



# The Buzz

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The Old School

Rockland

## To Fly Electric, Rockland to Boston

by Glen Birbeck



Cape Air, operator of several flights a day between Boston and Owls Head, announced an agreement to buy at least ten electric aircraft from Israeli builder Eviation. The plane, called Alice, seats seven passengers plus pilot and co-pilot, Alice has a range of six hundred miles. It's battery is just shy of a megawatt, 900

Kilowatt Hours. From Cape Air's perspective Alice is a dream come true. The maintenance costs are projected to be just a third of what the current fleet's aircraft costs to fly. The majority of Cape Air's machines are now Cessna 402s. These work horses have a pair of piston engines. Alice will have three electric motors turning its three propellers - all pushers, two on the wing tips and one at the rear of the fuselage. Another carrier, Harbor Air of Vancouver Canada has announced it will convert its DHC-2 de Havilland Beavers to electric. Harbor is the world's biggest airline flying float planes exclusively. In the case of the Beaver a single piston engine will be replaced with a 750 HP electric motor.

As with automobiles the electric revolution comes in two flavors. Pure electric and hybrid electric. The planes will not sit on the ground charging, they only make money when flying, so they'll have fully charged batteries swapped for those depleted at the end of a flight. The hybrids will burn fuel to generate the electric power supplied to the motors. The hybrid approach is an interim step. Big players Jet Blue and Boeing are funding startup Zunum Aero of Kirkland Washington with a goal of building a 12 passenger hybrid to be available in 2022. Companies taking the hybrid approach can cross over to pure electric when better batteries become available.

Intense effort is going into improving storage, the batteries, and propulsion, the motors. Also whats called battery management systems and the electronic drivers of the motors. The 500 to 750 volts or more these systems use challenge today's power semiconductors. Complex arrangements of hundreds or thousands of smaller cells are needed to reach the level of fractions of a megawatt needed. The voltage and current of each cell is monitored by computers during charge and discharge. The economics of dense energy storage hinges on battery life. The life of these cells is maximized by keeping their temperatures in limits. Remember Boeing's problems with batteries? They had a bad habit of bursting into flame.

Companies deciding or considering the move from petroleum to electric can get a PR boost from electric flying's tiny environmental footprint. With flights of under 500 miles generating two billion air fares each year the market is huge. In reality there is an environmental cost with the electric aircraft. The motors use magnets with rare earth elements and the batteries use lithium. Both materials require mining and processing. It will take careful study to decide where and how the post electric aviation industry will affect Earth's environment.

The pilot who fly's you the hour between cities may just have learned the basics of his profession in an electric airplane. Of all the early markets for the electric, flight training is the most obvious. The economics are a perfect fit too. The student pilot might spend an afternoon taking off and landing a dozen times at the same airfield. They're learning to play well with other flying traffic. Getting into and out of the pattern of tightly controlled airspace around an airport. In this the two seat Pipistrel from Slovenia is a rising star. This new aircraft awaits the snail like approval process from a distracted FAA. When that approval is finally secured the cost to student pilots will drop to as little as a quarter of today's hourly rate. Securing the needed hours in the air for the various classes of FAA license is a barrier to many would be flyers. When the regulatory dam finally breaks expect dozens of small trainer electrics.

Contribute yourself to WRFR and The Buzz

We are all volunteers, and you are invited to join us.  
email [steinberger@gwi.net](mailto:steinberger@gwi.net) or call Joe at 596-0731



Pearl Benjamin, from Watershed School, on left, and Sam Maltese, Greta Bishop, and Julian Blohm from Camden Hills High School.

## Student Activists on the Metro Show

Two weeks ago we received this email at WRFR:

Hello Joe,

I am the Events Chair for the Knox County Democrats. We are working with an amazing group of students from three schools and planning a Senatorial Forum featuring the remaining three Democratic candidates for U.S. Senate.

The group is called the Maine Teen Advocacy Coalition, and they are very intelligent young activists. They hosted a Gubernatorial Forum two years ago and it was a big hit, both with the seven candidates for Governor and with the 300+ people who attended.

They are two years older and wiser and this year, they're able to vote so I think it will be really interesting.

I just realized that you are the person who does a news show on the radio on Wednesday afternoon, Rockland Metro, and I was wondering if you'd have any interest in interviewing one or more of these students.

The event is Saturday, November 23rd, and all candidates have confirmed that they will be there. It's from 1:30 to 3:00 in Strom Auditorium on the campus of Camden Hills high school.

Sincerely,  
Nancy Davis

Of course we were delighted to invite these students to join us on the Metro Show. We are always eager for interesting guests and interesting conversations. And we were not disappointed. The old men on the Metro team and these bright young adults enjoyed an hour exploring ideas on a variety of subjects.

It should be noted that it was not our goal, or our practice, to promote the political views of these young activists. We are eager on the Metro show to discuss ideas with bright and thoughtful guests of all political and philosophical stipes, Republicans and Democrats, liberals and conservatives, etc. It is not hard to get on the show, no inside connections are necessary. Just email [steinberger@gwi.net](mailto:steinberger@gwi.net) and we'll make it happen.

Next week we will be joined on the Metro show by Ananur Forma and some of her neighbors who are opposing the 5G tower proposed for Camden Street, now before the Planning Board. Maine State Senator David Miramont will be with us too.



Photos from the Metro show by Ron Tesler

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15:

- Grown-Up Story Hour at Camden Public Library, 11 a.m. to noon. Volunteers read stories for 30 to 60 minutes. Readers are needed: 236-3440. Also at the library on Friday, the Chess Club meets from 4 to 5:30 p.m. Players of all ages and skill levels are welcome to show up and learn new strategies.
- “Murder She Said,” 6:30 p.m. in Thomaston Public Library’s Friday Night Films. Margaret Rutherford makes her first appearance as the famed Miss Marple in this sly mystery based on Agatha Christie’s “4:50 from Paddington.” Miss Marple sees a murder aboard a passing train, then follows a trail of baffling clues to a manor house inhabited by a quarrelsome family. There, she takes a job as a domestic and discovers the body. But no murderer is a match for Miss Marple.”

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16:

- Mural Panel Unveiling at Rockland Public Library, 10:30 a.m. Arts in Action and the library unveil new panels created for the library’s hallway mural by Oceanside High School first-year student Winter Adams as an independent project last spring.
- Chris Van Dusen to Read from His Latest Book Around a Bonfire, from 2 to 4 p.m. at Camden Snow Bowl. The Camden-Rockport Middle School fundraiser features Van Dusen reading from “If I Built a School.” Activities will include live music, food for sale, an “If I Built a S’mores” bar, art auction, and sale of prints and T-shirts with artwork from Van Dusen’s book
- “Maine Before and After Statehood: How Maine’s Past Informs the Present and Shapes the Future,” 4 p.m. at Sail, Power & Steam Museum, Rockland. Colin Woodard celebrates the history and character of Maine’s early settlers and explores how they inform Maine’s character today. He is the author of “The Lobster Coast: Rebels, Rusticators, and the Struggle for a Forgotten Frontier” and other books. The Rockland Historical Society program is free.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17:

- The Bolshoi Ballet in Cinema: Le Corsaire, 1 p.m. at Rockland’s Strand Theatre. “Bolshoi prima ballerina, the mesmerizing Ekaterina Krysanova, and leading soloist Igor Tsvirko ignite Medora and Conrad’s passion with undeniable intensity,” says The Guardian. With grand cinematic sets and a shipwreck. Three hours, 30 minutes, two intermissions.
- Sunday Jams in Rockland, Sail, Power, & Steam Museum, 75 Mechanic Street, 1:30 p.m.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 18:

- Free Adult Art Classes at Rockland Public Library, 11 a.m. Catinka Knoth leads the free Monday classes – with a focus on drawing in color – open to all, with materials provided. Students will draw woodland animals, wild turkeys, and Native American motifs this month.
- New Puzzle Club at Camden Public Library, 4 to 5 p.m. Puzzle lovers of all ages are welcome to join the new club to socialize and work on puzzle projects together. The club meets every Monday.
- U.S. Census Bureau Recruiting Session at Rockland Public Library, 5 to 7 p.m. Monday and noon to 2 p.m. Wednesday. A representative will describe the work and help people fill out an application. Census jobs provide paid training and flexible hours. For more info or to apply online: 2020Census.gov.
- Monday Jams at St. George Grange, at Wiley’s Corner, 7 to 9 p.m. through October. Country, gospel, folk, bluegrass.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19:

- “Beyond the Great Firewall,” 7 p.m. at Camden Public Library. The Camden Conference hosts a free talk by UMaine political science professor Kristin Vekasi, who describes how information is censored in China and what that means for the rule of its Communist Party and its foreign relations. Learn more at CamdenConference.org!
- Tuesday Jams in Thomaston, Federated Church, 8 Hyler Street, at 7 p.m. Folk, country, blues, gospel. FMI: 273-2914.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20:

- “Maine Alpaca Experience,” at 10:30 a.m. at Anderson Inn, Quarry Hill, Camden. Corry Pratt of Maine Alpaca Experience in Northport and Northern Solstice Alpaca Farm in Unity will speak about her passion for alpaca fiber and the animals that produce it. The program is free and open to women 50-plus. Registration is required: 301-6116, QuarryHill.org
- “STEM Workshop: Cookies!” at Rockland Public Library, at 10 a.m. Kids are invited to learn the science of baking with Miss Katie and Ms. Jessie. They’ll be baking small-batch snickerdoodles with creative mix-ins while everyone learns (and eats). Registration is required: 594-0310.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21:

- “Otters, Owls and Tracking Animals in Winter,” Thursday, November 21, at 6:30 p.m. at Rockland Public Library. Naturalist Kirk Gentalen tells tales about what he’s observed over 15 midcoast winters and he gives tips and tricks for spotting tracks and signs of deer, bobcats, coyotes, foxes, raccoons, fishers and others animals.
- Thursday Jams in Warren, Saint George River Cafe, 310 Main Street, 6 p.m. and Friday Open Mics, second and fourth Fridays, at 6:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22:

- “Evening of Mindfulness” at Lincolnville Community Library, Friday, at 6 p.m. Ning Sawangaeng presents the free program that will include guided meditation. She will discuss her own experiences with the practice and describe how it can strengthen the mind’s focus and help to develop self-compassion. Suitable for beginners and those with experience in practicing mindfulness and meditation.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23:

- Democratic Senate Candidates Forum in Rockport, from 1:30 to 3 p.m. in Camden Hills Regional High School’s Strom Auditorium. Maine Teen Advocacy Coalition and Knox County Democrats offer the free, student-led forum featuring all Maine Democratic Party candidates for U.S. Senate: Sara Gideon, Bre Kidman and Betsy Sweet. Refreshments will be served and there will be an opportunity to meet the candidates following the forum.

**Around Town** is compiled each week by C.O.H.Gifford, Jr.

An expanded listing is online at [wrfr.org](http://wrfr.org)

Please submit Around Town items to [gowrfr@gmail.com](mailto:gowrfr@gmail.com)

Our thanks to The Free Press for sharing its calendar.

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# Voting Day

By Steve Carroll

My early memories of voting day go back to the mid-sixties. I was a Sophomore in High School working at what was then Rockland’s only local Radio station. The station manager, Paul Huber, was a State representative and took under his wing a young politician named Dave Emery (who later served as a U. S. representative and member of the house armed services committee). On election day Paul & Dave would set up shop at the Radio station and tabulate results as they came in. Taking part in election night coverage was a thrilling experience and the memories have stayed with me my whole life.

This year I volunteered to collect signatures for my favored candidate for President Tulsi Gabbard. Each candidate must collect 2,000 signatures to be placed on the ballot for the Maine primary. Joe Steinberger and I set up our table and went to work asking “are you a registered Democrat?” In just a short while another couple arrived at the polling center looking to collect signatures for their candidate, Bernie Sanders. Although Bernie and Tulsi are competitors for the same seat, we invited them to join us at our table. Working together we collected even more signatures. As the day passed I learned this volunteer couple had just moved to the area, having lived in places all over the world. We learned a lot about each other as we chatted with friends visiting our table.

Later a charming young lady showed up collecting signatures for President Trump for the Republican party primary. We all started up a conversation and worked together to direct voters from either party to the proper table. Working together we were able to collect quite a few signatures for both parties. It was a good day all around, meeting and greeting friends and strangers. We learned that we can gain more by serving honey than vinegar and that we are all part of one big community: different people with different ideas, but with the same hopes and fears.

Remember, no matter who wins and who loses, life will go on and tomorrow is a new day. It is better to make a friend than an enemy.

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