

\$3.50
Wednesday,
August 12, 2026

Morning Sentinel

WEATHER:
Mostly
sunny
High 81°
Details, B6

CentralMaine.com

An edition of Central Maine Sunday

“When a family can’t pay rent, can’t put gas in their car, can’t buy food, they’re not buying school supplies. It’s one of the first things that goes.”

LISA THOMAS-WILLEY
operations manager,
Ruth’s Reusable Resources
in Portland

As the cost of school supplies adds up, families forced to sharpen their pencils



ABOVE: Libby Hernandez, of Limerick, shops for school supplies with her four daughters at Walmart in Scarborough last week. Pictured from left are, Aria, 7, Malayla, 9, Sunny, 2, and Libby. Natalia, 6, is hidden behind the stroller.

RIGHT: Colored pencils sit on a shelf at Ruth’s Reusable Resources in Portland. Ruth’s provides supplies for classrooms at no cost to teachers. Last year, 176 Maine schools signed up with Ruth’s, and teachers drove as far as two hours each way to get their supplies there. (PHOTOS BY DARYN SLOVER/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER)



From a donated supply resource center to the best discounts at big box stores, parents and teachers are seeking the most affordable ways to get stocked up.

By RILEY BOARD
Staff Writer

PORTLAND — Where do pencils go when their erasers dry out? Where do binders end up when companies go paperless? In Maine, the answer is Ruth’s Reusable Resources, which funnels donated school and office supplies to local schools. Ruth’s is a fairytale location for teachers, a magical cornucopia of crayons, pipe cleaners and binder clips. On opening day in late August, nearly 200 educators will fill their shopping carts for free. Some will camp out hours before the store opens at 9 a.m. This resource is more important than ever, as reports indicate school supplies, like so many other consumer goods, are getting more expensive. One recent study found global economic pressures, like the war in Iran and President Donald Trump’s tariffs, have driven up the cost of many back-to-school staples nearly 8% over last season. Parents and students shopping for supplies at major retailers

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TODAY’S ALMANAC

August 12, 2026

Today is the 224th day of 2026. There are 141 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Aug. 12, 2017, a driver sped into a crowd of people peacefully protesting a white nationalist rally in the Virginia college town of Charlottesville, killing 32-year-old Heather Heyer and injuring more than a dozen others. (The attacker, James Alex Fields, was sentenced to life in prison on 29 federal hate crime charges, and life plus 419 years on state charges.)

Also on this date:

In 1867, President Andrew Johnson sparked a move to impeach him as he defied Congress by suspending Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton, with whom he had clashed over Reconstruction policies. (Johnson was acquitted by the Senate.) In 1944, during World War II, Joseph P. Kennedy Jr., eldest son of Joseph and Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy, was killed with his co-pilot when their explosives-laden Navy plane blew up over England.

A month after immigrant’s slaying in Biddeford, big questions remain

The family of 25-year-old Johan Sebastián Durán Guerrero is also waiting for federal and state investigators to return some of his belongings, their lawyer says.



Members of the Maine People’s Alliance and others protest ICE actions outside Sen. Susan Collins’ Biddeford office on Tuesday. Meanwhile, Rep. Chellie Pingree and the top Democrat on the Homeland Security committee are planning a “shadow hearing” next week on ICE activity in Biddeford. **Read the story, A5** (DEREK DAVIS/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER)

By EMILY ALLEN
Staff Writer

The family of a man who was shot and killed by a federal immigration officer in Biddeford last month is still waiting for answers and for investigators to return his personal belongings — including the jewelry he was wearing and his daughter’s toys. The Office of the Maine Attorney General and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Office of the Inspector General both have announced investigations into the fatal July 13 shooting of Johan Sebastián Durán Guerrero. His partner and his sister met with a detective from the state attorney general’s office the week after the shooting and signed an authorization form agreeing that the state

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Q&A ON CYCLOSPORA

Here’s how to avoid the parasite, and what to do if you get sick

Infectious disease expert Dr. Dora Anne Mills from MaineHealth offers expert advice.

By JOE LAWLOR
Staff Writer

Maine is now part of the national cyclosporiasis outbreak, reporting 10 cases directly tied to lettuce that was recalled. The foodborne gastrointestinal illness is caused by a microscopic parasite. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has linked the outbreak to iceberg lettuce from a farm in central Mexico produced for California-based Taylor Farms, which issued a recall notice on July 17. Nationwide, the CDC has reported 10,468 cases in 47 states, including 517 hospitalizations and two deaths. Maine has identified 27 probable cases of cyclosporiasis so far this year, including the 10 associated with the outbreak that the state reported on Friday. On Tuesday, Lindsay Hammes, a spokesperson for the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, said there is no public health threat in the state stemming directly

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Coveted Cooper Flagg card — which could fetch millions — turns up in Rhode Island

The one-of-a-kind trading card features the Newport native’s autograph and a patch from the jersey he wore in his NBA debut.

By DREW BONIFANT
Staff Writer

Members of a Rhode Island retail shop that rips open boxes of trading cards on livestreams pulled the one-of-one numbered rookie debut patch Cooper Flagg card Monday. The highly sought-after Topps Chrome card — the only one in existence — could fetch upward of \$5 million should the RhodyBreakers

decide to sell. The card features a patch from the jersey Flagg wore in his NBA debut on Oct. 22, 2025. Flagg, a Newport, Maine native, also signed the card at Fanatics Fest last month. At Don’s Sports Card Center on Brighton Avenue in Portland, 22-year-old Michael Thiffault, of Biddeford,

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Dallas Mavericks’ Cooper Flagg

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