

JIM PAQUETTE

PICTURES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Note: Unless noted otherwise, newspaper clippings from Biddeford Journal acquired through newspaperarchives.com



From Journal December 8, 1939

Jim's father, Lucien Paquette

Lucien Paquette and his brothers' band, the Dixon Brothers. Lucien played the stand up bass



Article in 1944 Pepperell magazine about the Roy family. Yvonne, Jim's mother, is bottom row to the right of her mother with a big white bow in her hair.

April, 1944



Good Neighbors Help Out in Best Quebec Style

Seven members of the well known Roy family of St. Samuel in the Province of Quebec are now helping to make war fabrics at the Pepperell Plant in Biddeford. One of the girls came down three years ago, and liked it so much that every year she persuades a few more of the family to come down with her. The more the better, we say, when it comes to a family like the Roys!

On the Chaudière River, which flows from Lake Megantic to the great St. Lawrence, is the picturesque little village of St. Samuel in the Province of Quebec. It's a busy little village, and the river furnishes power for a saw mill, a small flour mill and a creamery. There is also a thriving pulpwood trade in that part of the country.

One of the best known and most respected families of St. Samuel is the family of Alphonse Roy, his wife and their fifteen fine children. Mr. Roy is manager of a creamery at St. Samuel, making 500 pounds of butter a day in the summertime. One of the boys is a skilled house painter,



Alphonse Roy, father of the wonderful Roy family, has five daughters and a son also working in the Pepperell Mill in Biddeford.



This is Aline, one of the lovely Roy daughters now living in Biddeford, who is doing a fine job as Roll Picker in a Spinning Room.



Brother Leo Roy was a house painter back in St. Samuel, but this year he's working as an oiler in Room 13-1 at the Biddeford mill.

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The PEPPERELL

several of the girls are school teachers, and all the children are getting along well. One of them wrote us this gracious French letter when we asked her for information about the family:

"Nous sommes heureux de vous faire connaissance de notre grande famille canadienne, dont quelques-uns travaillent pour la défense ici à Biddeford. Voici les noms: Première rangée, au centre, Monsieur et Madame Alphonse Roy. A leurs côtés de gauche à droite, Régis, Aline, Solange, Yvonne, Jules. Deuxième rangée, Annette, Bibiane, Eliane, Irène, Leo, Florence, Laurette, Lauraine, Berthe.

"Notre père est à la charge d'une beurrerie depuis 30 ans. Notre mère ayant été institutrice, elle-même s'occupe des comptes de la beurrerie. Parmi ses filles quatre ont gradué de l'Ecole Normale de Beauceville du cours supplémentaire. Lauraine et Laurette enseignèrent trois ans du 1er au 8me grade à Ste. Cecile et Piopolis. Bibiane enseigna 1 an 1/2 du 1er au 7me grade à Ste. Cecile ainsi qu'Annette 7 mois. Eliane a été diplômée pour la coupe et la couture. Leo gradua à l'Ecole de Ste. Hyacinthe pour faire le beurre à Beauceville 3 ans."

The trek of the Roy family to Biddeford started three years ago when Eliane came down looking for employment. She liked Pepperell and Biddeford so much that the next summer when she went home she brought back her twin sister, Bibiane,



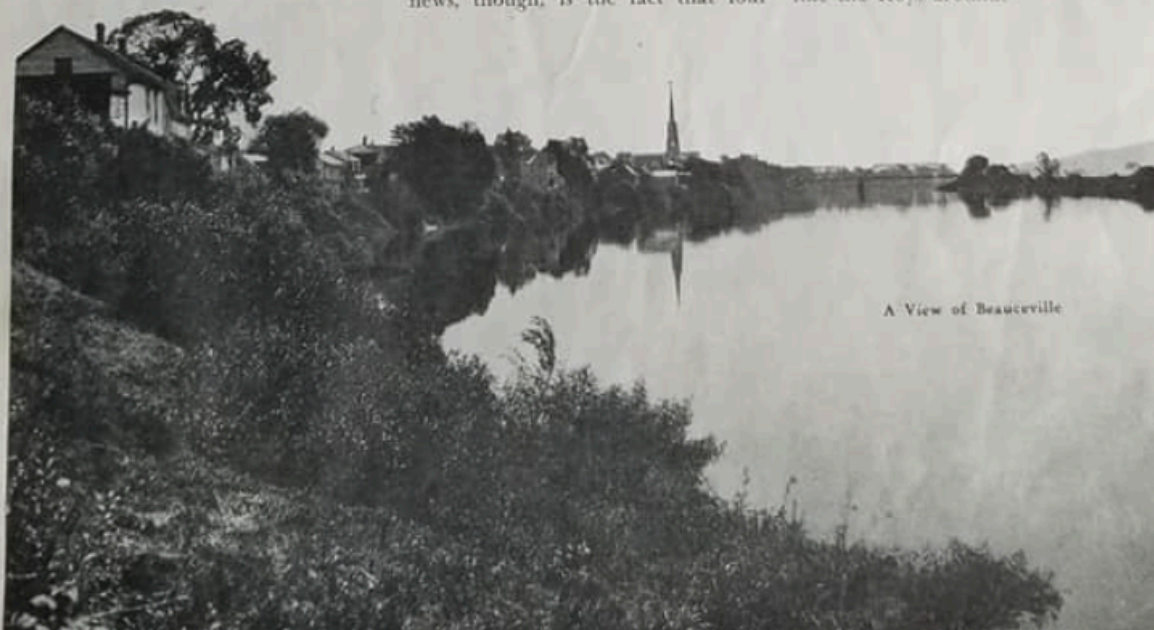
It's rather unusual for four sisters to operate a Barber-Colman Spooler, but the Roy family is an unusual and remarkable family. Here are Eliane, Laurette, Bibiane and Annette. They asked to be allowed to work together.

two other sisters, Aline and Laurette, and her father. Mr. Roy was kept plenty busy at the creamery in the summer, but when winter came there wasn't enough milk brought in by the farmers to operate the creamery, so he was glad to come down and help make Pepperell war fabrics, for the defense of his own country as well as ours. Six of his children are now here with him.

Mr. Roy is employed in the Blanket Weave room, and he thoroughly enjoys his work. One of his sons, Leo, has worked at several different jobs in the mill, and is now an oiler in Room 13-1. Aline is a Roll Picker on the Spinning Frames. The thing that really puts the family in the news, though, is the fact that four

of the girls, Eliane, Laurette, Bibiane and Annette, all operate one machine, a Barber-Colman Spooler. The girls were most anxious to stay right together at their work, so that's the way it's done. Aline is on the floor just below, so they can all get together for lunch every day. They're all pretty girls with rosy cheeks, and the boys all turn around when they go by.

Mrs. Roy and the rest of the children are still spending their winters in St. Samuel, but the Roys have made such a reputation for themselves in Biddeford that everyone is hoping that a few more of them will come back down after the next vacation. There can't be too many people like the Roys around!



A View of Beauceville

Lucien Paquette-Yvonne Roy 1951 wedding picture



Jim at a young age and 3rd grade student at St. Andre's
(from Journal June 6, 1963)



MEMBERS of the third grades of St. Andre Grammar School Missionary Club are, front row, left to right, Monique Courtois, Constance Dupuis, Marc Gonthier, Jeannine Poisson and Barbara Fecteau; second row, same order, Linda Cyr,

James Paquette, Susan Lapointe, Reginald Gilbert and Joan Goulet; third row, usual order, Michael Grover, Claire Sutton, Joseph Daigneault, Raymond Cyr, Deborah Moulton and Ronald Gagnon. Through their donations they were permitted to ransom eight pagan children.

Lucien Paquette



Jim and his mom





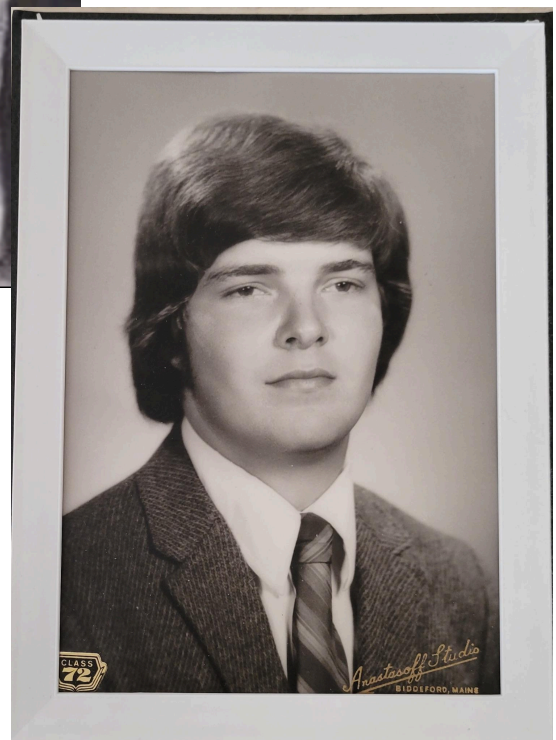
A PLACE TO PRACTICE — The "Mynt," a Biddeford rock group, rehearses in the old City Theater, placed at their disposal after they told Mayor Gilbert R. Boucher they could find no practice place. From left, Gary St. Ours, rhythm guitar; John Hop-

kins, bass guitar; Steve LaBelle, drums; Jim Paquette, lead singer, and Jay Alberto, lead guitar. The group plans a benefit concert to help the city swimming pool fund. (By District Correspondent Clark)

From Biddeford High School yearbook



Senior picture



BLACK HART!



From Journal May 17, 1974



From Journal August 13, 1975



ANNOUNCING
The Original
BLACK HART BAND
IS BACK AGAIN!!
DANCE
TO THEIR MUSIC
SATURDAY, AUGUST 16th
8:30 P.M. TO 1 A.M.
ST. JOSEPH HALL GREEN ST. BIDDEFORD

CABARET
STYLE

\$7 PER
COUPLE

From Journal April 9, 1977

TONIGHT



"BLACK HART"
ENTERTAINMENT
STARTS AT 9 P.M. \$3.50 PER PERSON
INCLUDES SET-UPS

COMING SATURDAY, APRIL 16
"SAKI"
The PINES
SMITHWHEEL ROAD, (HALFWAY) O.O.B. 934-2521
"ALWAYS THE BEST ENTERTAINMENT"
WE HOLD RESERVATIONS ONLY 'TIL 9:30 P.M.

From Journal
April 5, 1989

From Journal May 25, 1974

SAT., JUNE 1
PRE - NUPTIAL
DANCE
FOR
ALAN DUTREMBLE
AND NANCY AMBLER
MUSIC BY THE
BLACK HART BAND
TICKETS \$2.00
CALL 282-9688 Or 283-3058
THANK YOU



Black Hart Band helps youth hockey

The **Black Hart** Band will hold a reunion dance at the Biddeford Ice Arena this Saturday night from 9 to 1, to benefit the Biddeford and Sanford Youth Hockey leagues.

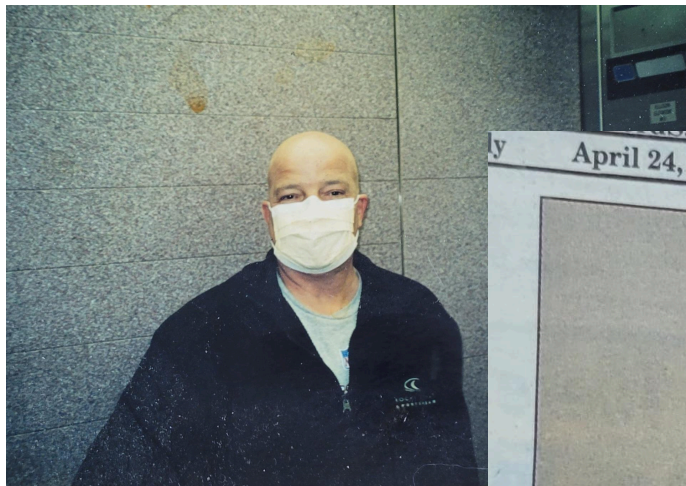
Black Hart Band, a popular local band, played widely in this area from 1971-82. In 1980, the group released a popular single, "Hard Luck, Bad Times." Members are Jim Paquette of Sanford, Tim Miles of Shapleigh, Norman Cantara and Mike Labelle of Biddeford, Rick Binette of Arundel, and Steve LaBelle of Saco.

The one-time reunion dance will raise funds to benefit the 311 children in the hockey programs, defraying the cost of ice time, paying for referees, and helping kids buy equipment.

Admission is \$15. Tickets are available at Dave's Dugout in Sanford and at the Arena in Biddeford April 7 and 8 while they last.

2000 Black Hart reunion performance





A deal with God—

Jim Paquette has survived cancer, so he's trying to establish a support center in York County

By Randy Seaver
Editor

Nearly a year ago, Jim Paquette of Saco made a deal with God. Today, Paquette is trying to hold up his end of the bargain by helping others like him who are survivors of cancer-related illnesses.

"I told God that if I survived the process I would do everything in my power to help others who are in similar circumstances," the 49-year-old father of three told the Courier on Friday.

During a routine physical examination in

January 2002, Paquette asked his doctor to check on a lump he found on his right thigh. His doctor sent him to meet with a specialist in Portland.

"I didn't think much of it at the time," Paquette said. "I was feeling fine. Everything seemed to be okay."

But Paquette's life was suddenly transformed into a nightmare when he learned that the lump on his thigh was actually a tumor that grew from a rare form of Sarcoma.

(Please turn to page 17)

Deal with God

(Continued from page 17)

tion about community resources and alternative therapies. The programs, including a resource library, are offered free of charge.

"It's really an amazing set of programs," he said. "It definitely started making a big difference in my life."

After discovering the resources that are available in South Portland, Paquette said he wanted to start a similar program in York County.

"If you look at how fast York County is growing, it's amazing to me that there isn't something like that down here," he said.

Paquette points to a recent study, released by Southern Maine Medical Center in Biddeford, which points to a 22 percent increase in cancer related illnesses since 1999.

SMMC's 2002 Cancer Program Annual Report showed local physicians diagnosed 347 new cases of cancer in 2001. The hospital has also spent the better part of the last year, lobbying for the location of a new cancer treatment center in York County.

Paquette said he was dismayed that York County residents didn't have more resources, so he decided to pitch his idea for a new support center to Biddeford Mayor Donna Dion.

"She seemed very interested in my plan," Paquette said. "She told me I might be able to use a room at the Community Center for meetings, but she also suggested I work with the hospital because it's difficult to go through the process of establishing a non-profit organization."

So, in November Paquette contacted Ed McGeachey, SMMC's president. McGeachey, Paquette said, was interested in the concept of establishing a broad range support service for cancer patients and their families. He referred Paquette to another hospital employee so that a concept for the plan could be developed.

Trying to make something happen

As he worked with the hospital, Paquette said he eventually became frustrated by the pace of developing his plan into fruition. As he waited, he kept busy with attending classes at the Cancer Community Center and volunteered to assist with Mary's Walk, an annual event in Saco, which raises money for cancer research.

He also became the president of the Maine chapter of the Sarcoma Foundation of America.

And, still he waited. Finally, in April, Paquette was asked to attend another meeting with hospital employees to discuss his plan. He said he was disappointed by what was offered.

"I wanted to start something that could begin meeting once a week," he said. "What they brought to me was something that would provide a meeting once a month. It's not that I don't appreciate their help, but I decided I had to go at this by myself for now. I want a lot more than what they are offering at this point."

Susan Hadiaris, SMMC's spokesperson, said she empathized with Paquette's frustration.

According to Hadiaris, SMMC has a "strong commitment" toward cancer survivors and their families.

"We've been working on these issues for a long time now," Hadiaris said. "We want to provide that resource for the community, and we've been enhancing the programs we already offer."

As examples, Hadiaris points to the hospital's oncology task force that meets on a monthly basis and says the hospital has a long history of providing free cancer screenings and more "individualized" cancer support groups, including support for those with breast cancer and prostate cancer.

A commitment to the community

According to Hadiaris, SMMC recently named Peg Belanger to be its cancer care coordinator. "Peg has worked for the hospital for a number of years, but this is a new position we created," Hadiaris said. "She will now be solely devoted to cancer care patients, beginning in early May."

Hadiaris said she and others at the hospital admire Paquette's tenacity and dedication to his vision of developing a broad-based cancer support center.

"No one can ever know here someone else is at with their dreams," she said. "I think it's a very admirable plan, and we would never want to hamper something like that."

At the same time, however, Hadiaris said the hospital views cancer treatment in a more individualized manner, saying different types of cancer can affect different types of people in very different ways.

"For example, I'm not sure how comfortable a breast cancer survivor would feel in a situation involving sharing intimate details of their illness with those who are prostate cancer survivors," she said. "While there are some common issues, I think there are many differing aspects to each person's situation that are completely unique."

Hadiaris, however, did say that Paquette's request did not go unnoticed by the hospital. Beginning next month, SMMC will offer a monthly support group for all cancer survivors at its Diagnostic and Therapy Center on the Industrial Park Road in Saco.

That program, Hadiaris said, will be facilitated by Debra Nelson, a licensed social worker who has been specifically trained in supporting cancer patients and their families.

"We feel it's important to have someone who is trained in all the many aspects of cancer care available at those meetings," Hadiaris said. "That does not, however, take away from the primary benefit of survivors sharing their grief and hope with one another. We just think it's an important ingredient that is necessary for long-term success."

Cancer support resources

• **Cancer Support Group,** Southern Maine Medical Center, Biddeford.

Contact: Debra Nelson, LSW; 283-7230, 283-7142

• **Cancer Community Center,** 778 Main Street, South Portland

Contact: 1-877-774-2200

www.cancercommunitycenter.org

• **Maine Chapter of the Sarcoma Foundation of America,** Saco

Contact: Jim Paquette; 283-4890 or

e-mail: jrpg@gwi.net

• **Maine Cancer Foundation,**

Contact: (207) 773-2533 or

e-mail: info@mainecancer.org

www.maineccancer.org

• **Mary's Walk,** an annual event designed to raise money for cancer research that is named in memory of Mary Kerry Libby of Saco.

www.maryswalk.org

cess."

While the first few meetings will be held on a monthly basis, Hadiaris said the new program could easily be expanded, depending upon the needs of those who participate.

"Nothing has been written in stone," Hadiaris said. "It's just difficult to know what pace participants will feel comfortable. We'll have to get the program up and running before we can know that."

Depending upon the level of participation, Hadiaris said there are no bounds to what a cancer support group could look like.

For his part, Paquette said he appreciates the hospital's willingness to meet at least part of his plan.

"I just want to do something more," he said. "I think there's a need, and I think people will respond."

Editor's Note: If you would like to help Jim Paquette with his plan, you may call him at 283-4890 or e-mail jrpg@gwi.net



Memory Lane co-owners:
Diane York and Jim Paquette

A place where people can go to simply have fun and relax

Memory Lane Music Hall celebrates its first anniversary.

"Sit. Relax. Gossip"

The small wooden sign hangs on one of two outdoor patios at Memory Lane Music Hall in Standish, where nearby picnic tables serve as a second invitation to relax and enjoy the company of friends. Inside the spacious and spotlessly clean establishment, the walls are lined with posters — one wall dedicated to Maine musicians, while others feature the numerous acts who have entertained patrons, sandwiched between the greats like Elvis and The Beatles.

Owner Jim Paquette says the bar is a dream come true. After triumphing over cancer a few years back, Jim made the decision to open the establishment which celebrates its first anniversary

on Sept. 15. He continues to strive to bring the best local entertainment to the area. Every Friday and Saturday night, starting just after 9 p.m., a live band takes to the stage. From oldies to heavy metal to country, Paquette offers a wide variety of constantly changing acts — designed to please everyone.

And the fun doesn't stop there, Jim makes sure a DJ spins the tunes before the band plays, as well as during their breaks to ensure the dancing and fun continues throughout the evening. And, on Wednesdays it's karaoke night and Thursday's "Up Close and Personal" offers a more intimate setting of

great acoustic talent.

"I kept hearing that there wasn't a club where people in their 30s, 40s and 50s could go to have a good time, where good music played," Jim says. "That's why I opened Memory Lane Music Hall, so there would be a little bit of everything for everybody. It's a place where you can just go and soon strangers become like

members of your own family. That's what it is like here — we really are like a family."

Business partner Diane York says the live entertainment coupled with the safe and comfortable atmosphere makes Memory Lane Music Hall stand out as a place where people can go to simply have fun and relax.

"Customers tell me that they love coming here because they feel very safe, very comfortable and that it's a family-type atmosphere," Diane says. "It's a place that everybody knows each other. That was our goal when we started this. I always have people tell me that they love coming here. We give them great service — with a smile. We bend over backwards to

make sure they are happy."

Memory Lane Music Hall also features pub-style food, which complements the contents of your cold, frosty mugs. Frank's Grill dishes out quality menu items in large portions that will leave you, and the contents of your wallet, feeling full. As an added bonus, Thursday nights from 6 to 8 p.m., the outdoor grill is fired up and you can take advantage of free hot dogs and hamburgers from a seat in the comfortable patio setting.

On other nights, four televisions line the walls for you to cheer on your favorite team — or you can participate in your own game, thanks to the dart boards and pool tables nearby.

Jim says he strives to

give back to the community by hosting a number of fundraisers throughout the year.

"I'm a big believer in giving back and I always want to help," Jim says. "That's what's really nice about this business. People should feel free to contact us about helping their organization."

Memory Lane Music Hall is open from 4 p.m. until midnight Monday through Thursday from 4 p.m. to 1 a.m. on Friday and Saturday, and from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Sundays. For more information, please call 642-3363, or visit www.memorylanemusic.com for calendar and event listings.

"People absolutely love coming here," Diane says. "It's a place to relax."



Owner Jim Paquette and business partner Diane York.



Jim's three children



Daughter Jenny,
Singing at Grand Ole Opry



Surrounded by family!



LET'S SPEAK
FRENCH

Parlez-vous Francais? 'Let's Speak French' offers conversation, fun

By Tammy Wells
Courier / Post

BIDDEFORD — Some came to learn more, some to engage in conversation, some to relive memories like the days when, in some of the area's parochial schools, half of the school day was taught in French, the other half in English.

"Let's Speak French" is an informal get-together of people eager and happy to converse in the language that for most represents their heritage.

There are no fees to join, and no group officers. They speak French, and have fun.

Spearheaded by Biddeford native and Saco resident Jim Paquette, Let's Speak French brings together people who want to practice their French speaking skills — and have a great time doing so.

It used to be that the French language was heard in most places in Biddeford, neighboring Saco, and some of the surround-



Tammy Wells Photo

Let's Speak French is an informal group of people who meet at 6 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month to converse in the French language and have fun. Organizer Jim Paquette said everyone is welcome. The meetings take place at TJ's Pizza in Biddeford.

FRENCH

Continued from page 1

areas, but it's not spoken so often today.

"I used to be fluent," said Paquette, 69. "I didn't know how to speak English until I went to school." But, he said, over time, his French skills became rusty as the his opportunities to speak the language of his birth dwindled. "It got to a point where I would have to stop and think how to say it. Since we've been meeting, I'm not struggling as much as I used to."

According to the U.S. Census, in 2019, 5.9 percent of Mainers spoke a language other than English at home. In 1970, about 141,500 Maine residents — 14 percent of the population at the time — reported French as their mother tongue, according to U.S. Census figures compiled by the

University of Maine. In the 2012-2016 census, 38,695 French speakers were reported in Maine, making up 3 percent of the population.

The Let's Speak French group has been meeting since January. It started small and has grown, with the most recent session on March 28 attracting 25 people, eager to converse. The group meets at 6 p.m. at TJ's Pizza in Biddeford on the fourth Tuesday of the month. Some come a little early and order supper.

They began the March session singing the French version of national anthem of Canada — a nod to their ancestors who left provinces like Quebec and New Brunswick to come to Maine to work, and then paused for a group photo before settling down to have a chat, en Francais. There is conversation, and often games, like passing out a flash card that shows an English word,

and people try to guess the French translation, said Paquette.

Barbara Corbeil said she reads French and writes it, but came to brush up on her French-speaking skills. "I grew up speaking English," she explained.

Claudette Vachon attended for the first time at the most recent session. "My daughter suggested I check it out," she said.

Jean Gagne said she grew up knowing French, but it was not spoken at home, most of the time.

"Only when my grandmother came to visit," said Gagne, who said her grandmother understood English, but didn't speak it.

Sandra Curro and Anita Moran were among the attendees.

"When I was little, my mom only spoke French to us," said Curro, but time passed, and there was less opportunity to speak French.

Pat Boston, born Therrien, was looking forward to the evening. She said she learned French at St. Andre's School and took French classes in high school and in college, and joined the Let's Speak French group for the first time in March after another program, which offered conversation in several languages, wrapped up. Paquette said during the 1950s and 60s, "no matter where you went in this area, you'd hear French spoken." That began to change in the 1970s and 1980s, and continued. "Now, I don't hear it at all," he said.

He and others who meet to talk, laugh, and enjoy each others company are changing that, a bit.

The next Let's Speak French event is scheduled for 6 p.m. at TJ's Pizza on Tuesday, April 25.

Tammy Wells — 207-780-9016, twells@mainely-mediallc.com

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Monthly reunions of the early 1970's classes of Biddeford High School