

10th Annual CLEAN SWEEP

Minimizing waste

Building partnerships

Supporting local organizations

Now in its tenth year, CLEAN SWEEP has become a highly anticipated tradition for departing Bates students, local organizations, and deal-seeking Lewiston/Auburn residents. Each spring students donate somewhere in the order of 5,000 unwanted items filling the entire rink in Underhill Arena, and turning it temporarily into a huge sales floor.

As students leave for the summer (and staff do some spring cleaning), volunteers from local organizations sign up to collect items left behind at each of the student residences on and off campus. Volunteers then organize, clean and price the items in preparation for sale day. It's a lot of work. Volunteers spend the better part of a month on this. But in the end it's worth it – the sale typically raises from \$15,000 to \$20,000 all of which goes to the local non-profit organizations whose volunteers make it happen.

Typical items include furniture, appliances, electronics, sports equipment, camping gear, rugs, clothes, and kitchenware, but people also donate some pretty interesting things: from prom dresses to fish tanks, a stuffed deer head, and Halloween costumes. We take anything in clean, working condition!

The event is organized by Bates' Office of Sustainability as a valuable way to promote sustainability through equitable, ecological, and economic partnerships. "It's win-win-win all the way around," explains Julie Rosenbach, the college's Environmental Sustainability Coordinator.

Eager bargain-hunters from the community line up at the door (some starting at 5am with lawn chairs and Dunkin Donuts!) for the annual event. Security estimates that more than 1,000 shoppers attend. "Folks arrive early and line up at the door. There are times the line actually goes all the way to Central Ave."

Last summer the sale brought in around \$18,000, which was divided up among 14 local nonprofit organizations including the Life Center of Auburn, Maine People's Alliance, Lots to Gardens, the Share Center and other Lewiston/Auburn organizations.

Furthermore, it keeps truckloads of stuff out of the waste stream. Rosenbach estimates that approximately 97% of the goods donated are sold or otherwise reused, and that less than 1% end up in the trash.



Saturday, June 18th
8am – 2pm
Underhill Arena
(145 Russell St)

