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News Release

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NMCC kicks-off its 50th Anniversary with lots of fun, food and music

Aroostook County - The sights, sounds and tastes of the early 1960's were alive on the Northern Maine Community College campus on January 12, as the College officially kicked-off its 50th Anniversary.

Approximately 600 students, faculty and staff and community members were on hand for a 60's "sock hop" celebration. The two hour event, which spanned the lunch hour, included free burger and hot dog baskets, milk shakes, root beer floats and banana splits. Entertainment included D.J. Bob Collins, NMCC automotive collision repair instructor, spinning Rock 'n Roll hits from the era, as well as a number of live performances. Folks also had the chance to take to the dance floor to compete in the twist, the limbo and even a hoola hoop contest.

Event planners wanted to kick-off the first 50th anniversary event as students returned from the holiday break to set the tone for the coming months. The new semester at NMCC began on January 10.

"The whole event was a great time! Not only was it a cool way to start off the spring semester, but it was a nice break in between classes for the day," said Dustin Graham of Mapleton, a liberal studies senior. "Without worrying about homework, I was able to eat lunch and have fun with retro dances and music, both participating and watching others perform. It's nice to have events like this to look forward to, breaking up the usual schedule between work and school."

Graham was the winner of the limbo contest, and a finalist in the hoola hoop contest, losing that title to NMCC nursing student Alix Curtain of Presque Isle. Other contest winners included: Joyce Tremblay, secretary for the academic dean, for her dance moves doing the twist; Lori Googins, athletic director, best dressed; Tyler Freeman of Caribou, most talented; and 15 members of the NMCC student services staff, spirit award for their outstanding outfits and performance of "Hand Jive."

"We wanted to start off our anniversary celebration with something fun and light-hearted," said Betsy Harris, NMCC registrar and chair of the subcommittee that planned the event. "It went off even better than we had hoped. The number of people attending the event and the people opting to perform were both larger than we had anticipated. The feedback we've gotten back from across campus and from the community has really been incredible."

With this successful event behind them, the College will continue planning events to celebrate several milestones in the coming years: the 50th anniversary of the founding of the college in June of this year, marking when Maine Governor John H. Reed signed a bill into law that established the institution; the 50th anniversary year of the first entering class in Augst, 2013; and the 50th anniversary of the first graduation at NMVTI in May, 2015. Major events will be held this fall on the weekend of September 9 when the NMCC Alumni and Friends Organization hosts its second annual Homecoming. A gala 50th anniversary banquet is planned for that time.

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Northern Maine Community College's student services staff helped to set the mood for the 1960's celebration held on campus recently. The group collectively won the "Spirit" Award not only for their great outfits, but for their lively performance of "Hand Jive" ...one of the highlights of the event.



Helping to set the mood for the 1960's diner theme, staff from Aramark, NMCC's dining services, operated a mock "soda fountain," handing out free banana splits, root beer floats and other drinks. Aramark staff also delivered free hot dog and hamburger baskets to tables, serving approximately 600 during the two hour event.



Kim Smith (left), from the Presque Isle Historical Society, and Betsy Harris, NMCC registrar, both served on the committee that helped plan the NMCC celebration.



NMCC nursing students Greg Palm and Alix Curtain were among the many who got into the 'swing' of things with the hoola hoop contest. Curtain was named contest winner.



Northern Maine Community College President Timothy Crowley (right) gets in on the fun as he and Gene McCluskey, director of admissions, hold the limbo stick for Robbie Krul (center), assistant director of admissions, and the other participants in the limbo contest.



A group of trade instructors lip syncing to “The Lion Sleeps Tonight” was among those performing during the 1960’s celebration at NMCC. Members were, from left: Dennis Albert, welding & metal fabrication instructor; Guy Jackson, residential construction instructor; Al St. Peter, plumbing & heating instructor; and Dave Guerrette, safety instructor. Performing with them was Austin Albert, son of NMCC employees Dennis and Cindy Albert.



Folks put their hips in motion doing the twist at the NMCC celebration.



More than 600 students, employees and community members joined in the fun at the NMCC 1960's celebration held in the college gymnasium on January 12.