced)
STUDENT FAROGERS-HAD A BUSY YEAR

With President Donna Morin at the helm, FAROG held fundraisers for a student trip to Québec, held a food and toy drive, attended Culturefest, cooked Franco foods for the Wilson Center, attended Francophone Day/Culture at the State House, and held an officer election for 2023.

Standing, l to r: Thomas Shetxline, Matt Wilson, Matt Frost, Michael Mutlu, Seated l to r: Molly Sirois, Gianna Cilley, Sophie Ladd, Rachel Ouellette Front l to r: Donna Morin, Kayla Pollier & Jessica Hutchinson

Emily Vaccaro, Quebec Trip Fundraiser

Jessica Hutchinson & Donna Morin selling tickets for Quebec Trip fundraiser

Students cooking french fries for poutines. Wilson Center Thursday Dinner.

Francophone Day/Culture at the State House

(See more FAROG on page 4)
SUMMER 2023

Food & Toy Drive, December 13, 2023:

Donna Morin and Matt Frost

Donna Morin and Lisa Michaud (Advisor)

CultureFest 2022:

Holiday Potluck, December 9, 2022:
Quebec Trip, February 17-20, 2023:

2023 Election of FAROG Officers:

President: Gianna Cilley
Vice president: Emily Vaccaro
Treasurer: Javier Ahumada
Secretary: Atilgan Micheal Mutlu
In collaboration with French Professor Jessamine Irwin, the Franco-American Centre provided a presentation by Susan Pinette, held a discussion and also offered a traditional luncheon for the guests. The group then left for Quebec City.

National Poutine Day Potluck, April 11, 2023:

On April 11 we celebrated National Poutine Day. Nancy Lamarre played the accordion; she was accompanied by students on the spoons. There were different variations of poutine, royal, vegan and traditional.

The yearly “Rassemblement,” April 21-23, 2023:

Every year, Franco American Programs organizes a “rassemblement” or gathering of Franco American artists, writers, and creatives. This annual event aims to create a culturally supportive space in which members of the Franco-American creative community can share their work.

Portions of this year’s gathering was hybrid, to allow for participation from those who were unable to attend in person.

Friday evening guest author Pierre Lavoie spoke about his book, Mille Après Mille. His talk was followed by a film screening of the Palm Beach Story, a film starring Rudy Vallée.

On Saturday, guests participated in sharing their writing and research (both hybrid and in-person).

Robert Sylvain shared his inherited notebook of old Acadian ballads written by his Mémère which he performs for his audience. http://robertsylvain.com/
Donna Morin graduated with a bachelors in Communication Sciences and Disorders, double degree in Child Development and Family Relations, and a minor in Disability Studies.

Our Community Group, Franco-Femmes

In November 2022 our ladies group made and donated blankets to the Homeless Shelter in Bangor. And we attended the Festival of Trees at the Anah Shrine Temple in Bangor.

In December Claire Bolduc offered to help Ray Pelletier hem his pants. She gave a quick “how to” sewing class.

In March 2023 we attended a Josée Vachon concert in Lewiston at the Franco Center.

The group meets weekly for lunch at the Centre.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATES!
May 6, 2023

Donna Morin graduated with a Chemical Engineering degree.

Matt Frost graduated with a BA in History

James Jarvis graduated with a Chemical Engineering degree.

Lin Larochelle, Lisa Michaud, Josée Vachon, Martha Mitchell & Emma Phillips

Lisa Michaud, Lin Larochelle, Martha Mitchell & Emma Phillips
ABOUT THE CENTRE

On February 5th, 2023 the Centre suffered a burst pipe which flooded 6 office spaces and caused significant damage to our building.

The hardest hit of those 6 offices happened to be our Archives: 50+ years of materials drenched and in water.

We hauled all of these boxes to dryer areas and spread everything out all over the place, wherever we could lay it down. We froze materials that we did not have time to get to immediately. It was a mess, but somehow, we survived and most of the materials did too.

The University stepped up, thank you Douglas Cyr and facilities! They have replaced flooring, ceilings, and have painted. It is still a work in progress. As a result, we have been doing a lot of moving, remodeling and organizing.

The Damage

The Clean-up and Renovations

The Kitchen & Dedication

Our newly applianced kitchen is dedicated in loving memory to Raymond Pelletier. Ray shared his love of cooking with us.

Within one month of my asking for donations to buy new appliances our community came through. Thank you all so much for making my dream a reality!
Summers 2023

The Recovery

We are still recovering from the flood that hit our archives in February. We saved as many of the files as we could. In the process, however, many of the folders and files were jumbled and mixed up as we had to take them as quickly as possible out from under the water and out of their wet boxes. Luckily, Tanja, an IPhD student, has joined us for the summer to help out. We’re taking the time, since we have to go through the files anyway, to organize and sort through them. It is a big job but in the end, we will have an organized collection of materials from 50 years of Franco American activism.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS & UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY!

This year was a very difficult year to say the least... but we were blessed with wonderful volunteers. Thank you all for your help, when we needed it most and for all that you do! A shout out to the University Paint Shop, Grounds, Electrical, Plumbing, Douglas Cyr, Michael Munson and all others who have helped with the clean-up and renovations.

Alex Baron
Martha Mitchell
Lin Larochelle
Debbie Roberge
Ginny Sand

OUR GREAT LOSSES: Thank you for the memories. May you RIP.

Pamela McInnis Beveridge
June 4, 1947 – February 22, 2023

Michael Parent
April 27, 1946 - May 5, 2023

Raymond Joseph Pelletier
November 2, 1942 - May 15, 2023
Our Vision Statement:
We seek to make Franco American Programs at the University of Maine into an international center for Franco American scholarly research and community engagement. The Franco American Program responds to an unmet need: it researches, teaches, and serves the French cultures of the Northeast. This need is felt locally, nationally, and internationally. The University of Maine is singularly capable of responding to this need and providing national and international leadership. The University's land grant mission to serve the people of Maine and its large Franco American population, its location close to Canada, and its role as the state's flagship campus present a unique opportunity to build upon our strengths and create a national and international profile.

Our Mission Statement:
Franco American communities constitute a large percentage of the population of Maine and the Northeast region. It is the mission of the Franco American Program to serve these communities while recognizing that cultural patterns do not stop at national borders. The Franco American Program includes the Franco American Centre as well as Franco American Studies.

The primary goal of the Franco-American Centre is to support and enhance the Franco American communities of Maine. The Centre looks to disseminate the richness of Franco history, language, and culture, as well as to bridge Franco Americans both to the University campus and to other peoples of the region. The primary goal of Franco American Studies is to broaden the canon of knowledge on Franco American peoples, culture, and literature. It encourages and facilitates interdisciplinary research, faculty engagement, and student exploration.

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Email: Spinette@maine.edu

Our Staff:
Volunteer/genealogist: deborah.e.roberge@gmail.com
Coordinator of Community Engagement: Lisa Desjardins Michaud
Email: Lisam@maine.edu

Le Forum: https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/francoamericain_forum/
Oral History: https://video.maine.edu/channel/Oral+Histories/101838251
Library: https://umaine.edu/francoamerican/franco-american-library/
Occasional Papers: https://umaine.edu/francoamerican/occasional-papers/
Résonance: https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/resonance/vol1/iss1/
FADA: https://francoamericandigitalarchives.org
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