

What do you know about NH?

An occasional opportunity to test the depth of your Granite State knowledge.

Q: What's the oldest distillery in New Hampshire?

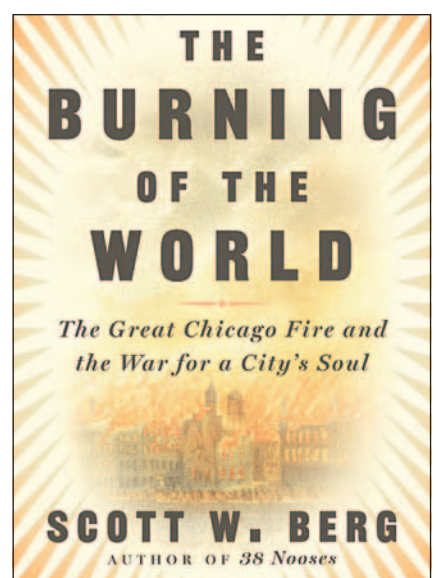
A: Brewing and distilling have been around since Colonial times, but the oldest current distillery in the Granite State is Flag Hill Distillery in Lee, which began making spirits in 2004. Flag Hill began as a winery in 1990.

NH Life

NEW HAMPSHIRE SUNDAY NEWS • OCT. 15, 2023 • PAGE D1

Today in NHLife:

- ▶ **DOG TRACKS:** Columnist Gail Fisher says someone must have missed some signals that White House dog Commander was sending before biting. • D2
- ▶ **HEALTH:** Loneliness and depression have significant health implications. Dr. Roizen explores. • D3
- ▶ **GADGETS:** Bluetooth adapters for older cars. • D6
- ▶ **TRAVEL:** Ten of the spookiest destinations in the U.S. • D6
- ▶ **PLUS:** Dear Abby, Heloise, 7-Day Menu Planner, Sunday TV listings and more.



▶ **BOOKS:** Scott Berg's "The Burning of the World" joins a long line of outstanding nonfiction about famous fires. • D5

Sewing up the joy of creating

IN THIS MOMENT of fall, I suspect many of you Budget Vogue fashionistas are putting away your sandals, getting out your socks, perhaps starting to prepare stews and soups and breads.



Budget Vogue

Susan Dromey Heeter

I'll take out my Staub Dutch oven and pore over recipes. That Staub is the French workhorse of ovenware. I delight in it and, no, I did not score it at a thrift shop. No, I bought it new, and paid rather a pretty price, but I love it and I've never looked back.

Alas, Budget Voguers, I want to write of the coziness brought in my autumn, the change in the air encouraging the domestic joys of inside activities. One I discovered this summer: sewing.

Two years ago I found a great — almost new — Singer sewing machine at Salvation Army. I bought it knowing it was far easier to use than the vintage Husqvarna Viking I'd found in Alaska.

That Husqvarna was the 1965 Triumph to my 2016 Honda — much, much cooler and classic, but, truth be told, I could not keep up.

I gave it to my friend, Trish, who is a true seamstress and who made her own wedding dress. She is an artiste. Moi? Point A to Point B is my motto for most things.

I delighted in my Singer this summer and created tote bags made from an old sail I found at a thrift shop in Gloucester, Mass. I made bags for all of my nieces and they were thrilled. I was thrilled, too, as I've not put thread to fabric in decades.

I bask in my creations and even use one to tote around my school supplies and lunch. I found belts in thrift shops to use as straps, discovered colors to enhance the white background, remembered that a seam ripper is vital to any creation.

When I brought this tote to the high school at which I teach, I visited the sewing class and shared my work as the young sewers shared theirs. Sewing can be magical, therapeutic, satisfying. One of my students shares her creations daily with me with the enthusiasm unmatched by anything TikTok or Facebook can provide. The joy of creating by hand (and machine) is bliss.

So, Budget Voguers, do share your crafts, your quilts, your pillows and bags. Show off what can be done with thrift store finds and an old — or new — sewing machine.

And if you can use a Husqvarna Viking, oh, do show and tell. You rock.

Susan Dromey Heeter writes and teaches on the Seacoast. Reach her at dromeheet@comcast.net.

Lebanon loves its opera house



JOHN KOZIOL/UNION LEADER CORRESPONDENT

Joe Clifford, the executive director of the Lebanon Opera House, leads a tour through a large-scale renovation of the venue, which temporarily closed its doors in August.

Nonprofit has 3 million reasons to celebrate its centennial

By John Koziol - Union Leader Correspondent

LEBANON

BLESSED BY a supportive community and generous benefactors, the Lebanon Opera House is in the midst of a \$4.2 million capital campaign to renovate its theater from top to bottom and also to take its shows on the road.

As of Oct. 3, the Opera House, a non-profit located in the Lebanon City Hall which celebrates its centennial in 2024, has raised \$3.3 million, said Executive Director Joe Clifford.

Since the end of August, the majority of that money, \$3.2 million, has been going into physical improvements, including a new floor, new seats, improved exterior lighting and signage and making the main lobby more inviting.

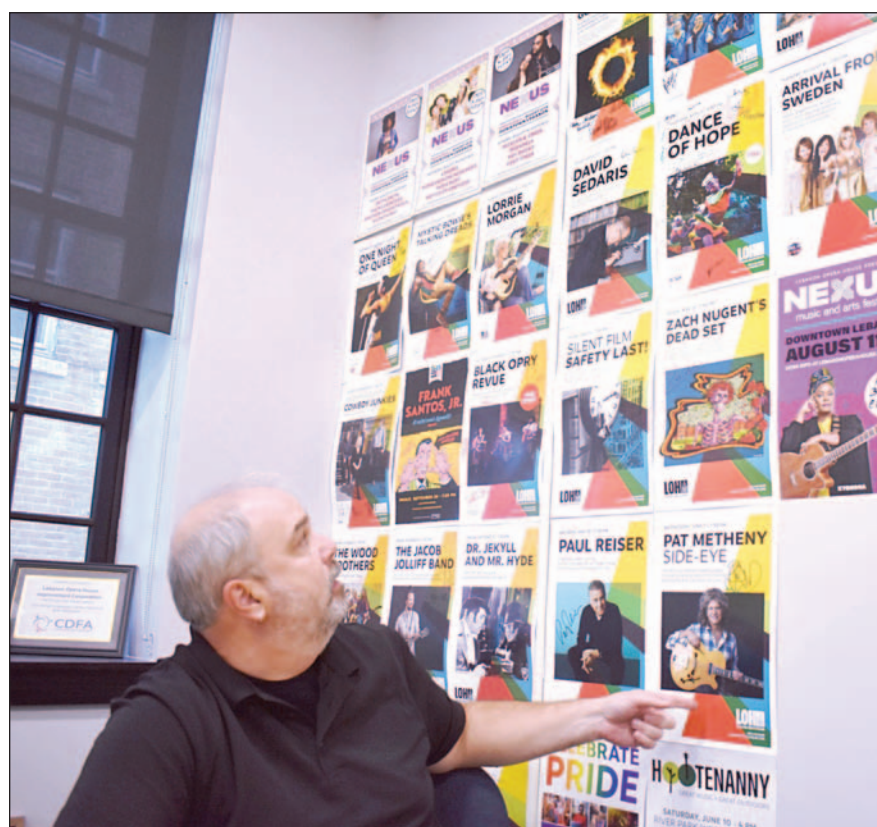
It also involves expanding the upper lobby, converting the incandescent stage lights to LED and refreshing dressing rooms and back-

stage spaces.

Work is expected to be completed sometime early next year, said Clifford, who has been at the helm of the LOH since 2017, following 17 years at the Hopkins Center for the Arts at Dartmouth College in Hanover.

Clifford said \$1 million is being raised for an operational reserve to encourage and promote new artists while also expanding the "LOH on Location" program, which in the past has seen the Opera House hold performances in parks, churches, and even on a

▶ See **Opera House**, Page D2



JOHN KOZIOL/UNION LEADER CORRESPONDENT

The Lebanon Opera House has drawn some nationally known acts in recent seasons. Executive Director Joe Clifford looks over posters from last season, which included guitarist Pat Metheny, comedian Paul Reiser and humorist David Sedaris.

As renovations proceed: Please take a seat — or two — or a whole row

By Julia Ann Weekes
Union Leader Staff

People are always looking to nab seats for fun shows, but the Lebanon Opera House is going one step further: Take home a seat. Or a row of them. Or all 800 of them, for that matter.

The entertainment venue, located inside City Hall, took its "Final bow — for now" in early August, when patrons took tours of the theater, snapped some selfies on stage and added a memory for two to a time capsule.

Then the doors were shut for a major renovation, to take place over five months.

But the initial problem was

what to do with all the 20-year-old theater seats, which needed replacing.

Brian Cook, the opera house's operations manager, said logistics were tough since they didn't have any place to store them all. Takers would have had to have the means to pick up seats as quickly as possible.

"It's a challenge," Cook conceded. Two-thirds of the chairs were custom made to fill the slope of the floor, and while some were in good shape, others were falling apart.

"We're making a good-faith effort to find them a home," Cook said when he put out a



LEBANON OPERA HOUSE

Lebanon Opera House is going for a new look, so these 20-year-old seats have been removed as part of a large-scale renovation.

▶ See **Seats**, Page D2

Commander probably didn't bite without warning

COMMANDER has left the building. We don't know where President Biden's two-year-old German shepherd dog has gone — the second of his dogs to be banished from the White House for biting, but after being given at least 12 chances — i.e., bites — Commander is gone.

As a dog trainer, what bothers me is that we are left to hypothesize about what was going on to create an environment in which two dogs suffered similar fates over the course of less than two years. There might have been a teaching opportunity, or at least more information about what created the environment that led to at least 12 people being bitten.

In the past, we've known that dog trainers have been employed to train White



Dog Tracks

Gail Fisher

House dogs — either on-site, or through boarding training — to help them adjust to their life in a very different household. Sadly, there has been no word I'm aware of, about attempts to modify the behavior of either German shepherd.

We are often engaged to help owners and their dogs deal with behavior problems, sometimes even including multiple bites. Virtually every owner is

shocked the first time their dog bites. Before every first bite, most owners are secure in the knowledge that their dog doesn't bite. A typical reaction is just that: "He's never bitten before!"

That first bite doesn't mean the dog has suddenly become "aggressive," or that he will necessarily bite again, but our emotions and trust are shaken and the dog/owner relationship changes with just one incident.

Another common statement we hear is that the dog "bit without any warning." But that is rarely the case. Often there have been repeated warnings that have been ignored, misinterpreted, or even punished.

Growling is often a precursor to a bite, but not always. Further, if a dog is

punished for growling he may learn to stop growling, but his feelings about undesirable situations haven't changed. If he learns from the punishment, he may stop issuing an audible warning, and bite if provoked. The fact is that growling is one way a dog communicates, "Something is distressing me. Make it go away, or I may have to." The "I may have to" often means with a bite.

Because growling is simply communication, it's important to not scold or punish a dog when he growls. This doesn't mean to ignore growling, but it does mean don't yell, hit, grab the dog by the collar, or do anything the dog will interpret as punishment. She won't recognize that what is upsetting you is her

growling. Rather, she will associate the punishment with whatever she is growling at or growling about. She is already stressed about that "thing," and now has even more reason to dislike it.

A dog growls out of fear or apprehension, or because of an unpleasant past experience. A fearful dog growling is saying, "Go away. Don't come any closer." A dog that is growling due to a past experience is also saying, "Leave me alone. Stay away." Scolding a dog for growling is punishing the expression of fear. He's still afraid, plus he'll view the object of his fear as having made his owner angry.

The bottom line is to not react negatively if your dog growls. On the other hand, you need to rescue the dog

from whatever he's perceiving as tension-producing at that moment. Then you need to tackle the issue, be it fear of Secret Service personnel, or whatever it may be.

Training and desensitization can teach a dog that the object of their fear is a source of good things. In the meantime, it would have been important to protect Commander from whatever caused this reaction — to avoid a bite for both his, and his victim's sake. Unfortunately, that wasn't done, and now Commander is gone.

Gail Fisher, author of "The Thinking Dog" and a dog behavior consultant, runs All Dogs Gym & Inn in Manchester. To suggest a topic for this column, which appears every other Sunday, email gail@alldogsgym.com or write c/o All Dogs Gym, 505 Sheffield Road, Manchester, NH 03103. Past columns are on her website.



JOHN KOZIOL/UNION LEADER CORRESPONDENT

The Lebanon Opera House, built in 1924 as a vaudeville theater, community gathering spot and city hall, is getting a \$3.2 million renovation in advance of its 100th anniversary.

Opera House

From Page D1

local rail trail.

"We've seen a lot of growth over the past six years," said Clifford. "Our community really values this space," he said, pointing to strong donations and ticket sales at the year-round venue.

He is proud of the fact that no taxpayer money is being used to fund the renovations, and says the Opera House is in a good place financially.

"My goal was to go from good to great. Let's create the theater for the next 100 years," he said.

Part of that entails reducing the number of seats in the theater. Before renovations began, there were 800. At the reopening, there will be several dozen fewer.

"Leg room was lacking and (the) seats could have been wider," said Clifford.

For reasons that are not clear, the seats, which were installed about 20 year ago, range in width from 18 to 22 inches. In the revamp, all the seats will be 22

inches wide and will have cup holders.

"Comfort trumps the number of seats," he said.

The "creaky" floor to which the seats were affixed is also being replaced.

The aim is to make the opera house more attractive both for performers and patrons, said Clifford.

One of the larger performance spaces in the Upper Valley, the Opera House's size is an advantage, in that it can host "artists of significant note." The past season featured a slew of nationally known acts, among them comedian Paul Reiser, author and humorist David Sedaris and top-notch jazz

guitarist Pat Metheny. The Opera House recently signed a new, 35-year lease with the city and will soon be better positioned to "bring the show on the road," said Clifford.

"It's an exciting time for us," he said, but it's not an anxious time.

"Having (\$3.3 million) in hand before those guys started swinging hammers was a relief."

Conneston Construction Inc. of Laconia is the project's general contractor.

For more information about the Lebanon Opera House and its centennial celebration, go to LOH100.org. northcountrynews@unionleader.com

Seats

From Page D1

call on social media in late summer.

Maybe someone wanted one or two for a porch, a man cave or home theater?

After all, people who sat in those seats over the past two decades have been witness to nationally known performers of all kinds, including Stephen Stills and Judy Collins, Weird Al Yankovic, Paula Poundstone, Shawn Colvin, Savion Glover, Neville Brothers, Suzanne Vega, Rosanne Cash, Keb' Mo', David Crosby & Sky Trails Band, Pat Metheny, Lindsey Buckingham, Cyndi Lauper, Indigo Girls, Jason Mraz, Chris Isaak, Clint Black, Kenny Wayne Shepherd and David Sedaris.

The first to accept the chair challenge were Nanci and Al Cirone, who sponsored two of the theater seats two decades ago and have been taking in shows at the opera house since the mid-1970s.

Their two chairs — with blue fabric on the seat pads, wooden arms and metal legs — temporarily sit in their TV room, but they soon will make the move to a new home in Portland, Maine, in memory of a close friend, well-known lawyer and fellow Lebanon Opera House supporter, the late Deborah Cooper, who died in 2004.

The chairs will reside with Cooper's son, Tom, and his wife Alexa, who are parents to daughters Siena and Caroline.

Cooper "died before



LEBANON OPERA HOUSE

Al and Nanci Cirone have taken home a pair of seats they sponsored 20 years ago at the Lebanon Opera House, which is getting a big makeover.

she could meet her twin granddaughters, who are five years old and are like grandchildren to us," Al Cirone said. "We got engraved name plaques for the two girls and I attached them to the chair arms."

One seat has the name "Cirone" on it and the other the name of the law firm where their grandmother worked for many years. Cooper also served as state assistant attorney general and deputy attorney general.

Cooper's daughter Elizabeth is the Cirones' goddaughter, and it's all an

extended family of sorts.

Looking ahead, the couple plans to sponsor one new seat in time for the opera house's 100th anniversary in 2024.

Dedicating only one seat doesn't mean the two will have to sit apart. Neither Cirone actually sat in the chairs they sponsored 20 years ago; they had another vantage point that they preferred in the theater.

There's no word yet on where they'll sit in the new setup, but it's a given they will be back in the audience soon.

jeekees@unionleader.com

"My goal was to go from good to great. Let's create the theater for the next 100 years."

JOE CLIFFORD
Lebanon Opera House Executive Director

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JUMBLE

Answer:
SHRANK ONWARD HAMMER
SECEDE SOCCER WILLOW

When the children's birthday party got a little out of control, the —

REC ROOM WAS WRECKED

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Today's puzzles are on Page D6

SUPPOSING MARGE SIMPSON WERE ON VACATION AND A BORING EVENT OCCURRED, IT WOULD BE NOTHING TO WRITE HOMER ABOUT.

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