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## Androscoggin Bank Colisee

When I think of what is happening in Lewiston/ Auburn, there are many things that come to mind. The Bates Mill renovations, Great Falls Balloon Festival, more shopping stores and restaurants and many other improvements to the twin cities that have generated new business to our community. However, the most prominent in my mind and closest to my heart, is the Androscoggin Bank Colisee.

I started playing hockey at the age of four. At that time I did not pay much attention to the facilities. I was just happy to be on the ice. As I got a little older, I started playing in the travel league. This led me to play the game at different arenas across New England. This is when I realized that our "arena" as we referred to it back then, was not so nice. I remember getting to one of the ice rinks in New Hampshire and asking my parents if we were at the "hotel". It was so nice and the outside did not look at all like our rink. Before, I assumed that all rinks were alike, I quickly found out that was not the case.

I remember going to the arena for practices and the parking lot was either mud or ice. My mom and I were holding each end of my hockey stick and hoping not to fall on the parking lot ice. Many of the seats were broken, the paint was dingy and the facilities were not the best once I had seen what others had to offer.

Now it is the opposite. I have played hockey since the age of four and just finished my senior year playing for Lewiston High School as Captain. I absolutely love playing at the Colisee. Now, compared to other ice rinks, we have the "hotel". The outside is beautiful, all broken seats have been replaced and everything is nicely painted. The locker rooms are in great shape. Because of these renovations, the Colisee has been able to attract various concerts and other entertainment events. Of course, the biggest attraction to the

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Androscoggin Bank Colisee is the Mainiacs hockey team. This has generated a new interest in the game of hockey and many fans come out to support them. Without the renovations, this would not have been possible. The Mainiacs have been able to provide fans with great hockey pride being the winners of the President's Cup in 2007.

The Mainiacs have also been instrumental in assisting the LAYHL organization raise money in order to reduce the cost of hockey assessment for young players. This assists them to be able to play the game of hockey and keep the cost somewhat affordable for parents.

I am very proud to have been able to play at the Androscoggin Bank Colisee for some of my Travel years and my entire high school hockey career. I have been lucky enough to play in four State Championship Games to a sold out crowd. I cannot describe the feeling of looking up into the crowd and seeing all of the great fans. This great new building has brought everyone together to cheer for their local hockey team. Even though we did not win, I was very proud to be a part of the L/A community. This is why when I think of "LA/It's Happening Here!", the first thing that comes to my mind is the Androscoggin Bank Colisee and how lucky I was to have been able to play in both the old "arena" and the newly renovated Colisee. I will continue to go to the Colisee to watch my young cousins start their hockey careers but they will not be able to appreciate the great look of the Colisee as much as I have since I have seen the differences that have been made. I look forward to attending my 2008 Graduation from Lewiston High School at the Colisee. I feel that it is a perfect place to end my High School career.