

**PLAY**



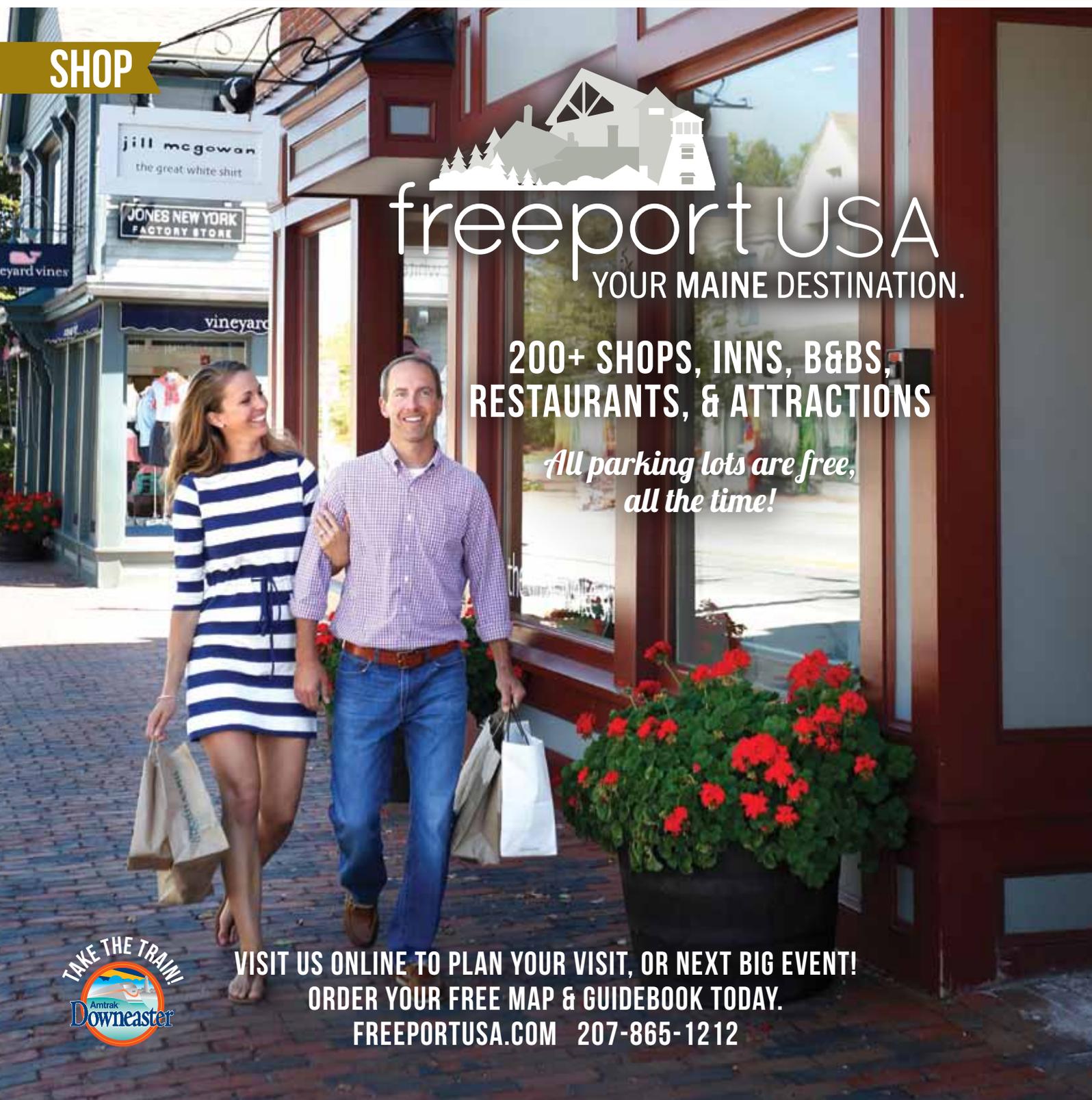
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LFK's location on Longfellow Square and loyalty to Portland's poet make it the perfect literary pub for monthly Word Portland nights, when writers read from their work. Ernest Hemingway (inset) would approve.

# Literary Nights



The thinking—and reading and writing—person's guide to cocktail hours around town.

BY KAREN HOFREITER

Before the temperatures start to soar and thoughts turn to the summer trifecta of beaches, barbecues, and Bissell Brothers, May is the time to take in a little culture. Maine's literary history—filled with authors and poets the likes of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Edna St. Vincent Millay, and Stephen King—provides a tweedy backdrop to a dynamic and invigorating contemporary literary scene.

## HEAD TO HENRY'S 'HOOD

Settle in at hip-yet-bookish LFK, the pub overlooking the Longfellow statue in the eponymous square, with a craft beer and incredible burger while enjoying lively poetry and prose read by local and regional authors at **Word Portland** (188A State Street, Portland, [wordportland.weebly.com](http://wordportland.weebly.com); May 2, 9 p.m.). This month's reading includes poetry by Kevin McLellan and Megan Grumbling and fiction by Tanya Whiton.

Looking for a thrilling beach read that will have you glued to your chaise longue for hours? The bestselling suspense novels by internationally acclaimed author and Camden resident Tess Gerritsen will do just that. Get to know Gerritsen at **MaineVoices Live (One Longfellow Square, corner of Congress and State streets, onelongfellowsquare.com; May 3, 7 p.m.)**. *Portland Press Herald* writer Ray Routhier will lead the conversation with the MD-turned-nov-



A recent Think & Drink event at Space Gallery on Congress Street hosted Kyle Patnaude and Melinda Plastas discussing citizenship and dissent.

ticipate in a Q&A afterward. On May 31, columnist Bill Nemitz interviews former Senate majority leader George Mitchell.

**THINK THE BIG THOUGHTS**

Intellectual curiosities (and a few libations) will have a salubrious effect on your brain at **Think & Drink Portland's** cerebral happy hour (**Space Gallery**, 538 Congress Street, Portland, mainehumanities.org; May 18, 6:30 p.m.). A discussion on the topic "Citizenship and the Climate" explores the 14th Amendment (which deals with citizenship and citizen rights) in terms of "activism, art, gender, sex, and more." (Yes, 'more.')

Be part of the creative process at the annual **Little Festival of the Unexpected** at **Portland Stage Company** (25 Forest Avenue, portlandstage.org; May 11 to 14), where playwrights read from their

scripts-in-progress, after which audience members are encouraged to share their impressions and offer input. Featured playwrights are Brenda Withers (*String Around my Finger*), David Butler (*Dying to Know, A Tale of Life and Death in Two Acts*), and Callie Kimball (*Sophonisba*).

**INTO THE OLD PORT**

**E**legance and literary flair characterize **Maine Historical Society's** annual **Mr. Longfellow's Cocktail Party** at the U.S. Custom House (312 Fore Street, Portland; May 20, 5:30 p.m., mainehistory.org). The celebration of the Maine poet and author of the poem "Drinking Song" includes champagne cocktails, tasty nibbles, and a silent auction. This year's location is a special treat for history buffs, architecture fans, and the curious, as the doors to the 1868 Renaissance-revival style U.S. Custom House are usually closed to the public.

For high-energy word play and perhaps a Bushmills single-malt, head to **Port Veri-**

FROM LEFT: COURTESY MAINE HUMANITIES COUNCIL/SPACE GALLERY (2); COREY TEMPLETON

elist, who also created the long-running TNT TV detective series *Rizzoli & Isles*. Audience members have the chance to par-

BANGOR

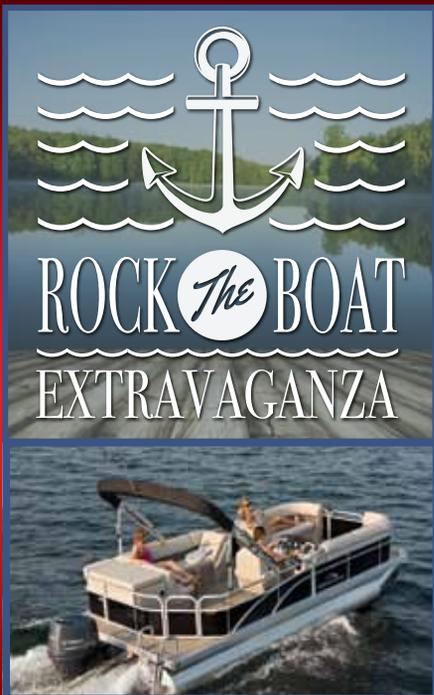
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Maine Historical Society's annual Mr. Longfellow's Cocktail Party is Friday, May 20 at the Custom House on Commercial Street.

**tas Spoken Word** on Tuesdays at **Bull Feeney's Pub** (375 Fore Street, Portland, port-veritas.com). Every second Tuesday of the month you'll find an open mic and poetry slam starting at 7:30. It's held in the gothic-windowed Yeats Room on the second floor, where you can sit back and enjoy the word-smithery of seasoned guest poets or join the brave newcomers baring their souls during the open-mic session. This month's readers include: Lola Haskins (May 3), Rachel Flynn (May 10), Sophia Holtz (May 17), and Desiree Dallagiacomo (May 31). ■



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