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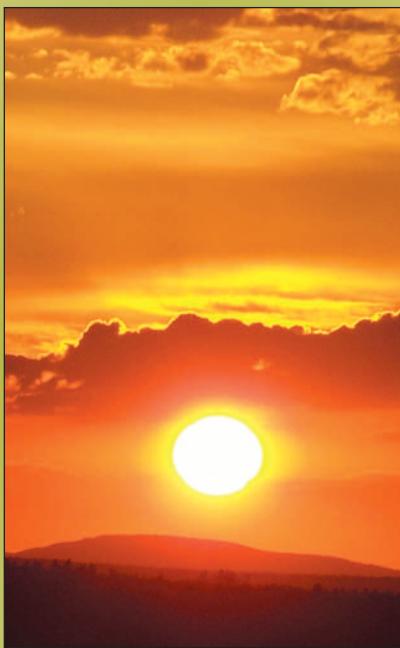
Serving Albion ★ Benton ★ China ★ Palermo ★ Unity ★ Vassalboro ★ Windsor ★ Winslow ★ Fairfield ★ Somerville ★ Whitefield ★ Liberty ★ Sidney
Chelsea ★ Jefferson ★ Washington ★ Oakland ★ Freedom ★ Skowhegan ★ Madison ★ Norridgewock ★ Anson ★ Solon ★ and other Somerset County towns

Fall foliage report

Despite record summer heat, Maine's leaf bearing trees will show off their usual yellow, orange and red hues in the coming weeks according to the first 2010 fall foliage report from the state Department of Conservation.

There is low leaf color, less than 30 percent of peak, in Aroostook, Piscataquis and Somerset counties. Color in the remainder of the state is very low, or less than 10 percent toward peak, with very low leaf drop. Overnight temperatures in the low 40s and the continued decrease in daylight will spark the gradual change in leaf color from north to south through late October.

Late summer sunset



This late summer sunset was captured by Tina Richards, of Clinton.

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Judy McNally Williams honored by Motor Maids

by Lyn Rowden

A pack of motorcyclists in club colors roared two by two into a Skowhegan parking lot on September 19. Police were there too. However, it was not in pursuit of a gang, but to recognize an extraordinary life-long Skowhegan resident for her contributions to the sport of motorcycling.

Motor Maids of Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New Brunswick, and New England and East Coast Biker Chicks came to honor Judy McNally Williams, "a true pioneer of Maine motorcycling."

By age 16, Judy was already riding an Indian Scout motorcycle. Two years later, in 1949, she became the first woman in Maine to join the national Motor Maids motorcycle club, which had formed in 1940. She had her first daughter, Bonnie, and remained an active member for several years until her growing family took center stage.

Her husband, Merle Williams, was a car dealer from 1945 into 1950s and sold Triumphs and Indian motorcycles, at his dealership which stood where the Belmont Motel pool is now.

"I'll try anything out," said Judy recalling when the Indian company came out with skis for motorcycles. Although pregnant, she put the skis on her bike, having to push them down into snow. "It was fine as long as you could go, but when you shifted the skis would come up," she laughed. "Snowmobiles came along to solve that problem."

Among the 75 guests in attendance at the recognition were friends Dale Holden and his father, Glen Holden, age 84, of the Kennebec Valley Riders who rode with Judy and Merle to the races in Laconia.

Judy's niece Heather McNally, of Topsham, a member of the Biker Chicks and newest member of Motor Maids



A photo of Judy McNally Williams on her Indian Scout motorcycle in 1949 was reproduced on a T-shirt for the club members. Photo by Lyn Rowden

planned this event as a unique way to cheer Judy, now 78, since she has been diagnosed with a heart condition. Heather contacted Lil Charron, of Arundel, the Motor Maids district director.

"They're a great bunch of gals," said Lil speaking of the women bikers. The Chicks and Maids were all eager to get together to ride from the Skowhegan municipal parking lot to the PACE Banquet Hall. Twenty-two ladies and several gentlemen on bikes, all buzzed by Judy each waving as they passed. Three bore flags: Diane

Clairmont, of Hartford, with the American flag; Gail Neilson, of New Brunswick, with the Canadian flag; and Barbara McGill, of Monmouth, with the Motor Maids colors.

East Coast Biker Chicks, Maine and



Judy McNally Williams, age 78, of Skowhegan, poses on a Harley Davidson at a recognition event to honor her as the first Maine member of the Motor Maids motorcycle club in 1949.

Photo by Lyn Rowden

Boston chapters presented her with a certificate and honorary lifetime membership and their T-shirt.

"She paved the way for other women to feel the wind in their hair...Thank you for opening the gate to the sisterhood," read the citation.

"I was glad to," Judy replied. "Now I'll have to try to find a motorcycle I can ride!"

Ruth Osborn, longest running member of the Motor Maids of Maine, presented "Maine's legend" with honorary lifetime membership. Lil explained how she had met with Judy in July, gave her a motorcycle ride and offered to buy her lunch. To secretly glean information from her for this surprise.

Lil said it was the "present meeting the past," as she researched Motor Maids archives for this special occasion. There she found a photograph of Judy on her Indian Scout in 1949. She had it printed on a T-shirt and presented it to Judy. While Judy went off to put it on, all the ladies shed vests and jackets to reveal the same shirt on each of them. Judy reappeared surprised by "everybody with my face on!"

The Motor Maids have a challenge coin and they presented one to Judy to "slap on the table so she never has to buy a round of drinks" when challenged. Always lady-like they also gave her a necklace of their insignia.

Lil pronounced, "We're all here today because of ladies like you, strong-willed, bold, daring. You believed in yourself and you never looked back. The Motor Maids organization was inspired by ladies like you, the grassroots of women motorcy-

MOTOR MAIDS

Continued on page 15

80,000 vs. 100,000 lbs.

President agrees to make pilot program permanent

by Roland D. Hallee

On September 15, U.S. Senator Susan Collins announced that President Barack Obama has agreed to her request to make permanent the pilot program that allows



trucks weighing up to 100,000 pounds to travel on federal interstate highways in Maine and Vermont. At Collins' request, the president included this provision in the Fiscal Year 2011

Continuing Resolution, an appropriations bill that would continue to fund the federal government past October 1.

Current federal law restricts trucks weighing more than 80,000 pounds from regularly using the interstate highway system, although exemptions have been granted to New Hampshire, Massachusetts and New York in the northeast. Heavier trucks in Maine and Vermont had to leave the interstate system and use smaller roadways, creating significant safety concerns and putting pressure on the already overburdened secondary roads and bridges.

Last year, Sen. Collins successfully included a provision in the FY 2010 Omnibus Appropriations bill that created a one-year pilot project that allows trucks weighing up to 100,000 pounds to travel Maine's federal interstates, such as I-95, I-195, I-295 and I-395. The pilot project had been set to expire on December 17, 2010.

In June 2004, Wilbur Smith Associates, a nationally-recognized transportation consulting firm, completed a study which found that extending the current truck weight exemption on the Maine Turnpike to all federal highways in Maine would reduce heavy truck traffic through several communities, such as Saco, Old Orchard Beach, Freeport, China and Albion, to name a few, and "result in a significant decrease of three fatal crashes per year."

Sen. Collins has faced some stiff opposition to her efforts, especially from California Senator Barbara Boxer. However, she has had strong support from Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-Vermont), Sen. Daniel Inouye, chairman of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, and Sen. Thad Cochran, vice chairman.

However, with the inclusion of a provision in the fiscal year 2011 Continuing Resolution (CR) that would make the pilot program permanent, the CR must still be passed by Congress with this provision included in order for the pilot to be made permanent. Although there is still a way to go in the process, Sen. Collins is hopeful the bill will pass with the provision included.