

# Machias Valley News Observer



COUNTY SEAT WEEKLY

ALL THE HOME NEWS

SERVING WASHINGTON COUNTY CITIZENS & BUSINESSES FOR MORE THAN 155 YEARS

Since 1852 • Vol. 157 • No. 17

MACHIAS, MAINE • WEDNESDAY • DECEMBER 16, 2009

\$1.00

## Otten Reveals Plan for Growing Maine



Les Otten, aiming for the Blaine House, promises to make state government more responsive and accountable to the people.

Ruth Leubecker

by Ruth Leubecker

The only gubernatorial candidate with zero political experience, Les Otten, a Republican from Greenwood, brings a wealth of proven business acumen to the table.

"Government is not a business," says Otten, who presently runs three small businesses, each with 10 employees or less, "but it needs to be audited, measured, responsive, and accountable, accountable, accountable. And these principles need to be constantly applied."

The former ski resort owner and minority owner of the Boston Red Sox, Otten is sharply attuned to the plight of business owners in Maine, as well as the state's prime position in relation to cultivating energy sources.

"It's hard to store wind, but it's not hard to convert wind into hydrogen or ammonia," he says. "We need to move forward in harnessing these resources. We

need to use the energy sources in Maine to produce reasonable energy. That's the woods we're surrounded by, the tidal power in the ocean and the wind around us."

He views Maine as a potential national pioneer because of the position in resource growth. "At the same time the country is focusing on energy issues, we're surrounded by trees growing 10% faster than they ever have. Forestry products will grow maybe 30 to 40% more over the next decade," he explains. "We should convert as many homes in Maine as possible to pellets. As governor, I would create policies to create energy sources here so that we could not just become independent as a state, but become a pipeline in the United States."

His goals for Maine also translate into personal behavior. "Making your house smart so that it uses and stores electric-

ity at 3 a.m. is what everyone should be doing, if electricity costs four cents at 2 a.m. and 17 cents (a kilowatt hour) at 3 p.m. People need to rethink what they're doing," he says. "I intend, in the next five to six years, to have a car that runs on electricity. We've overprotected ourselves to the point that we've driven up our costs. There are no fair costs and no transparency in insurance."

Otten, 60, is former chair of the Governor's Wood to Energy Task Force and a past president of the Maine Pellet Fuels Association. He is also the principal of four Maine companies: Maine Energy Systems, Sports Vision Technologies, Phoenix Restaurant, and Colony Development and Building.

His television commercials promoting him as Maine's job czar have highlighted his Jobs for Maine Campaign. "Maine is broken and I feel very comfortable in saying that I'm good at fixing things," says Otten, self-dubbed as Maine's Job Creator-in-Chief. "Jobs are the most important thing we can do to reverse the downward spiral."

He often says in tackling the job crisis that he's going to go to the root of the problem. "There are five specific impediments to our lack of good jobs in Maine," he says. "The first is taxes, then insurance, rules and regs, energy and education."

His father is the strong shining example he often refers to when talking about his business successes. "My father was See *Otten*, page 4. . . . .



Jud McBrine, Ed Hennessey, Dick Gardner and Margaret Gardner take part in the presentation of \$100,000 to Washington Academy. The check from Machias Savings Bank boosted the school over the \$1-million mark in its capital campaign for expansion.

Ruth Leubecker photo

## WA Tops \$1 Million With MSB Gift

by Ruth Leubecker

Pledging \$100,000 to Washington Academy, Machias Savings Bank last week became the donor that boosted the school over the million-dollar mark in its capital campaign to raise \$1,875,000.

At its first boys' basketball game of the season, Jud McBrine, headmaster of the East Machias school, announced the public phase of the campaign to finance the facility's expansion which will include an Arts and Music Center and tennis courts.

Ed Hennessey, president of Machias Savings Bank, presented Richard Gardner, WA board of trustees chair, with the \$100,000 check following the team's warm-up period on Friday night between the sched-

uled games. Richard and Margaret Gardner are co-chairs of the capital campaign, which will also ultimately include improvements to the school's athletic fields and the construction of a Health and Wellness Center.

The Tomorrow Begins Today Campaign has been divided into several phases. The Advanced Gift segment solicited those closest to the academy, including the trustees, and ended last year. The next three major phases will focus on Leadership, Major and Community gifts, in that order. To learn more about the campaign and its impact on students, families and communities, please contact Robin Molloff-Gautier, campaign director, at WA's Development Office, 255-8301, ext. 209. ■

## Sheriff Defends Civil Process Policy

by Ruth Leubecker

Although on the agenda of a recent Calais City Council meeting, Washington County Sheriff Donnie Smith was denied the opportunity to clarify the county's civil process policy.

A month ago eight Calais attorneys had notified the City Council in writing complaining about costs and length of delivery of civil process documents from the sheriff's office. Instead

of notifying the sheriff directly, the complaint was aired on WQDY and this is how Smith first heard of the lawyers' grievance.

Civil process court documents are related to divorces, lawsuits, non-payment of credit cards, repossessions and eviction notices, among others. They often require more than one trip to facilitate because recipients See *Sheriff*, page 4. . . . .

## DECH Employee Appreciation Tea Planned

The Committee to Save Our Hospital has planned an Employee Appreciation Tea on Wednesday, January 27, from 1 to 4 p.m. at Down East Community Hospital. Additional details will be forthcoming.

At the Friday, December 11th breakfast meeting at the Blue Bird Ranch Family Restaurant, Veronica Conley, President of the RN Nurses' Union reported on the Union's response to the

changes since the hospital was placed into receivership. Conley indicated that union members were very pleased with the new direction that DECH is taking, with the new CEO Doug Jones and with the new Outpatient Director, Joanne Flemming. Conley also discussed the effectiveness of the mentorship program for new nurses.

Committee members noted See *DECH*, page 4. . . . .



Six-year-old Trinity Milarno of Machias enumerates her wish list to Santa.

## Santa Visits Poinsettia Festival

by Christine Laurel

The holiday season was celebrated in colorful reds and greens at Jordan Gardens last Saturday with its first annual Poinsettia Festival, complete with poinsettia tree and reindeer games, where children played seasonal-appropriate games

like Toss the Halo, Fishing for Candy Canes and Snowballs on a String. Jeff Chick reprised his Machias Christmas Parade role as Santa, handing out wooden toys handcrafted by inmates at the Downeast Correctional Facility. ■

### Machias Valley News Observer Holiday Hours

We will be closing our office at noon on both Thursdays, December 24th and December 31st.

We will be closed on both Fridays, December 25th and on January 1st.

The ad deadline for those two weeks will be on Wednesday (12/23 & 12/30) at 3 p.m.

We wish all of our readers a peaceful and joyous holiday season.

### Index

Arts & Ent . . . . .	8 - 9
Church Services . . . . .	25
Classifieds . . . . .	31
Community . . . . .	20-23
Coming Events . . . . .	24, 25
Help Wanted . . . . .	30, 31
Holiday Guide . . . . .	15-18
Legals . . . . .	28, 29
Letters to Editor . . . . .	6
Obituaries . . . . .	28
Op Ed . . . . .	7
Real Estate . . . . .	29, 31
Sports . . . . .	26, 27
Town Notices . . . . .	29