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Looking for leisure options? Let the Readers' Poll be your guide

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Fore Street: outstanding in its field.

Just when you think you've heard all you want to hear about stimulus packages, here comes one you'll actually care about:

The Maine Entertainment and Recreation Stimulus Package. You might know it by its more common name, the 23rd Annual Audience Readers' Poll.

Every year, our poll asks readers to vote for their favorite restaurants, pizza, beer, dance clubs, bands, ski hills, lobster roll, coffee, and more. In all, we have 20 categories of food and fun.

Then, after we compile the results, we print the top two vote-getters in each category (sometimes more). These results serve as a guide for Mainers looking for new eateries to try, new scenic places to visit, new experiences to experience.

So it's our aim to have these results stimulate your entertainment and recreational activities.

We had a lot of help this year, with 1,809 people voting either online or by paper ballot.

We had some perennial Portland-area winners, including Ricetta's in the pizza category, which faced stiff competition from Portland Pie Co. and Flatbread.

We also have some names not everyone will recognize right away, such as Club Texas in Auburn, a popular country dance joint complete with mechanical bull.

Besides using the results as a guide, it's also fun just to see if your personal favorites are winners. The poll is meant to let people vote for their favorite Maine people, places and businesses. In this economy, thinking locally is more important than ever.

(... Other categories from the online pages were removed to make this one-page PDF.) Click on our logo to go to the complete online article.



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They're No. 1: Michelle Taylor and Dave Winsor of WTHH, the country station known as "The Wolf," were voted Best Local Radio Personality for the sixth time.

• GET THIS PARTY STARTED

BEST BAND

BOB CHAREST BAND: 253

DON CAMPBELL BAND: 78

This event band, formed by keyboardist, vocalist and music teacher Bob Charest, has had a lock on this category for the past couple of years...



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Payson Park is tops with the sledding set, beating out No. 2 Riverside Golf Course.



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In the swim: Best Athlete Ian Crocker