



June 30, 2022

If you had a not-so-great history teacher in school, you can be forgiven for thinking that history is about people you don't know and places you haven't been and times so far away that no one understands them.

Last week, as we celebrated the 55th Anniversary of Independence Association, some very talented historians helped us remember:

***History is the story of what all of us have done together.
And when we've done great things,
remembering our history reminds us how great we can be.***



We celebrated the hard-working Diemer family of Topsham, who were among the

founders of Independence Association. From left front: Beth Gage, Judy Diemer, Doris Diemer; rear, Jim Diemer, Molly Burrill, Sally McMullan. [Watch their story on video.](#)

June 9, 2022

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — SENATE S2889

the European Union, Poland, and other countries. Based on my work over many years in the Helsinki Commission, I know that the current situation of Roma in Europe today simply cannot be understood without learning about the genocide of Roma during World War II and the enduring legacy of that tragedy.

I believe more should be done to teach about Romani experiences during the Holocaust, and we welcome the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum's support for scholarship in this area. This resolution commends the Museum for its work in promoting remembrance of the Holocaust and educating successor generations about the genocide of Roma.

The museum welcomed the introduction of this resolution last year, observing, "House and Senate passage will help raise awareness about the history of the Romani people, the richness of Romani culture, and to unequivocally reject the dehumanization of Roma and any violence directed against their communities." I look forward to the opportunity for this resolution to be adopted by the Senate. I ask unanimous consent that the text of S. Res. 124 be printed in the Record.

There being no objection, the mate-

~~Cyprus, Permian Camp, and Roma people were interned at Auschwitz.~~

(2) commends the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum for its role in promoting remembrance of the Holocaust and educating about the genocide of Roma;

(3) supports International Roma Day as an opportunity to honor Roma culture, history, and heritage of the Romani people in the United States as part of the larger Romani global diaspora; and

(4) welcomes the Department of State's participation in ceremonies and events celebrating International Roma Day and similar engagement by the United States Government.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO PATRICK JOHNSON, JR.

• Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Madam President, I am pleased to commend Mr. Patrick Johnson, Jr., of Tunica, Miss., for his service and contributions to the State of Mississippi while serving as the 86th president of Delta Council.

Organized in 1889, Delta Council plays an important role in uniting agricultural, business, and economic development leadership to solve problems and promote greater opportunities in the Mississippi Delta region, which en-

Compton Producers Farm Bill Task Force chairman, and Tunica County Chamber of Commerce member. In addition to serving as a member of Delta F.A.R.M., Mr. Johnson has also served on the Tunica County Farm Service Agency Committee and is a past director of the Tunica County Farm Bureau. Mr. Johnson and his wife, Emily, are members of Tunica Presbyterian Church where he sings in the choir.

It is my pleasure to join the citizens throughout the Mississippi Delta and the State of Mississippi in offering congratulations to Mr. Patrick Johnson, Jr., and sharing our appreciation for his service and leadership. His impact over his year of service has undoubtedly contributed to the overall continued success and influence of this highly respected 87-year-old organization, Delta Council.

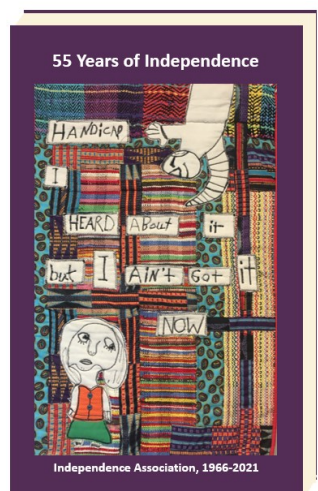
RECOGNIZING THE INDEPENDENCE ASSOCIATION

• Mr. KING. Madam President, today I wish to recognize the outstanding contributions of an organization based in my hometown of Brunswick, ME. This year marks the 55th anniversary of Independence Association, and I could not be more grateful to everyone who



Teague Morris, from Sen. Angus King's office, reads a statement about IA that appeared in the [June 9, 2022 US Congressional Record](#)-- part of the official history of the United States. It notes, in part:

The Youth Development Center [our earlier name] immediately demonstrated that **the right people, resources, and support made an inclusive and independent life a reality** for their children, and they soon welcomed others with additional needs as well. That organization grew and, in 1977, became Independence Association; since then, its staff, volunteers, and parents have gone on to **empower hundreds of people with disabilities to enjoy enriching lives in the Maine communities we all love.**



Journalist and advocate Lisa Wesel wrote our 55th anniversary history, which you can obtain at Gulf of Maine Books in Brunswick and soon online from IA (via the Spindleworks store). Historian [Candace Kanes](#) researched and developed the content for a 10-panel exhibit about our early years and who we've grown to be. Exhibit designer [Brewster Buttfeld](#), with wife Emma Buttfeld, created the panel designs. The exhibit will be shown at the Topsham Public Library in August.



Friends gathered ... State Rep Poppy Arford, right, together with State Rep. Jay McCreight, brought sentiments from the Maine Legislature.



Get Your Copy of Our 55th Anniversary History!

If you're bored by history, you'll love this professionally written story about how local families created and sustained a home- and community-based alternative to institutionalization for their children.

Buy it online at the Spindleworks store or in person at [Gulf of Maine books](#) in Brunswick.

Everyone's Watching Spindleworks on Netflix!



Above, host Phil Rosenthal greets his cousin Anna McDougal outside the Spindleworks building in Brunswick during the program's shooting last fall.

It's been just about a month since the quirky food and travel show "[Somebody Feed Phil](#)" on Netflix opened its fifth season with a show that features Spindleworks. So much excitement!

Training coordinator **Chelsea Gray** says her two young daughters "are now CONVINCED they know a celebrity" because they saw Spindleworker Anna McDougal on the show after they met her at the Run for Independence.

"This is the vision of an inclusive life that I hope we can accomplish in their lifetime!"

Chelsea says. "They see Anna as a role model, a runner, and an artist. They see her 'Up Syndrome,' but they also the other valued social roles she has."

It was Anna, by the way, who got host **Phil Rosenthal** to put Spindleworks on the show. Anna is his cousin, and she visited him on the set of a previous show, the popular *Everybody Loves Raymond*.

New Sales, New Visitors

The episode has fed the studio's resident artists with lots of new sales and visitors. More than 30 new online sales per week have been sparked by the show since the season opened. Spindleworks resident artists earn 65% of the sale price of their works, so that's income to our creators. A friend of the studio is helping us keep up with the demand by posting lots and lots of new work in the [online store](#).

Gallery visits are also up, as show fans have added Spindleworks to their list of Maine "must see" sites. Senior Program Manager **Brian Braley** says the show has accounted for roughly 25 new visitors every week.

Last Chance! Don't miss this show in Augusta!

Places. a two person show

Maine General Main St. Cafe
Alfond Center for Health
Augusta Maine

May 25 - July 6, 2022

Bruce Winslow & Justin Boisvert



Our mission: To assist adults and children with disabilities in obtaining full and inclusive lives in their chosen communities.

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