

# MAINE WOMEN MAGAZINE

APRIL 2020

An intimate chat with  
**Dr. Christiane  
Northrup**

Holly is . . .  
*sailing solo*  
...around the world

Lunch with  
legendary author  
**LOIS  
LOWRY**

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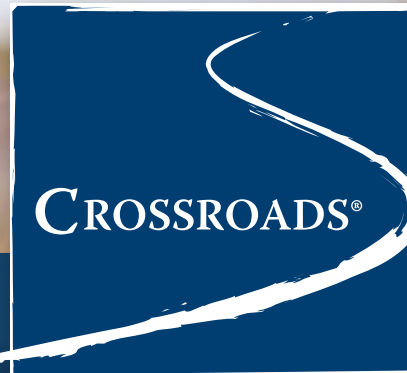
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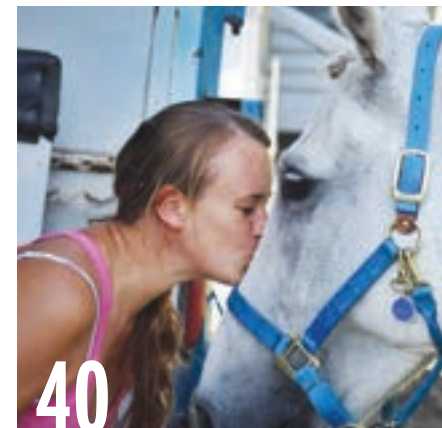
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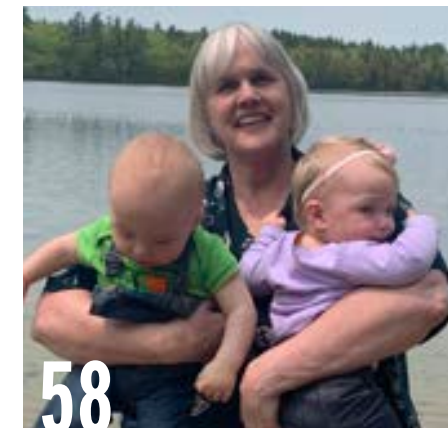
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Cover photo courtesy  
Dr. Christiane Northrup



Maine is filled with extraordinary woman, as this April issue of *Maine Women Magazine* shines a light on!

We are happy to bring to the magazine an exciting conversation with Dr. Christiane Northrup, author of *Women's Bodies*, *Women's Wisdom* and *Making Life Easy*, among many other books. She consistently honors and believes in women and reminds us, always, "to connect with our own intuition."

Lois Lowry, acclaimed author of novels for middle-school and young adult readers, shares her own fascinating, moving story as a lifelong writer—and her thoughts on the power of stories. Thinking of the many letters she has received about *The Giver*, she recalls, "Kids were telling me that their lives were changed [by it]. And they still tell me that."

Holly Martin is a young woman who is sailing her own boat around the world! Making a point that can work for all of us, she observes that at sea, "conditions change so quickly, you just have to chill and be happy for whatever you have right now." I so much enjoyed speaking with her while she was staying in Panama, getting ready for the next leg of her long voyage. We will be following her progress every month on her continued journey.

Ellen Forbes is a lifelong rider who specializes in dressage. She overcomes the fear and pain that came from accidents and maintains her unshakeable love of horses. By literally getting back in the saddle, she shows us what it means to keep moving forward.

In this issue, we also meet Dr. Dora Anne Mills, Abby Planeta, Allison Tribou, Dr. Sasha Rose, Kelley Halter, and others, who here express themselves in many inspiring, important ways.

Remember something: YOU, reading this, have experiences and insights that are valuable. Whether you're working, washing dishes, caring for your children (or friends, elders, or people in the community), or running in a million different directions . . . YOU are important.

Each day is a new beginning, in April or in any month. Forgive yourself. Smile along your way. The world is yours, so let the sunshine come into your heart.

As my dear Mom would say, "You can laugh, or you can cry. So, you might as well laugh!"

Mary Barstow, Publisher

*Maine Women Magazine* is pleased to announce that we are partnering with Junior League of Portland, an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women, and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable. In collaboration, we hope to advance the efforts of the many women in the state of Maine who are doing transformative work.

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May 29, 2020	<b>Mid Coast Successful Aging Expo</b>	Elk's Lodge	17 Rankin St., Rockland

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# Sailing Solo

Holly Martin's Great Adventure  
Around the World

BY MARY FRANCES BARSTOW



Photos courtesy Holly Martin



**H**olly Martin, 28, is doing what fewer than 200 people have ever done: sailing alone around the world. Growing up in a sailing family, Holly bought her boat, the SV *Gecko*, in Salem, Massachusetts, and gave it a thorough, ten-month overhaul. Her boat is a Grinde, 27 feet long and 10 feet wide, built in Denmark in 1983. Holly set out from Maine last fall. She has charted a route to the Marquesas Islands in French Polynesia and then on to New Zealand. When we caught up with her recently in Panama, she was about to cross the Panama Canal and reach the Pacific. We will be following her journeys in future issues of *Maine Women Magazine*.

**MARY:**

You are on an epic trip! Tell us about your route.

**HOLLY:**

Yes. I'm going to sail from Panama to the Marquesas. This is all in French Polynesia, and then from there I'm not sure. Eventually I'll end up in New Zealand, possibly by December.

**MARY:**

Holly, are you ever scared?

**HOLLY:**

Only a couple times. I got into a big storm once, and it was scary, but I just focused on my boat and on doing things to make my boat safe. Then once I'd done everything I could do, I was like, "All right. Well, this is what it is."



The Gecko under sail.



Sailing beneath the Brooklyn Bridge.

**MARY:**

Do you meet people as you make stops along your route?

**HOLLY:**

Oh, yes. I love sailing by myself, but I'm really social, and I love being around people. As soon as I get anywhere, I'm running around making friends because to me that's one of the best parts of traveling—the incredible people that you meet.

Ultimately, though, my goal is to sail solo, so I haven't met someone who's great enough for me to give that up yet.

**MARY:**

What do you think makes you do what you are doing? Do you get lonely?

**HOLLY:**

I actually don't get lonely. I love being at sea alone. I grew up on a boat. My parents were circumnavigating, and they had us along the way. Then when I was in 7th grade, we moved to Maine. That was my second time in the States. So, I just have a really strong sailing background, and I've never not thought that I would sail. To me, it's as natural as someone saying, "Yeah, I want to live in a house and have a car."

**MARY:**

How did you get and fix up your own boat?

**HOLLY:**

After I got out of university, I just started working on boats because I wanted to get the skills that I needed to sail solo. But I also needed a job, and I wanted to travel, so I got jobs on boats where I wanted to be. That way I could travel, get paid, and get boat skills. Then, once I felt like I had enough skills, I bought my own boat.

At that time, I was working a contract job, so I was on a couple of months and then off a couple of months. I was working on research boats, doing back deck tech work, helping scientists interface their research with that particular boat.

So, I bought my boat, then went back to work, then hulled it out for many months in Maine two winters ago. I tore it all apart and rebuilt a lot of it and rewired and re-plumbed. I would go back and forth between my job to make money and then I would stay on my boat for a couple of months, when I would work on it and spend all the money, and then back to the job.

**MARY:**

Is it true you were born on a boat?

**HOLLY:**

My sister was. I was born in a house, but I was moved onto a boat in the first 24 hours.

**MARY:**

So being on a boat is as natural to you as breathing?

**HOLLY:**

Yeah. This boat feels more like home than a house ever has for me. It's what I've always known I was going to do. I never knew I was going to do it solo until recently, but that was more of a confidence thing, like I did not think that I could do it solo. I always saw myself being on someone else's boat, and then at some point, I thought, "Wait a second. I know something that could be way more fun."

**MARY:**

Is there a favorite experience you've had so far on your trip?

**HOLLY:**

That's a good question. A lot of them are people experiences . . . times with some of the friends that I've met and things that I've done with them. But as far as a sailing experience, I would say one of the most exciting things I've done so far was the day that I left for my first big passage. I just felt like I was standing on the edge of the cliff with a parachute ready to jump off. It was so exhilarating! It had been a year and a half of work leading up to that moment, and I'd had no idea what to expect because I'd never been at sea by myself for that long. It was just a really, really good feeling.

**MARY:**

Do you have communication by phone and satellite on the boat?

**HOLLY:**

No, I don't. For my parents I have a GPS tracker so they can know where I am. They've been really supportive of me going off on my own, so I felt "Sure, you guys can know where I am." But I don't let anyone but them know. To me, part of the fun is being totally anonymous when I'm out at sea.

Other than that [GPS tracker with them], once I'm out at sea, I have nothing. And that's a choice. I like being totally cut off when I'm out there. It's the most free I've ever felt in my life, and I don't want to give that up.



**ORIGIN:**  
Round Pond  
Bristol, ME

• **Culebra,**  
**Puerto Rico**

• **ABC Islands,**  
**Caribbean**

**NEXT:**  
*French Polynesia*

Holly working on a research boat.

**MARY:**

Do you have a sense of where your personal future is headed?

**HOLLY:**

I have no idea. I mean, I just want to sail and sail anywhere and everywhere. I want to sail around the world, first of all. I love traveling, and I love being in cultures that are closer to the earth and not so tied to technology and phones and cars and air conditioning.

I guess I just really love life, and I want to keep experiencing it in this way, by just sailing around and meeting people. Being at sea is probably one of my favorite things to do. So I would be happy if I just kept doing this forever, but I'm sure at some point I'll change and want other things. For now, I don't really look that far in the future. I'm just kind of looking at the next couple of days, usually.

**MARY:**

You really live in the now.

**HOLLY:**

Yes.



Fueling up in Culebra, off the east coast of Puerto Rico.





**MARY:**

Do you ever think someday you will want children?

**HOLLY:**

I definitely think about it. Yeah. I love kids. It's one of those future things that I'm not thinking about because right now, I'm just me. But I'm definitely open to the idea, if I meet someone that I like and they're already a sailor. But my boat's better, so obviously we'll go on my boat! If I have kids, I would raise them on my boat, for sure.

**MARY:**

So you'd always want to live on a boat, I bet.

**HOLLY:**

Yes. You know, there might come a time when I don't want to live on a boat anymore. I know a lot of sailors who cruise when they're young. Once they reach their late 40s, early 50s, they start to think about living on land again. So, that could happen to me to. As long as I'm happy, I don't really care what I'm doing, but I think I'll be on a boat for at

"As long as I'm happy, I don't really care what I'm doing, but I think I'll be on a boat for at least the next ten years."



least the next ten years. I can't see myself doing anything else.

**MARY:**

That's wonderful! Where did you live before you moved to Maine?

**HOLLY:**

My parents were just sailing. They were doing the same thing that I'm doing. We were just sailing around. I was born in New Zealand, and we sailed west through Indonesia, the Indian Ocean, South Africa, back to the Caribbean, and then we sailed up to the Arctic, over to Greenland, then down the coast of Canada and hit Maine, and that's where we stopped.

**MARY:**

Were you homeschooled on the boat?

**HOLLY:**

No, our parents would put us in public school six months out of the year and then take off when the spring winds came.

**MARY:**

Where did you go to public school?

**HOLLY:**

Iceland for a year, Norway for two years, and Newfoundland, Canada, for a year, in Corner Brook. Living on a boat, we didn't really see our family besides my parents and my siblings. Aunts, uncles, grandparents, and so on weren't really a part of my life. Even now, I always adopt grandparents. And my first self-adopted grandparents were in Newfoundland.

**MARY:**

Did you ever meet your grandparents?

**HOLLY:**

My mom's parents died when she was in her early 20s, so I never met them. But my dad's parents were awesome. Wherever we were in the world, we always got birthday and Christmas presents and cards from them. We did our best to keep in touch with them. Now I only have a grandmother left, but I send her postcards every time I'm in a new country, and email and call her on the phone.

**MARY:**

Do you sail where it's cold?

**HOLLY:**

When I left Maine, it was really cold. I think I left on October 28, and I was just ahead of the snow line all the way down to North Carolina. My olive oil was solid. It was tough through a lot of nor'easters, and it was so cold. I have no heat on my boat. I had probably like a foot high of blanket layers, and I would sit in my sleeping bag in the cockpit on watch, with all my clothes on, and I'd still be cold.

And now it's hot all the time.

**MARY:**

How many miles do you go a day?

**HOLLY:**

It depends a lot on what I'm doing. If I'm at sea, I probably average 100- to 120-mile days in a 24-hour period.

At sea, you can't stop your boat. It just keeps sailing. Once you're going, you're going. So at night, depending on weather and ship traffic, I do between 20- and 45-minute naps. I wake up every time and check my course, check weather, check for ships, check the sails, and then go back to sleep for a little.

**MARY:**

Are you exhausted?

**HOLLY:**

The first couple of days are hard. But then your body actually gets used to that rhythm, and if, for a 12-hour period, I'm taking 30-minute naps, I actually get a decent amount of sleep. When I wake up to check, I only half wake up, and I can immediately go back to sleep as soon as I hit the bed. So I'm up for like two minutes, maybe, and then back to sleep.

**MARY:**

If you got to the point where you had to go live somewhere, where would you pick? What is your favorite destination?

**HOLLY:**

Probably New Zealand or Australia. I love it there, and since I was born there,



Sewing a quarantine flag.

in New Zealand, I have citizenship so I can live and work there as a citizen, which makes it easy.

**MARY:**

Do you have any time for reading on board?

**HOLLY:**

Yes, I read so much. One of my favorite authors is Haruki Murakami. My two favorites of his are *Kafka on the Shore* and *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicles*.

The boat's always moving, but I have autopilot—it's a wind vane, so it is mechanical. I lie around, read books, fish, look at the clouds, and listen to music. I'm just so lazy when I'm at sea! It's like when you want to be lazy and you don't have to feel bad about it at all because there's nothing else to do. Because when you do have to do stuff—like if there's bad weather and I have to wake up in the middle of the night and change sails—then you do that. So, when there's nothing to do, the best thing is to hang out and enjoy that, too. It's very hour to hour when you're at sea because the conditions change so quickly. You

have to just chill and be happy for whatever you have right now.

**MARY:**

Now, this is "Grandmother Number Three" talking here, okay? You have to write a book on your amazing experiences.

**HOLLY:**

Yes, I've always wanted to write a book. I've started, am starting. Before I had my boat, I was doing a lot of back-packing, and I've been writing excerpts of adventures that I've had, with the thought of putting them together one day.

**MARY:**

How would you describe your spiritual beliefs, as you travel on this long solo adventure?

**HOLLY:**

I am not affiliated with any established religion, but I think you get this life and that's all you get, so you should make the most of it. Because who knows what happens after you die? Life is so beautiful as it is. •



# EFFORTLESS *Elegance*

WRITTEN & PHOTOGRAPHED BY CANDACE KARU

## ◀◀◀◀ ANTIPASTO CHICKEN

**E**ntertaining is often stressful and intimidating, but it doesn't have to be. Keeping a small repertoire of dishes you can prepare with confidence and ease will help make entertaining a breeze. Here is one recipe you can rely on for effortless entertaining in minutes.

This ultra-simple and sophisticated dish of succulent chicken thighs surrounded by savory vegetables and swimming in a light and flavorful broth has been a favorite of mine for years. You can assemble it early and put it in the oven just before your guests arrive. By the time the cocktail hour is over, dinner is ready. But you don't have to save it for special occasions. This dish is a great last-minute mealtime solution for a busy family, too.





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### LOVE ON A PLATE

#### INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups (1 medium container) antipasto bar selection (I like quartered artichoke hearts, capers, pitted green olives, peppadew or sweetie drop red peppers, and roasted garlic.)
- 4 oz French green beans (cut in half)
- 4 large or 6 medium boneless, skinless chicken thighs, about 1.5 lbs. (You can also use boneless, skinless breasts.)
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 1 cup white wine
- 2 springs of fresh thyme
- Salt and pepper to taste

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
- Place chicken in a roasting pan small enough that the thighs are touching, but not overlapping. Salt and pepper generously.
- Cover with antipasto and green beans.
- Add chicken broth and white wine. Top with thyme sprigs.
- Cover and roast until chicken is fork tender (30-45 minutes, depending on the size of the chicken pieces.)
- Serve over white rice, angel hair pasta, or a bed of baby spinach with crusty bread and a crisp white wine.

### ANTIPASTO CHICKEN PRO TIPS:

- Antipasto is one of those dishes that is even better the next day, so leftovers are coveted.
- If you do have leftovers, you can add a cup of boxed chicken broth (or homemade if you have it) for a hearty soup at lunch the next day.
- If your market doesn't have an antipasto bar you can use one 14 oz. can of quartered artichoke hearts (drained), 1 cup capers (drained), a handful of green olives, and 1 cup chopped pimentos.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I enjoy *Maine Women Magazine*. The articles are so interesting and all about Maine women and Maine subjects that truly matter to most everyone. I wish I could subscribe to it.  
*Rita, Isle au Haut*

**Editor's note:** Now you can!

Excellent articles—a great read.

*Julie Selbo*

I truly enjoy this magazine. The articles are so interesting and well-researched and developed. I enjoy the advertising immensely. They are relevant to me. Well done!

*Annette*

I just received my first issue. I really like this magazine because it features local artists and local small businesses.

*Susan, Portland*

I love your stories about Maine women. I feel such a connection with this magazine. I was so happy to see it distributed throughout the state.

*Martha Pittsley, The County*

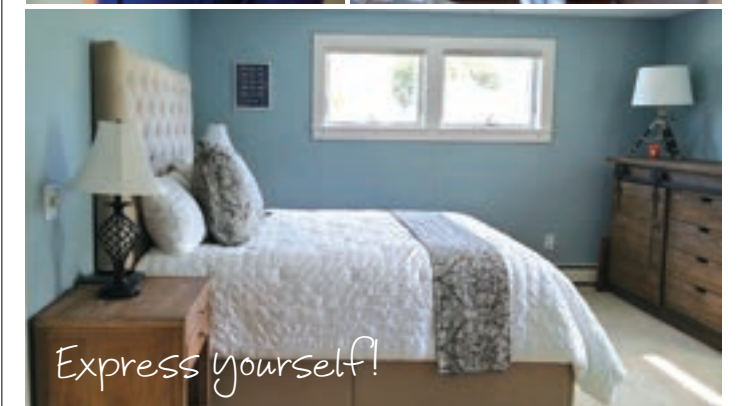
I love how you are presenting the new *Maine Women Magazine*. It is so smart and fashionable. I look forward to next month's edition.

*Alice Smart*

#### CORRECTION

In our February issue, we incorrectly attributed the photograph on pages 40 and 41. It was taken by the extraordinary photographer Tom Bloom. We apologize for this mistake.

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Your Style....  
Your Home....*



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# "I'LL ALWAYS BE A PARAMEDIC"

*Abby Planeta, Certified EMT*

BY LIZ GOTTHELF

Abby Planeta knew from a young age that she was destined to work in public safety.

When she was 16 years old and living in Connecticut, she took an emergency medical technician class at a local community college at the urging of her older sister, who was a firefighter.

After Abby became a certified EMT, she joined the volunteer ambulance team in her hometown of Durham, Connecticut, and responded to calls one day a week.

"I loved it and absolutely got hooked," she said.

After graduating from high school in 1997, Abby tried college for a semester, but she found herself more interested in coming home every weekend to work on the ambulance. She stayed as a volunteer with her hometown department, even after getting a full-time job at a private ambulance service.

"I think of my fellow DVAC [Durham Volunteer Ambulance Corps] volunteers often, as they gave me some of the best EMT training and experience, honestly laying the groundwork for my career. I still keep in touch with quite a few of them," said Abby.

Knowing that she had found her place in life as an emergency responder, she went on to become a licensed paramedic in 2002.

Now at 40 and juggling a career with being a single mother to a 13-year-old, Abby works full-time for the Rockland, Maine, Fire and Emergency Services. She still has the same zest for her job as she did when she was 16.



"It's in my blood—it totally is. My son will tell you: 'My mom loves her job. She's done it for a long time,'" she said. "This is all I've ever done. I'll always be a paramedic. I can't imagine a 9-to-5 schedule where I knew exactly what I would be doing each day. As a paramedic, you walk in, and you never know what the day will bring."

One aspect of the job Abby enjoys is meeting new people and building relationships with people who become repeat patients. She said she often strikes up a conversation with patients as they are being rushed to the hospital, in order to take their mind off the situa-

tion and keep them calm. Abby is naturally friendly and very personable. When speaking with her it's easy to see her relating to others and helping them relax.

She has met many interesting people, including veterans, former professional athletes, and some who had careers in Hollywood back in the day.

"They have just amazing, amazing stories," she said.

One of her favorite memories of the job is from August, 2018, when she helped deliver a baby. "I'll admit, it was the call I never wanted to do," said Abby, but it turned out to be a wonderful experience. She had never been in that situation before and was nervous, but her training kicked in and the situation went smoothly. Emergency responders delivered a healthy baby girl in the ambulance.

Ambulance crews need to learn how to respond to all types of situations. Abby recalls several years ago, when the synthetic drug known as "bath salts" was popular. "It was a tough time for us. There's nothing to reverse the effects," she said.

Though fortunately the use of bath salts has subsided, the opioid epidemic is a very real concern, and in addition to her duties on the ambulance, Abby teamed up with a local doctor to train staff at the local YMCA on how to administer Narcan.

Abby has seen a lot in her career. One major change that has made a huge difference in cardiac arrest survival is "pit crew CPR." Instead of transporting the patient right away, the rescue crew performs CPR on the patients before moving them, working as a synchronized team and using a smart phone app for precision timing.

Abby also works per diem as a medic on the island of Isleboro in the summer. "It is a whole different EMS world than my norm. Having to figure out how to get each patient off the island, sometimes by boat transport or ferry is... so different from anything else I've ever done," she said. "Amazing how well the island services work up here under all sorts of conditions."

Rockland Fire and EMS Chief Chris Whytock describes Abby as a valued member of the department. "She is a team player, and her knowledge and experience in the EMS field is top-notch. Rockland Fire and EMS is a stronger, more progressive department because of employees like Abby," he said.



"It's in my blood. I can't imagine a 9-to-5 schedule where I knew exactly what I would be doing each day."

# MOVING FORWARD: Women's Progress

BY MARTHA BUSTIN

**A**dvancements in women's opportunities, rights, and freedoms have not been achieved easily nor overnight. No one trail-blazing achievement, no one protest rally, legislative victory, act of individual courage, or creative invention makes all the difference. As we observe Maine's Bicentennial, however, we look back over the sweep of 200 years. From that broader perspective, women's remarkable collective progress is a cause for celebration.

Comparing 1820 and 2020 we see that, then as now, women are often caregivers. Then as now, the home can be a trap as well as a refuge and a source of pride and satisfaction. And women still often face bias. But over the past two centuries, the big picture has, without question, improved. Women have moved from a condition of generally limited options, low expectations, and lives in the shadows to a condition of relative freedom and self-determination.

How does change of this magnitude happen? Drawn from the past two hundred years, here are a few examples.

## A Brief Timeline

**1820s. Working at home.** Most women in this era of Maine's history necessarily spent much of their time child rearing, cooking, creating the home, and making clothes and necessities for the family. This work was hard, yet valued, since it related to survival.



Maine Governor Carl E. Milliken signs a legislative resolution to hold a special election on September 10, 1917, on a state constitutional amendment to grant women the right to vote in Maine (Seated from left: Mrs. Henry Cobb, Mrs. Carl E. Milliken, Governor Carl E. Milliken, Deborah Knox Livingstone. Standing from left: Florence Brooks Whitehouse, Charles Milliken, Mrs. Guy P. Gannett, Mrs. Arthur T. Balentine and Mrs. William R. Pattangall). Photo courtesy Maine Historical Society

As historians Mazie Hough and Jennifer Pickard document in their article, "Least Productive of Any Public Benefit," some women—particularly those with older children—were gradually able to have small home businesses, such as weaving cloth for sale or barter. And Hough and Pickard point out that in the Wabanaki culture, which in general allows women more latitude for travel, leadership, and independence, women also pursued the making of some commodities, such as baskets and moccasins.

**1848 to 1920. Winning the vote.** Countless activists worked tirelessly for decades, in the face of all-male governments (and entrenched aversion to gender equality), to win the right to vote. In 1865, for instance, Lewiston factory workers marched on the 4th of July to urge suffrage for all citizens. In Augusta in 1873, more than a thousand marchers formed the Maine Woman Suffrage Association (MWSA).

Individual women in Maine played significant roles, including Katherine Reed Balentine (1878–1934), who

led the MWSA from 1916 to 1917, and Deborah Knox Livingston (1876–1923), who co-founded the Bangor Suffrage Center.

Finally, on August 26, 1920, the U.S. Secretary of State certified into law the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution. How much or little this law affected social progress is debated, but after that point, the right to vote could no longer be denied on the basis of sex.

**1870s. Getting patents on inventions.** Margaret "Mattie" Knight (1838–1914), of York, invented a machine for mass producing a sturdy flat-bottomed paper bag. The prototype of her machine is in the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, in their "Hall of Wonders." She co-founded the Eastern Paper Bag Company, and in 1873, successfully defended her patent in a court of law, in a suit against a male co-worker who stole her design. She went on to invent and patent other inventions, for improving the manufacture of windows and sashes, shoes, and the rotary engine.

In 1873, another Maine inventor, Helen Blanchard (1840–1922) from Portland, invented and patented the zig-zag sewing machines for button-hole making, and later made improvements to the cranked pencil sharpener, hat-making machine, and surgical needle.

These inventions represented women's increased participation in the country's economy, with its drive towards mechanization and mass production.



Margaret "Mattie" Knight (1838–1914), inventor of the paper bag machine.



Rachel Carson (1907–1964), biologist and writer of *Silent Spring*.

**1877 to 1950. Creating literature and poetry.**

Women became more present in the cultural life of the growing country as well. Sarah Orne Jewett (1849–1909), of South Berwick, wrote her first book of stories, *Deephaven* (1877), and her first novel, *A Country Doctor* (1884), finding her lifelong subjects in the people of rural and coastal Maine. She became a celebrated author of sketches, stories, and vignettes. She remains most famous for *The Country of the Pointed Firs* (1896), a sequence of stories.

Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892–1950), who was born in Rockland and spent her youth in Camden, wrote the highly praised poem "Renascence," while in high school. She went on to become a renowned writer and freethinker—the "most famous poet of the Jazz Age" and "the embodiment of the New Woman," as described in Nancy Milford's biography *Savage Beauty* (2001).

**1941 to 1945. Helping during the war years.**

World War II brought women from Maine into the workforce in great numbers, to fill in for enlisted men. At Bath Iron Works, for example, women made up 16 percent of the workforce. Many other women served in the Army Nurse Corps and, at home, helped organize volunteer civilian efforts. A young lawyer in Brunswick, Jean Bangs, was involved for all the war years in the Red Cross, UFO, civilian defense, and the ration board, as outlined by Margaret Shiels Konitzky in *Midcoast Maine in World War II* (2018).

**1960s and 70s. Changing with the times.** Many women in Maine participated in this era's momentous social movements: civil rights, antiwar, feminism, gay rights, and environmental protection. With the "back to the land" or homesteading movement, an influx of young people increased the population of some rural counties here by as much as 20 percent between 1970 and 1980. They were inspired in part by the *Whole Earth Catalog* (1968), by



Poet Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892–1950).

Photo by Arnold Genthe



Back-to-landers Scott and Helen Nearing wrote *Living the Good Life* (1954; reissued in 1970), and lived in Brooksville. Photo by Richard Garrett

Scott and Helen Nearing's book, *Living the Good Life* (1954; reissued in 1970), and by the Nearing's farm itself, in Brooksville. The energy they put into such initiatives as sustainability, organic methods, composting, recycling, seed banks, farmers markets, and food co-ops have had a lasting effect on the culture and the environment.

**1962. Gaining environmental awareness.** While the industrial juggernaut rolled on and over the environment, there were some who blew the whistle on the havoc being wrought. Biologist and writer Rachel Carson (1907–1964) spent her summers in a coastal cabin in Southport, deeply immersed in the environment and in her writing. Her influential bestseller *Silent Spring* (1962) awakened the American public to the poisonous chemicals being marketed and used widely as fertilizers and pesticides. In her last book, *The Sense of Wonder* (1965), written about walks she took in Maine with her young grandnephew, she aimed to foster an awareness of “the joy, excitement, and mystery of the world we live in.”

**1940 to 1972. Serving in Washington, D.C.** Margaret Chase Smith (1897–1995), of Skowhegan, was the first woman elected to the U.S. Congress from Maine, in 1940. In 1950, she was the first person to oppose Senator Joe McCarthy for his House Un-American Activities Committee. She spoke for “the right to protest. The right of independent thought.”

**1900 to the present. Performing at the Olympic level.** At the games in Paris, France, in 1900, 22 women athletes (roughly 2 percent of the total) competed in the sports of tennis, sailing, croquet, equestrian, and golf. In the 2018 winter games, about 1,200 women participated, making up over 40 percent of the total. They competed in sports previously off limits, such as ice hockey, bobsleigh (or bobsled), and ski jumping. On the US team of 244 athletes, 135 were men and 109 were women—near parity.

Several generations of inspiring Maine Olympians have included marathon runner Joan Benoit Samuelson (1957– ) from Cape Elizabeth; alpine ski racer Julie M. J. Parisien (1971– ) from Auburn; rower Anna Goodale (1983– ) from Camden; middle-distance runner Anna Pierce (1984– ) from Portland; luger Julia Clukey (1985– ) from Cape Elizabeth; luger Megan Sweeney (1987– ) from Portland; biathlete Clare Egan (1987– ) from Cape Elizabeth; rower Elle Logan (1987– ) from Portland; and luger Emily Sweeney (1993– ) from Portland.

**The present. Serving the community.** Women are powerful forces within their communities—there are many, many examples of this truth. For example, Abdikadir Negeye co-founded Maine Immigrant and Refugee Services in 2008 to help Somalis and other Africans who moved to Lewiston. The immigrants were seeking to escape civil war, the collapse of the central government in Somalia (1991–2006), and that country's humanitarian crisis, caused by lawlessness, violence, droughts, and corruption.

Maine Senator Margaret Chase Smith of Skowhegan, a Republican candidate for President, speaks during a press conference during the Illinois primary in 1964. Collection of Margaret Chase Smith Library/ Courtesy Maine Historical Society



Olympic marathon runner Joan Benoit Samuelson. Tony Duffy/Getty Images

**The present. Owing businesses and farms.** Expert herbalist, teacher, and gardener Deb Soule launched Avena Botanicals in 1985, making and selling herbal extracts and teas through a catalog and at the Common Ground Fair in Windsor. On her biodynamic farm in Rockport, she now grows over 150 different medicinal plants and offers a range of healthful herbal products such as lip balms and skin creams. She shares her knowledge via seasonal workshops and bi-monthly herb garden walks.

For more than 30 years, Barbara Scully has been “an oyster aquaculture pioneer,” using her passion for marine science to bring fresh oysters, clams, and lobsters to happy customers. The Lobster Store is her oyster-and-lobster market in Edgcomb, and she owns and operates Scully Sea Products. Throughout her career, she has been an innovator, designing innovative oyster-holding rafts for her operation and working to deliver the finest shellfish.

And Maureen Bacon, owner of Pleasant View Blueberry Farm in Cornish, takes pride in not spraying the bushes or berries with insecticide.

These and other business owners work hard, with good spirit. They share what they do and know, contribute to the economy, and help make Maine the great state it is.

### The Way Forward

Overlapping and multi-faceted achievements—many more than can be mentioned here—gradually add up to social change. Women are still sometimes constrained by complex internal and external forces. Low self-esteem, self-doubts, and depression can be killers, for instance. Misogyny, harassment, condescension, economic hardship, glass ceilings, double standards, tokenism, and non-level playing fields can

make the way challenging. Yet in this time of Bicentennial, we wholeheartedly celebrate the trailblazers, including the many men who welcomed women and were supportive mentors, coworkers, friends, and family members.

We now have chances and a wide array of choices, and therefore have a better shot at being our best selves, fulfilled. And in another hundred years, at Maine's Tri-Centennial? I predict more good news. •

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# Mrs. Maine America

*Expanding Your Comfort Zone*

BY LIZ GOTTHELF



"I really feel that the only limitations are the ones we push on ourselves."



Susan Costa Photography

When Allison Tribou won the title of Mrs. Maine America 2019 in May in South Portland, there were many thoughts going through her head. One of them was that she was going to have to fly to the national competition in Las Vegas. She had never flown before.

"I'm not a very adventurous person," said the 33-year-old Augusta resident. She describes herself as a typical working mom of two, busy juggling her work as a Quality Assurance Analyst with her duties at home. She enjoys spending time with her husband and two daughters and is active in her church.

Allison took a deep breath and boarded the plane. "I was so surprised with myself. My husband was giddy because we were finally flying together," she said.

The shy introvert has had to push out of her shell and become a public figure, making the rounds in many scheduled appearances at parades, festivals, and other events.

"The last year has just been a whirlwind," said Allison. "I've literally taken myself out of my comfort zone. It really is an adventure. I'm doing new things all the time."

Many young girls who meet Allison see her as a real live princess, she said, and she makes a point to show them love and kindness, two things the world needs to see more of.

Being a pageant queen isn't all about glamour. One of the most memorable moments of Allison's reign was the day she donned work boots and used power tools and learned how to install sheetrock, while volunteering in a Habitat for Humanity project.

In fact, Allison decided to compete for Mrs. Maine America to expand upon her passion of serving the community, and she has used her crown to promote awareness of foster care. She herself was unaware of what a significant number of children are in need of foster care until a family member took in a foster child.





Allison sings "God Bless America" at a Sea Dogs game.

Over the past year, she has volunteered her time with Project Sparrow, an organization that advocates for foster children. Through her work with the organization, she has helped organize a Christmas gift drive and a tea party for girls being raised in the foster service and their female caregivers.

Allison brings her daughters to events when she can, and one night the family joined her at a Sea Dogs game where she was scheduled for a public appearance. The vocalist who was to sing "God Bless America" at the game was unable to perform that night. Allison, who is a backup vocalist in her church's choir, was

approached by a staff member who knew her from church and asked if she could fill in and sing that night.

"I'm a backup singer, and I've never wanted to be a lead singer," she said. At first she declined the request, but as she was sitting in the stands watching the game with her family, she had a change of heart and decided maybe she was up for the challenge.

"By the fourth inning, I said to myself, 'Say yes, say yes, you can do this, you've already done so much out of your comfort zone,'" Allison said. "That day I sang "God Bless America" on top of the dugout before thousands of people, without any preparation."

She wanted to move past her fears not only as a lesson to herself, but as a lesson for her daughters. "I really feel that the only limitations are the ones we push on ourselves," she said.

This has been a year, Allison said, of learning to say yes. When she gives up her crown in May, she will focus on spending time with her family, remain active with her church and her community, and she will continue to keep saying yes.

*Note: Mrs. Maine America contestants are judged in three categories: private interview, swimsuit competition, and evening gown. Fifty percent of the contestant's total score is based on the interview, while the swimsuit and evening gown competitions each make up 25 percent. Each Mrs. Maine America contestant is awarded a local title and will represent her area and community at the state pageant.*

*The crowned Mrs. Maine America receives, along with other winnings, a trip to the national Mrs. America competition in Las Vegas, where she will compete with contestants from across the country for the national crown of Mrs. America. The winner of the national pageant competes for Mrs. World.*

*For more information on the Mrs. Maine America pageant, go to [www.mrsmaine.net](http://www.mrsmaine.net).*



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# Becoming the woman you want to be

A Conversation with  
Dr. Christiane Northrup

**D**r. Christiane Northrup has reached millions of women through her bestselling books, as well as through her television and conference appearances, workshops, e-letters, and social media sites. She has formed a global community of women who embrace her unique medical and holistic perspectives. Many women keep her books near to hand, on their bedside tables and desks—helped, encouraged, enlivened, and comforted by her insights.

One of Oprah's all-time favorite guests, Dr. Northrup has written on subjects that touch a nerve with women—aging, menopause, mother-daughter relationships, and the body's divine aspect. Be watching for her updated, revised book *Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom: Creating Physical and Emotional Health and Healing* (due out in May 2020).

**MARY:**

How do you look so good at this age?

**CHRISTIANE:**

I started to do Pilates, in my 40s! I learned the Pilates mat work from Nancy Etnier in Portland, and it turns out—this is kind of a miracle—that she taught classical Pilates. She learned from direct descendants of Joseph Pilates, who was a genius with the body and with fascia, which is a secondary nervous system. I then started to go twice a week, and one of her students, Hope Matthews, moved up to Yarmouth and worked in the mill in Yarmouth. I've been doing it ever since. I have to tell you, it does something to the fascia, where you literally increase the energy through your whole body.

**MARY:**

Did your parents inspire you to follow a healthy lifestyle by their example?

**CHRISTIANE:**

My father was ahead of his times, very health-oriented, and I was very much like him. I always feel like I'm just carrying his work forward. My mom has also been a huge inspiration. When she was widowed, she was 52. Since then, she did the Appalachian Trail with Anne, a friend of hers. They did the whole trail, piece by piece. Anne ran ski trips in Vermont, and they had met and became fast friends. Anne was an ex-nun, who left the convent at 50.

**MARY:**

That is a big life change.

**CHRISTIANE:**

She and my mother were hilarious. Anne died at 93, but they did the hundred highest peaks in New England, with unmarked trails. Then my mom went to Mt. Everest base camp

at the age of 84. That's 100 miles, with no oxygen up there. Doing that's not of interest to me. Okay, it just isn't. But what it did do is give me this role model in my lineage, someone I look up to, so 50 doesn't seem very old, 60 doesn't seem very old, 70 doesn't seem very old, and so on.

**MARY:**

Have your siblings affected your thinking about health and wellness issues, too?

**CHRISTIANE:**

Yes, very much so. I had a sister who was killed in a car accident, at the age of 23. I was a second-year resident at the time. I had patients who were dying of ovarian cancer and gynecologic cancer and conditions like that. And I have to say, Cindy's death really made me a better doctor because I realized more fully what people were going through. Just how bad it is to have a family member die.

And my youngest brother, Bill, and the experiences he went through early on in his life also had a big effect. The doctors told my parents that he was mentally challenged. And he wouldn't eat. My parents signed him out of the hospital against medical advice or he would be dead now. No one knew what was going on with him. My parents said, "Well, he's not going to die in here. We'll have him die at home with his family."

They fed him every hour on the hour, tube feeding. Then finally they found a doctor, when my brother was a year old and weighed very little. This doctor did a pediatric endoscopy, looking down with a light and saw that my brother had an eroded esophagus. My dad, who was a dentist, kept putting down a tube to feed him, because he'd vomit otherwise. The doctor said, you've got to take the tube out, it's going to rupture his esophagus. They did, and the doctor said, "Let's just see if he gets hungry enough, he'll eat." And he did. I remember this. I was about 10. My mother brought him home on the plane from Philadelphia, and he was eating a roll. We all just cried. We'd never seen him eat anything. Now he is perfectly healthy.



**MARY:**

You have a scientific background, yet you embrace other aspects of life, trying to get the whole picture, not just the one that was presented to you. How did your career path develop?

**CHRISTIANE:**

I would talk to patients. Even as a med student, I would talk to them. And they would tell me [things]. The patients I'm thinking about were at Dartmouth Medical School, at Mary Hitchcock Hospital. It's sunset, and it's right in the middle of town. I would make rounds and talk to the cancer patients. And one woman said to me once, "Tonight I'm just going to float out into the sunset." I knew she was going to die. I would just listen to people. They would tell me what was going on. And I would wonder, why isn't anyone else listening? Because they'll tell you.

**MARY:**

Do you believe in a hereafter? Do you believe that we've had many lives?

**CHRISTIANE:**

Oh, totally. Oh gosh, yes. I believe we've had many lifetimes. I believe that I must've been burned at the stake in at least four of those.

But absolutely I believe in a hereafter. I also believe, and I think this is key—that most of our spirit is not really even in our bodies. That we have an eternal place, an all-powerful part of us, that is outside of our bodies, but comes through our bodies and pervades our bodies, our soul, as it were. And that soul can only learn in a physical body. Our spirit is bigger than that. It knows what's going on and it's immortal. But the soul has to learn lessons in the physical body, where it's very dense matter.

Now, I think, we can begin to see our bodies as bio symbolic. This is the work of Louise Hay, where

everything that happens to us has a meaning, and we can heal it by understanding the meaning. When you go through life that way, not feeling like a victim, then more and more life energy comes through you.

When I wrote *Goddesses Never Age* that book came out of . . . I'm going to tell you the honest-to-God truth. That book came out of a desperation in me to not have the age 50 or the age 60 mean "That's it" for me.

I researched and wrote the book because I wanted to become the kind of woman that the kind of man I was looking for would be interested in. And of course, when you set out to heal things within yourself, and you create a work around it, like *Goddesses Never Age*, it comes from a very personal place. And then the message is always very universal.

**MARY:**

You're been through a divorce. Did you remarry?

**CHRISTIANE:**

No, I'm not married. But I have a life partner.

**MARY:**

Would you get married again?

**CHRISTIANE:**

No. This is a great question. I'm going to tell you what I would do—I actually intend to do this, by the way: I would have a wedding.

But at this point, I don't think I would ever combine resources with anybody. Because you get to this stage, where he's got adult children, I've got adult children, and I don't want to deal with whatever the adult children want from your estate or whatever.

The legal part of it, I'm not interested anymore. Getting to that point took me a long time. I guess I had to go through a divorce where things were not so great.

**MARY:**

I like this idea of a ceremony, of making life vows that are not the same as legal vows. I certainly understand that. And I like the idea of a party.

**CHRISTIANE:**

Yeah. I want to have the full wedding because it's a spiritual occasion. I would want to have the community and the wedding and "the two shall be as one" idea. Like Noel Paul Stookey's "Wedding Song." I'm very into that.

**MARY:**

You're not practicing medicine anymore, correct?

**CHRISTIANE:**

No. What I'm doing instead, I'm using my platform for education. Obviously, I write books. I just revised *Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom*, cover to cover. It's coming out in May (2020). Back in the '80s and '90s when I wrote it, everyone thought my patients were crazy.

I wanted it current, up to date. That book first came out in '94. At first, I was terrified to go into the hospital. I didn't want any doctor in Maine to see it. I thought they were going to remove my license. I said, "Please do not publish it until I become board certified in OB/GYN. Because they're apt to go after me."

Now, I'm obviously much more accepted. And now I'm also completely updating *The Wisdom of Menopause*, and that will be coming out the following year. This week I'm recording *Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom*, so it'll be available in an audible format.

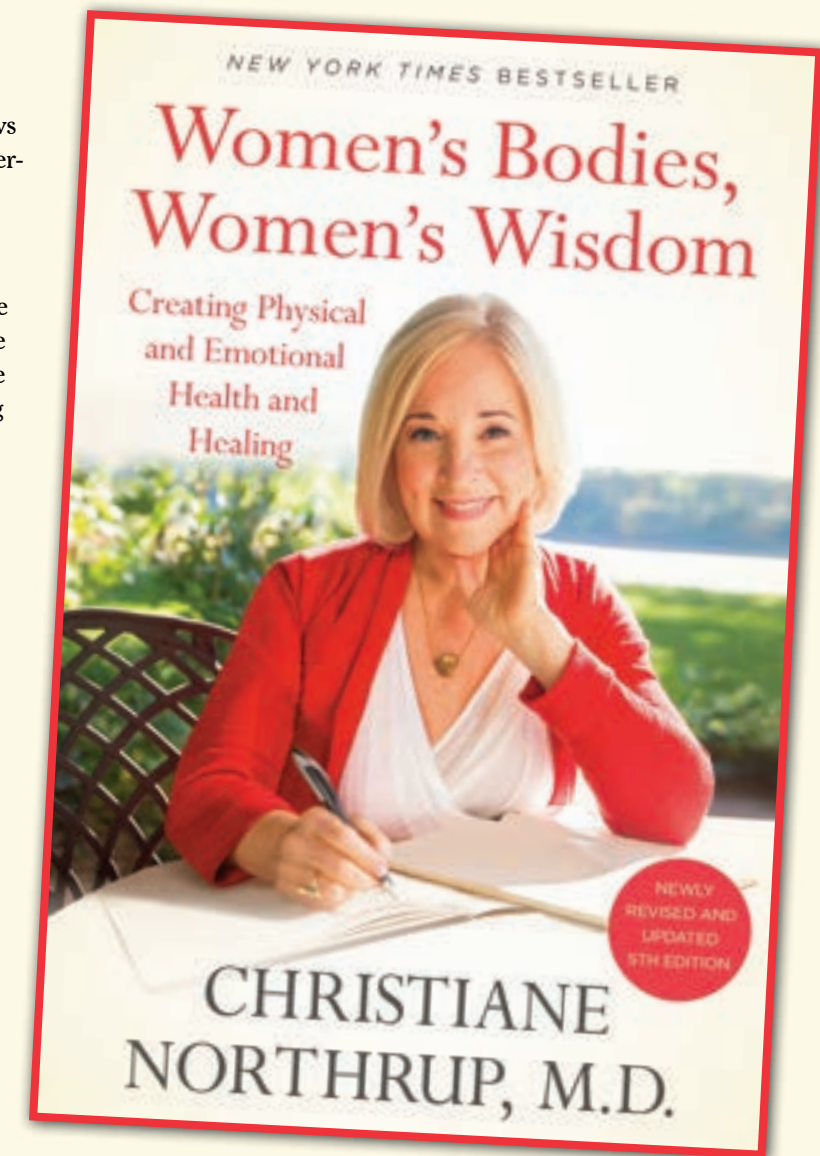
**MARY:**

If you were talking to a young girl or even an old girl, what are things that everybody should be doing?

**CHRISTIANE:**

I would say, standing barefoot on the earth, at least some of the time. And if you can't do that, then put your hand around a tree branch or hug a tree because that will ground you. We all need the energy of the earth. We're all very disconnected from the earth. There's really interesting data on how these actions can heal people. So, get your feet on the ground as much as you can. Walking the beach is great.

We also need to get our vitamin D levels into the optimal range, which is 40 to 80 nanograms per mil-



lilitar. And in Maine, you can't make vitamin D from the sun between about October 15 and March 15. So, during that time, you're going to want to take, usually it's 5,000 to 10,000 international units per day of vitamin D. You should have your levels tested, and one of the very best places is [grassrootshealth.net](http://grassrootshealth.net).

**MARY:**

What else would you recommend?

**CHRISTIANE:**

I've recently become very interested in EMF, the electromagnetic fields and dirty electricity. I have just recently put Stetzer filters throughout my house, so that any dirty electricity would be calmed down, and that's been fun to do. Because we're living in a kind of electronic smog. From the Wi-Fi and the computers and 5G is a disaster that's coming.

"We all need the energy of the earth. There's really interesting data on how these actions can heal people. So, get your feet on the ground as much as you can."

Whole flocks of birds are falling dead out of the sky. That's another issue. So, I guess, what I would say to everyone, that's just so easy: Turn off your cell phone at night. Don't sleep with it by your head ever.

We don't realize that these things are just not good for biology. I would never have an Alexa anywhere near me. So, we need to connect with the earth, and we need to connect with our own intuition. And to do that you've got to be unplugged.

The other thing that I would say is, do things with people. I danced Argentine Tango for eight or nine years, and I'd go into Portland and had this beloved Tango community. We would just do close embrace dancing. It was wonderful, and it heals my heart. Social media does not take the place of being with like-minded people. We have to be with people face to face.

**MARY:**

You have written a book about mothers and daughters. Is your relationship with your daughters terrific?

**CHRISTIANE:**

Yes! After the divorce, I had to completely reinvent myself. And by doing that, I created for them a pathway into being older, that looks appealing to them. They have been very proud of me. Because lots of times, what happens to women is—it's your children who are the best thing you've ever done. They're the people you want to be around the most. Because they're cool, right?

**MARY:**

It's so true.

**CHRISTIANE:**

It's just plain true. And at the same time, if you put all your eggs in one basket, if you just want to be with your kids, then you can become a burden to them by always becoming too needy for their attention. If you don't heal the wound with the mother, you will become a problem for your children. If she's a problem for you, you're going to do the same thing. So, you have to individuate from your children. You need to create your own life. You need to be an inspiration for your children.

“[Your children are] the people you want to be around the most. Because they're cool, right?”

**MARY:**

Does anything make you cry? Do you cry?

**CHRISTIANE:**

Oh, yes. Lots of stuff makes me cry. I feel it, feel how bad it is, feeling it inside me, and then in a way, set a timer, including yourself. So, you get three minutes to just rant and rave and weep—for the gnashing of teeth and rending of garments. You let yourself feel it.

If people need help with this, they can go to the Center for Nonviolent Communication (cnvc.org). They give you a list of emotions and a list of needs that those emotions signify. Which is kind of a revelation. It was a revelation to me that it was okay to have a need.

Then I take 100 percent responsibility for what I'm feeling—even though you really want to blame someone. However, if someone's driving me nuts, it's therapeutic to take a towel and flap it against the woodwork—a windowsill is good. And you can just scream, “I hate it when your heart is closed to me. I hate it when your heart is closed to me.” Because that's the most painful thing, when someone else's heart is closed to you. It's just is so painful.

**MARY:**


Closing thoughts?

**CHRISTIANE:**

Ashley Montagu, a wonderful anthropologist, said most adults are nothing but disintegrated children. And—you're around little girls. I'm around an 18-month-old and a 4-year-old—I see what we're supposed to be like. They are joyful and fearless, and that's how we're supposed to be.


And what I would say to any woman is that life is long. For me, it took 10 years, but I had to become the kind of woman that the kind of partner I wanted would be interested in, and I have. •

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# Back in the Saddle Again



*Equestrian  
Ellen  
Forbes*

BY LIZ GOTTHELF

**F**or Ellen Forbes a life without horses is simply unimaginable. “I’ve loved horses since I knew what a horse was,” said the 34-year-old New Gloucester woman.

Ellen first became a horse owner at a young age, in a surprise gesture of kindness from a stranger. When she was about nine years old, her mother took her to an open house at a miniature horse farm. “I happened to be an avid reader at the time, and I got my mitts on a horse farm directory,” she said. Ellen wrote to horse breeders all over the country, asking for photographs of horses to put on her bedroom wall.

She got more than a few pictures for a collage. One horse owner, a Mississippi court judge, was so taken with Ellen that he gave her two miniature horses. He said when he was young and in 4-H, someone had given him a cow, and now it was his turn to help a young person with an interest in livestock.

Family members pitched in to build a fence and a barn, and they picked up the two miniatures, a mother and her foal, which were shipped to Massachusetts. Griffy and Scarlet are now 23 and 30, and have been great companions

over the years. They have participated in 4-H events, and have even gone trick-or-treating.

Ellen began riding horses, which led to the acquisition of a Morgan named Rosie. She and Rosie built a solid relationship and competed in dressage competitions when Ellen was in high school and college. When, after 14 years together, Ellen lost Rosie to colic, she was broken-hearted.

“I had had her since I was 12. I trained her, and through the years I was able to mold her. When I lost her, it was quite devastating,” she said.

Though she knew she could never completely replace Rosie, Ellen knew she had to get another horse. “I decided I couldn’t not ride,” said Ellen.

She was introduced to a Gypsy Vanner in 2012. As a seasoned rider, she didn’t think twice about getting on him and going for a ride. The horse got out of control, and Ellen was thrown off, landing on her face. The injury put her on a liquid diet for a few months, and it also introduced something she didn’t know she could have when it came to riding, and that was fear.



“We are partners with these delicate and sensitive animals that have quirks and personalities of their own.”

“I was always a very solid rider. I was the kind of rider that trainers put on young horses because I was so solid,” said Ellen. “It was very strange to be afraid.”

Then a friend posted a listing on Facebook for a Hanoverian named Grafton. “I saw him, and I had to have him,” she said. And, as the expression goes, she got back in the saddle again.

A six-month internship with a trainer got Ellen back to showing on a competitive level. Grafton turned out to be a rock-solid horse, patiently waiting his turn at horse shows and not easily spooked. She saddled up Grafton one day in May 2018, and the two were enjoying a trail ride. Then everything went black.

“Something happened. I don’t remember,” she said. She woke up on the ground and called 911 on her cell phone. Grafton had made his way back to the driveway, where a paramedic untacked him and put him back to his stable.

“I basically felt like I was hit by a car,” said Ellen. She had torn ligaments and tendons and a brain injury that caused dizziness, balance issues, and feelings, at times, of being easily overwhelmed.

Ellen has no idea what happened in the woods to cause the accident on such a reliable and steady horse. She is still recovering from post-concussion syndrome, with migraines and nausea. But she hasn’t been scared away from horseback riding.

“I’ve only had two bad accidents since I was nine. I feel like that’s a good run,” she said. She’s hoping to be riding daily again this summer. She plans to continue teaching others how to ride, and she is also studying to be an equine massage therapist.

Fortunately, in both accidents she was wearing a helmet. “Helmets are life savers and the most important piece of equipment a rider can have. There is no price worth a traumatic brain injury,” said Forbes.

And though she’ll never know what happened that day in May, she’s still loyal to Grafton, who remains dependable. “I love the relationship you have with horses. Each one is different,” she said. “Grafton is like my other half.” Ellen said she’s able to read the horse’s moods and can predict how he will act in certain situations.

“We are partners with these delicate and sensitive animals that have quirks and personalities of their own, and all riders encounter setbacks from personal injury, our horses’ injuries, weather, and so on. But we keep going, starting over and conquering our fears and goals. It really connects riders to each other and deepens the bond with our horses as partners because you don’t get that relationship with anyone else,” she said.

Taking care of horses is a commitment. As a typical horse owner, Ellen, who is also an emergency dispatcher, spends hours each day taking care of horses, grooming them, training them, feeding them, and cleaning their stalls. It makes for a busy schedule. But Ellen wouldn’t have it any other way.

“This is my life,” she said. “It’s definitely a lifestyle.”



SUSAN CORREIA  
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**MARVIN**

# Brannelly's Irish Tavern

A SHORT STORY BY POLLY MCGRORY

You can tell a lot about people by what they drink. I should know. Twenty-five years behind this bar has taught me a lot about human nature. I got new customers and old customers and sometimes I'll get a fella just passin' through, but I can always peg 'em right off the bat. I know who they are and what they do, where they've been and where they're goin'. The only time I ever got thrown for a loop was that little darlin' Mollie O'Brien.

I figure she was from another planet, one that wasn't as old and tired as this one. Or maybe from a fairy tale—the sweet little princess lookin' for her charmin' prince. I'll never forget the night she walked in here—the place stopped cold. Every head swiveled to look at this luscious little lollipop, all golden ringlets and peaches-and-cream cheeks.

I remember thinkin', "Whoa, honey! Ye've come to the wrong place!" Not that this is a dive, mind ye. Brannelly's is a fine Irish Pub. 'Tis nothin' fancy, but clean as a whistle, and we serve a good brew. A shot is a shot here . . . no skimpin'. And nobody bothers ye. No cops, no bosses, no naggin' wives. But our regular folks ain't what ye'd call the upper crust. Most of 'em have seen better times. But they're hangin' on, and they don't cause any trouble. They're just lookin' for a minute or two away from the heavy burden of reality.

So here she comes, waltzin' in, smellin' a little flowery, a little soapy, and lookin' . . . well, lookin' new. I thought Michael O'Reilly was gonna fall off his stool, I did. Mike is a Guinness drinker—likes his brew hearty and rich, he does. He's a stocky lad, all muscled up from his buildin' all those new houses on the other side o' town. But like they say, an Irishman is never drunk as long as he can hold on to one blade of grass and not fall off the face o' the earth. Well, Mike had an iron-clad hold on that blade o' grass, I'll tell ye. So Mollie saunters by

him, the poor lad, and he doesn't stand a chance. He looked like he was goin' to propose any minute. And I wouldn'ta blamed him either.

She smiled at him for the flattery of his stare. Then she smiled at poor old Mr. Donnelly as he shuffled back from the loo. He stopped dead in his tracks, he did, at the sight of this cotton-candy dream fillin' up the space in front of 'im. Then she flashed that pearly, high-beam smile on me, and roses of Picardy bloomed in my cheeks.

Mollie sashayed up to the bar stool next to Maggie Flaherty. Maggie welcomed her into our little circle with an outstretched hand. Maggie was definitely a lady, quite a beauty, I'm told, in her younger days. But after her husband Seamus died, she was a bit lost for companionship and took to droppin' by for a pop or two. She liked a sip of Port . . . said it warded off the evenin's chill. Maybe the evenin's ghosts, too, I'm thinkin'. She motioned for me to serve the young lady, and I asked, "What'll ye have, Miss?"

"I'd like a margarita, please," she replied, sliding onto the stool. Now that's a real little lady who knows those fancy foreign cocktails.

"What brings you here, dear?" asked Maggie, as we all waited for the reason for her wanderin' in to our humble waterin' hole. She glanced around the room.

"I'm looking for someone," she stated carefully.

Everybody at the bar looked up at that one. Wonderin' if maybe it was them she was lookin' for. Much as I liked these folks, I didn't think there was a prince—charmin' or otherwise—in this motley group. Paddy Flynn was starin' at the soccer matches on the telly. He was a draft drinker anyway . . . he'd never make enough money to keep this little hot-house flower happy. And she sure didn't look like the diaper/dishwasher type to me. Sean Conroy was watchin' Mollie's every move as he sipped on his

Jameson Irish Whiskey. Sean liked the good stuff, but he was a bit of a rake with the ladies. We were still hearin' stories about how he fiddled around with Katie Kilduff and left her with a broken heart and a bouncin' baby boy. I didn't think he'd get that close to our little Snow White here. She seemed to be dancin' to a more liltin' tune than Sean's silly whistlin'.

I figured heaven would've kept an eye on her. Most likely they'd assign her a high-rankin' guardian angel, and he'd be packin' a Smith & Wesson.

Jack O'Brien sat quietly at the far end of the bar. Jack used to be a fine picture of a man, goin' to law school, headin' for the Big Time. But turns out he liked dry Manhattans better than dry old law books, and so the only bar he ever passed was right here into Brannelly's Tavern. He wound up in insurance, and folks said it was a sad waste of a bright mind. But Jack was good at it, charmin' the worried Irish housewives out of a few dollars of their husbands' skimpy paychecks, just in case they got lucky and the lads prematurely entered the ranks of the "dearly departed." Then Jack had the happy task of deliverin' the life insurance checks that bought those poor girls a small taste of freedom.

I liked Jack—he brightened up the place with his sparklin' wit and his gentlemanly way of speakin'. But the devil had it in for Jack. The one day, years ago now, that he came in, I noticed that he'd brought his little girl with him but left her in the car while he came in for a drop. She sat quietly in the car readin' her book, occasionally lookin' out the window to see when he was comin' back. She didn't look bored at all, no . . . she looked like she knew her place. Well-trained by those nuns at St. Joseph's to sit quietly, be obedient, and trust her dad to do the right thing. Well, Jack stayed a little too long that day. There was an accident on the way home. Nothin' serious, but the little darlin' broke her arm. Mary O'Brien bought her daughter all kinds of dolls and ice cream to fix that hurt, and then promptly threw Jack into the street. He's never been the same. Never said nothin' about it, not for the last 15 years, but there's somethin' melancholy tuggin' at the corners of those dark blue eyes. Maggie says he's an alcoholic, but I still treat him like a good customer.

Well, weren't we all taken by surprise then when our lovely young lady spots Jack way off in the corner and says, "Oh, I think that's him!" Maggie shot me



a daggered look clearly intended to seal my lips. I had a hard time with that. Here's our sweet little lass, can't be a minute past 21, and she's headin' for a dead end. I checked Jack out of the corner of me eye. Well, sure, I admit he's still pretty good-lookin', but he's halfway into his customary evenin' haze here, he's twice her age, and I don't think he's a worthy candidate for the position of Handsome Prince.

But somethin' in our little lady's shinin' face stops me from blurtin' out the god-awful truth about Jack. She's lookin' at him like he's a long-lost dream, like she's been lookin' for him forever.

She slowly walked over and sat on the stool beside him, and ye coulda heard a pin drop—we weren't so much as breathin' for the suspense. Jack looked up at her, his eyes a bit hazy, and tried to focus on this unexpected angel. She put her hand on his shoulder and smiled at him. She could tell by the blank look in his eyes that he didn't recognize her. So she helped him see.

"Hey, Dad . . . It's me . . . Mollie." •



# *Lunch with a* **LEGEND**

*Meeting Lois Lowry, author of The Giver*

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
CHRISTINE SIMMONDS

Lois Lowry and her dog, Alfie,  
at their home in Southern Maine.





**L**ois Lowry's house in Southern Maine is at the end of a cul-de-sac in a retirement community. It's a small one-floor house in an olive color, with a porch and a garage. A few sparse trees and bushes decorate the yard. There is no indication that the person who lives here is a beloved, accomplished author of children's and young adult's books such as *The Giver* and *Number the Stars*, works of literature which are often taught in classrooms.

She is my favorite author, and I am slightly star-struck to meet her.

I arrive at her home for lunch. She answers the door and invites me inside. There is classical music playing over the speakers. Family photographs and art prints decorate a tasteful sitting room. A dining table with a colorful sunflower print tablecloth is against the wall, and a short bookshelf is absolutely stuffed with books—some stacked on top of each other. The chairs around the dining table are a matching design in varying solid pastel colors—blue, yellow, pink.

Her 14-year-old white Tibetan Terrier Alfie greets me with a wagging tail to beg for belly scratches. Lois tells me there are not many dogs of this breed around, but he is very old and “completely deaf.” It is obvious she loves Alfie, though.

Lois herself is quiet and unassuming. She does not think of herself as famous, and it shows. She wears a black shirt and checked pants. She has gray hair and the kind of glasses that can be called “spectacles.” She looks like an average grandmother.

She offers me coffee, and we sit on a yellow couch with Alfie in between us while she talks about her career.

Lois started writing at a young age. “From the time I was seven or eight I was always writing stories,” she tells me. She even wrote a book for her brother when he was three.

At the age of 17, Lois attended Brown and majored in literature with a focus on writing. “I always loved sitting alone in a room and writing things,” she says, “So when I went to college that is what I majored in.”

She dropped out to get married at age 19, “which women did then,” she tells me. Then she had four children before the age of 25. “So I had to put everything on hold.”



When her youngest child went to kindergarten, Lois went back to college at the University of Southern Maine to complete her undergraduate degree. Then she continued on to graduate school.

She began writing for magazines in the '70s as a freelance writer. “I still wanted to write the great American novel,” she tells me, “which all people starting out as writers hope and think they're going to write.”

Writing for magazines, though, was a way to make money.

In 1975 she published a short story in *Redbook*. She describes the story as being “for adults but seen through the eyes of a child.” After it was published, a children's book editor from Houghton Mifflin in Boston contacted her.

The editor said they were looking for an author who could write for young people and asked if she would consider writing a novel for young adults.

Lois says she had never considered writing for a younger audience, “which was surprising because I had a bunch of them in the house. Our house was certainly filled with children's books. I had read to all those children for all those years.”



That book, *A Summer to Die*, was a semi-autobiographical novel about “two young girls and the effect on the whole family of the death of a teenage daughter.” Lois’s own sister Helen died of cancer in the 1960s.

When the book began to win awards, her publisher

was very excited, but it did not mean much to her. “I didn’t know anything about that world and what those awards meant,” she comments.

For her, the excitement came when she began to hear from her readers. Almost immediately, as soon as that book was published, she began to receive letters, she recalls. Now she gets emails, but she still hears from her readers every day about how important her books are to them.

Reading those letters and realizing how passionately young people can react to a book made a big impact on Lois. She realized that adults do not have their lives changed by reading a book, “but those kids at 12 were telling me that their lives were changed. And they still tell me that.”

Eventually Lois asks if I am ready for lunch. I am so wrapped up in our conversation I have completely forgotten about food. In her kitchen she pours me a glass of water in what looks like a wine glass.

She serves me banana bread with walnuts, quiche with broccoli and bacon, and a salad. She made them all, and I am overwhelmed at being served lunch made by my favorite author. She tells me we have to eat a lot because she will be leaving the next day for London to speak at Oxford.

Many of Lois’s books are used in schools, especially *The Giver* and *Number the Stars*. Lois tells me *Number the Stars* is often used in fourth or fifth grade, while *The Giver* is often used for seventh or eighth grade classrooms.

*The Giver* has been challenged in some schools as to whether it is appropriate for children. Lois tells me it is less frequently challenged these days, as “other books are more disturbing and more recent.”

“I had no idea when that book was published that it would become so controversial.”

Lois says she sometimes gets feedback from parents about the content of that book. She tells me she has a handwritten letter from one woman saying, “Jesus would be ashamed of you.” She also tells me about a website, since taken down, that refers to her as “The Antichrist.”

I cannot imagine anyone giving that title to the woman I am chatting with.

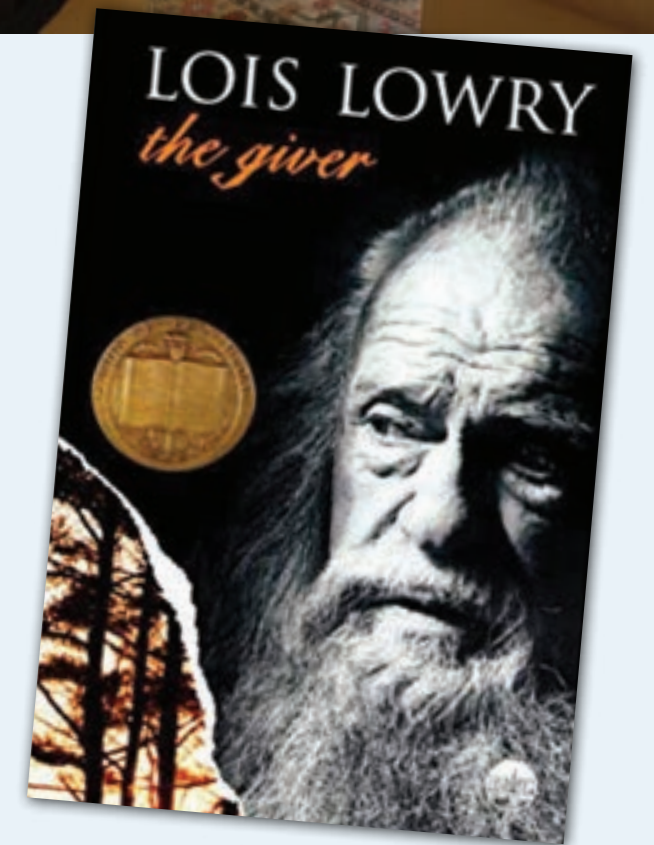
Lois tells me she has written many letters to many parents over the years explaining why she does not think books should be banned. “At its best, I think a book can be a vehicle between parents and kids at an age when communication is sometimes difficult.”

Four of her books have been made into movies. The most recent and best-known is *The Giver*, which came out in 2014 and features stars such as Jeff Bridges and Meryl Streep. She tells me she didn’t have anything to do with the production, but she was invited to South Africa to watch part of the filming.

“They were very nice to me,” she says.

Lois tells me she continues to maintain a friendship with Jeff Bridges. They exchange emails periodically.

A fourth movie, an animated film voiced by comedy stars including Maya Rudolph, Ricky Gervais, and



Martin Short, is due out in 2020. It is based on her book *The Willoughbys* and will be released on Netflix.

While Lois has mixed feelings about how movie directors have adapted her work, she has a way of coming to terms with it. “I have to keep reminding myself, and I’ve done this each time a book has been made into a movie, that the book still exists. It’s a separate thing. I’m not going to let myself get bent out of shape about it.” •



# A COMMON COMPLAINT

Healing those in GI distress

BY DR. SASHA ROSE



Does your belly feel bloated or distended most days? Do you wake up with a flat tummy but by mid-day feel like you're five months pregnant (and you're not)?

Digestive symptoms are not always things we discuss around the water cooler, or even with our closest friends. But know that if you have been living with digestive discomfort, you are certainly not alone.

My naturopathic medical speciality is digestive health. People seek me out when they are suffering from indigestion, heartburn, constipation, or diarrhea, as well as ulcerative colitis and Crohn's Disease. But bloating may be the complaint that brings people in more than any other.

It is not uncommon for a new patient to come into my office complaining of chronic bloating with a previous diagnosis of Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS). Unfortunately, it's also not uncommon for her to relay stories of seeking out care from primary care providers and/or gastroenterologists and being told "it's all in your head" or, if not in so many words, still feeling dismissed and not heard. And yes, it's usually women who have been treated this way.

When someone describes a scenario like this, with symptoms such as bloating, abdominal pain and distension, diarrhea, constipation, sometimes fatigue, and weight loss, it's a red flag for something called SIBO (Small Intestine Bacterial Overgrowth), an underdiagnosed condition.

There is up to a 75 percent overlap between the symptoms of SIBO and IBS. This overlap means that a large majority of people previously handed the diagnosis of IBS tested positive for SIBO in research studies.

So, what exactly is going on with SIBO?

Most of us have heard of the microbiome—the "good" bugs in our intestines that provide digestive and immune function (as well as mood regulation, but that's a topic for a different time). Most of these bacteria are in the large intestine, and a smaller percent of them are in the small intestine.

Various risk factors—a past episode of food poisoning, repeated use of antibiotics as a child, repeated use of antacids as an adult, and many others—can lead to an overgrowth of normal non-pathogenic bacteria in the small intestine.

These bacteria "out-gas" hydrogen and methane gases, and when there is an overgrowth, it leads to symptoms of bloating and sometimes constipation and/or diarrhea.

An at-home breath test can test for this condition. Also, a medical practitioner can make the diagnosis based on your symptoms, in what's called a "clinical diagnosis."

I know that many of you will finish this article and Google SIBO, which you should. Do your research and see what people diagnosed with it are saying. I do caution against trying to treat it yourself. It is a medical condition and needs to be treated by a licensed specialist. •

Digestive symptoms are not always things we discuss around the water cooler, or even with our closest friends.



## GET OUT & GO RVing!

Going on an RV trip can be a lot of fun, whether you travel alone or with friends, family, and pets. RVs let you experience new places and activities, all from the comfort of a mobile abode! Still, for all the independence an RV can offer, it never hurts to consider extra precautions, safety factors, and ways to save. That's where an RV club can come in. Depending on the club, these organizations can offer companionship for the road, insurance benefits, discounts at parking sites, and even roadside support.

There are dozens of clubs to choose from, but here are a few to take a look at:

**RVing Women**—women's club in the US and Canada, with a Northeast network [rvingwomen.org](http://rvingwomen.org)

**Good Sam Club**—the largest RV club, with a Maine branch [mainegoodsam.com](http://mainegoodsam.com)

**Escapees**—international club for freedom-lovers, with a New England chapter [escapees.com](http://escapees.com)

**Passport America**—discounts on thousands of campsites, including 21 places in Maine alone [passportamerica.com](http://passportamerica.com)



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## YUMMLY

This is the ultimate kitchen companion that will make cooking and grocery shopping easy and fun. You can search from millions of recipes and save your favorites. Once you have picked out what recipes you want to make, Yummlly will make a grocery list for you with all the items you will need. The recipes are clear and easy to follow with step-by-step instructions, videos, timers, and other handy tools to assist in your culinary creations.

## HEADSPACE

Life can be hectic, so it's important to take time to stop, relax, and center yourself. The Headspace app helps you achieve this every day, with hundreds of available sessions on physical health, personal growth, stress management, and anxiety relief. These are all designed to help you stress less, focus more, and feel better. Headspace is also great in achieving quality sleep with sleep meditations, relaxing sleep music, and sleepcasts to guide you to a place of rest.

## LIGHTROOM

Adobe Photoshop Lightroom is a powerful and intuitive photo editor and camera app. Lightroom empowers you in your photography, helping you to capture and edit stunning images.

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## MYFITNESSPAL

MyFitnessPal makes focusing on a healthy lifestyle easy, with the ability to track fitness metrics. Create a health plan with this app for losing weight, eating healthier, exercising more, and drinking more water. You can track calories and nutrients of foods and recipes you love by entering them into the app or simply scanning a barcode. Use the built-in pedometer to track steps or link this to your favorite workout app to log your exercises. This app also allows users to add friends for support and motivation on your fitness journey.

## PINTEREST

The Pinterest app is a social networking experience driven by imagery where inspiration rules. Discover billions of possibilities for every part of your life, from food, travel, fashion, home design, and much more. This app allows you to "pin" ideas you find online in one space and share them with others or collaborate with others on an idea board. You can also search for inspiration that has been pulled together by other users of the app by category.

## POSHMARK

Poshmark is an online marketplace where users can buy or sell name-brand fashion. You can shop items from millions of "closets" and "boutiques" for women, men, and kids at a discounted price. The app also allows you to sell your name-brand clothing quickly and easily and negotiate pricing with buyers or sellers. All Poshmark orders are shipped using expedited USPS Priority Mail. •

## WUNDERLIST

The Wunderlist app allows you to make to-do lists and tasks assignments for any purpose. This could be grocery lists for the family, project to-do lists, a checklist for vacation plans and more. This app makes it easy to share your lists and collaborate with everyone in your life and also instantly syncs between your phone, tablet, and computer, so you can access your lists from anywhere.

## MINT

This is a great app to keep track of your finances, which can be extremely important if you are on a limited or fixed budget. Mint is the free money manager and financial tracker app that allows you to see everything in one place using a clean interface. You can view your bank accounts, credit cards, bills, and investments so you know where you stand. Mint allows you to see what you're spending, where you can save money, and track your bills. The app also allows you to keep track of your credit score.

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| STYLE |

# FASHION BRIEFING

WRITTEN & PHOTOGRAPHED  
BY AMANDA WHITEGIVER

**SUIT AND MULES**  
J. Crew

**BOLD LIP**  
Chanel Ultrawear Intense Matte  
Liquid Lip Colour in Rose

**N**atasha Irving is a lifelong Mainer and Waldoboro native. In fact, she lives just down the road from her parents, who still reside in the house on her grandparents' farm in which she was raised. Irving is the midcoast district attorney, serving Knox, Lincoln, Sagadahoc, and Waldo Counties. Her 2018 election win made Maine history, making her both the first female and the first Democrat to win the post since the position was established in 1972. Irving's bold ideas about criminal justice reform are focused on serving her community.

After passing her bar exam while eight months pregnant, and being inducted into the Maine Bar with her five-week-old daughter on her hip, not much fazes this

hardy Mainer. As she works to implement a community-based restorative justice system in the midcoast, she faces the kind of difficult decisions on a regular basis that many of us only glimpse when we serve our turn on jury duty.

Away from the courthouse, Irving is a mom who takes getting outside with her family very seriously. With April showers ahead, they emerge from their snowsuits, and trade their winter snowmobile rides and skiing for family walks and hikes. Soon they are planning this summer's camping trips. Any season of the year, caring for their goats, chickens, and sometimes a pig or two ensures they get outside, no matter the weather.

**Describe your style in one sentence.**

Preppy, punk, and professional at work, and utilitarian, comfortable, and sporty at play.

**Is it "Maine" style? If so, how? If not, how does it deviate?**

Yes, because I'm a Mainer through and through. I often wear my Bean boots or my sneakers with my suits, until I have to change for court, meetings, or conferences.

**First outfit you remember picking out, loving, and feeling great in?**

I remember a black crepe skirt with dark pink and white flowers from Contempo Casuals that I probably got when I was 12 or 13. I loved it, and wore it with black tights and a black shirt, and felt super cool wearing it in the mid '90s.

**How old were you when you felt like you developed a style of your own?**

As long as I remember, I had my own sense of style. I can see the same thing in my daughter.

**What was your last memorable outfit?**

I have gold and navy wide corduroy suits from J. Crew that are my current favorites.

**Favorite bricks and mortar place to buy clothing in Maine?**

J. Crew.

**Do you thrift? If so, where?**

Yes, anywhere and everywhere. Specifically, Young 'Uns in Damariscotta (great for kids and grownups), Salvation Army, Goodwill, you name it! In the last few years, I tend to buy my work clothes online, since I don't have time for much shopping, but I still get all my outdoor clothes secondhand, with the exception of boots.

**Best clothing, shoes, or accessory bargain of all time?**

Burberry trench coat, \$4.00, Goodwill, Rockland.

**Most you ever spent on something to wear?**

My suits. I always buy them on sale

from J. Crew, but altogether they still cost about \$250.00 with a shirt. It is a necessity for an attorney to wear a suit, but I am extremely frugal, and it pains me to spend a lot on anything.

**Who is your style icon of all time?**

That's tough. Chrissie Hynde and Michelle Obama.

**Who is your style icon in Maine (dead or alive)?**

First, I'll say my daughter. She is 5, and she is so confident in who she is and so insistent on dressing for herself only, not for anyone else. I hope she always has that.

In the midcoast, we have some fierce women attorneys who own the courtroom. Their clothes are professional and fashionable, but it's their confidence that is eternally stylish. When it comes to outdoor clothing, women farmers and fisherwomen all over the state are looking fabulous in Carharts, Grundens, rubber boots, and baseball hats. There is no such thing as bad weather, just wrong clothes!

**Mountains or coast?**

That's tough, too! I grew up on the coast, so I feel really at home on the coast, but I love Maine, all of it. I feel so lucky to live here. This summer, we are planning a hiking trip in the Bethel area, but we will do some island camping and go on hikes in the midcoast, too. I love visiting the mountains, but the coast is home.

**What would you refuse to wear?**

In our family we have embraced the Marie Kondo tidiness method, and I am routinely asking myself if the piece of clothing brings me joy. I have found, really my entire life, that I only have a few things I really love, and then a bunch of other junk that just takes up space. If I don't love it, I don't wear it, period.

**How many pairs of Bean boots do you own? What else do you wear in the snow?**

One pair currently. I always have one



pair of Bean boots for wet, snowy weather. I love my UGG boots for warmth and comfort on dry, chilly days.

**Where you do get your style inspiration? Magazines, movies, social media?**

Anywhere: music, movies, magazines, people-watching. I am not a consumer of social media, so I am missing out on that.

**What is your current "go to" outfit or item of clothing?**

At work, I have a few classic suits (including the corduroy) that are comfortable and versatile for my profession. At home and off duty, I am loving the leisure-wear trend and enjoy wearing joggers with sneakers as often as possible. Also, a good pair of jeans is non-negotiable with a classic cut, loose t-shirt. Nothing fancy.

**What do you change into after a long day?**

If it's outside work, like gardening or taking care of our goats and chickens, I snag a pair of my spouse's Carharts and one of the ten or so Common Ground Fair tees we share. This time of year, I'm usually getting straight into sweatpants, a t-shirt, and a sweatshirt. •



# LESSONS IN PERSEVERANCE

BY KELLEY HALTER

Maine is the most magical, resourceful, and beautiful place where I've ever been blessed to live. I love Maine! My life adventures have afforded me the opportunity to live in six states across several different regions of the US, and abroad. Now I joke that I'll live in another place again if someone takes it upon themselves to throw my ashes over the Maine state line. That being said, my time living here has included the most challenging and traumatic experiences of my life. Being surrounded by the Maine woods, along with the support and love from my amazing family here, were pivotal to my resilience.

I have yet to meet a Maine woman who does not have an amazing array of versatile skills. And my Mother-in-Love Norma is the epitome. Norma was the first woman to have a taxi license in the state of Maine and one of the first women to gain her commercial driver's license. She was featured in *Parade* magazine for being one of the few female truck drivers who drove solo. Norma also spent several years building and selling rustic furniture made from the trees of our lovely Maine woods. She bakes, draws, and, as an expert grower, teaches all in her circle about gardening and horticulture.

I had one child, and in August of 2018, I gave birth to twins. That pregnancy and their birth were incredibly challenging experiences. Grandma Norma has been pivotal in supporting our healing. She listened to my story from start to finish. She held me while I cried through the uncontrollable, body-wrenching,

ugly cry which cleanses so much pain. She simply loved and accepted me when I was spinning out with tension, anxiety, and anger. Above all, she loved on my babies when I was struggling just to be okay.



I have come to the belief that women (Maine women in particular) are resilient beings. Acceptance of what is happening around and within us is pivotal to moving resiliently through any trial. Maine culture lends itself to this peaceful, yet strong, acceptance of both forces that are beyond us and of the power within. Whether that power is used to endure the storm or make neces-

sary changes, this open acceptance of life—the good parts, the turmoil, and everything in between—is something I appreciate about our Maine culture.

Grandma Norma has always handled and rolled with life's circumstances. Whatever chaos my children and I have thrown at her, for example, she has

accepted and supported us. That said, she also has clear boundaries around what is true and right for her. I never have to worry if there is an agenda behind her actions or if she is doing more than feels okay to her. Because she simply doesn't do more than what is within her capacity. Her boundaries help ensure she's loving and supportive when she is with us. She's always safe.

Connecting with Grandma Norma was so natural. She was present when needed, in countless unobtrusive, accepting, and helpful ways. She was there to hold a crying baby, to help put the babies to sleep, or to give me and my oldest some space to get out of the house while she watched the twins. There to listen and help as I've moved through the various phases of my healing. My kiddos have a deep connecting bond with Grandma Norma, as she has been peacefully present and consistent with them throughout their lives. The excitement when Grandma arrives is unlike any other.

As with many of us, Grandma Norma has been through her own traumas and challenges. Norma grew up in South Portland with her parents and five siblings. As a child, she was abducted. When her two children were 6 and 4 years old, her husband and their father passed away. She survived cancer resulting in a complete hysterectomy. Her house, along with most of her belongings at the time, burned down, and she had to rebuild her life as a single mom with two children. She cared for her mother and older brother until they both passed away. Norma has done the work to heal herself and continues to love and support her family in generous and pivotal ways.

I repeat and stand by my core conviction: Maine women are resilient. Grandma Norma's story is incredible, and she is resilient. But she's not alone. She stands among many Maine women who have exhibited the same strength and power to move through the tough times and overcome. Who are the Resilient Maine Women in your life? •



Dora in Ghana in 2015.  
Photos courtesy  
Dr. Dora Anne Mills

# SERVICE AND SELF-CARE

*Talking with Dr. Dora Anne Mills*

BY SHEILA D. GRANT



If a positive attitude contributes to good health, Dr. Dora Anne Mills may live forever. She sees her childhood braces as a privilege; remains friends with her ex and, nearing her sixth decade, dropped 25 pounds and feels better than ever!

Dr. Mills served as Maine's State Health Officer and Director of the Maine Center for Disease Control from 1996 to 2011. She then spent more than seven years as the VP for Clinical Affairs and Director of the Center for Health Innovation at the University of New England, eventually also serving as UNE's Interim VP for Research.

And since September, 2018, Dr. Mills has been the Senior Vice President of

Community Health for MaineHealth, northern New England's largest healthcare provider. Dr. Mills is also the mother of a grown son and teen daughter; a hiker who has scaled Kilimanjaro – twice; and she is Governor Janet Mills' youngest sibling.

## Growing up in Farmington

Life wasn't always easy as a child, but Dr. Mills considers herself the lucky sibling.

"I was a lot younger than Janet, but one of my earliest memories of life is Janet, in a full body cast, sleeping in a hospital bed in the middle of our living room, and I used to get up on her body cast to play with her.



Dora and Janet in 1993.



Dora and her siblings, Peter, Paul, David, and Janet, at Thanksgiving 2018.

She could use her hands to hold my hands.”

Janet Mills faced spinal scoliosis during a time when the treatment was severe. She underwent two major surgeries by herself at a Delaware hospital because families were not allowed to visit. After two months away, she lay in a body cast from neck to hips for a year.

Thus, Dr. Mills, 12 years younger than her siblings, considers herself fortunate. Her scoliosis was diagnosed early. She wore a back brace beginning in 6th grade and continuing, at least at night, through college. “I wore teeth braces, too,” she recalled. “But I was lucky. I was the only one who got teeth braces. There were no orthodontists around when my siblings [were growing up]. I had advantages that the other kids didn’t have.” The ‘other kids’ include brothers Peter Mills III, David and Paul.

Dr. Mills grew up in a professional household. Her father, Peter Mills Jr., was an attorney, state representative, and served as U.S. Attorney for Maine in the 1950s. Her mother, Katherine Mills, was a high school English teacher who taught her children to communicate well, and expected them to pitch in on chores both indoors and out, regardless of gender. Dr. Mills recalled, laughing, “My mother very felt that everyone had to chip in. As

a girl, I was still expected to mow the lawn and shovel snow. We didn’t think much about [gender roles].”

However, “There were no women doctors when I was growing up, or at least I don’t remember any,” she said. “It never dawned on me that I could go into medicine.”

Yet, the youngest Mills excelled at math and science. “I went to Bowdoin, and started out taking government classes. But I dabbled in science and math classes including calculus, biology and physics.”

During the second semester of her sophomore year, Professor Moulton approached and asked, “Miss Mills, why aren’t you considering medical school?”

“I was taking one of his [biology] classes at the time,” recalled Mills. “He was the pre-med advisor. Everyone had to go through him to get recommended for medical school. I had never heard of him reaching out to a student. I think I was in a state of shock!”

Professor Moulton advised Mills, and “basically gave me the pathway for going to medical school,” she said.

### Better health for everyone, everywhere

During a summer break from medical school, when students are expected to do something medicine-related, Mills went to West Africa. “Then, toward the end of medical school, I wanted to go back, so I took a year off and went to Tanzania to a Mennonite mission hospital.”

During her internship and residency at a children’s hospital in Los Angeles, Dr. Mills spent a few months working and hiking in Nepal. She also got involved, through a local church, in providing healthcare at an orphanage in Tijuana, Mexico. “It was a two-and-a-half-hour drive. We would leave at 4 a.m. on Saturday and get back on Sunday night.”

During her time at UNE, Dr. Mills made service trips to Ghana, Africa. She is also involved with the Portland-based organization Partners for Rural Health in the Dominican Republic.

And Dr. Mills said she loves her job, which she describes as overseeing health efforts for the entire population in the MaineHealth service area, rather than patients only. “Our vision is better health for everyone living in our communities,” she said,

adding that she is excited to work with many community partners to identify health issues and solutions.

“I’m increasingly recognizing that mindfulness is very much a part of that,” she said. “When you look at the data and surveys, among youths and all ages, really, the stressors are so high, and that manifests itself in higher suicide rates, higher rates of depression, and higher alcohol and drug use. I am increasingly recognizing that we need to do a better job ensuring that we all have the tools to take care of our mindset as well as our bodies.”

Dr. Mills used to run as a mindfulness activity. “Now I walk, but briskly,” she said. “And I swim in the summer. Outdoor exercise has always been part of my mindfulness time: hiking, cross-country skiing and downhill, kayaking, just about anything outdoors.”

“I climbed Kilimanjaro twice, in 1986 and 1995,” she said. “The first time was during my year in Tanzania, and the second time, I had gone back to work for a month and climbed with a group. The first time was remarkable because we got to see Halley’s Comet. The day you summit, you get up at midnight and hike through the night. We didn’t expect to see the comet. We had no idea. But around 2 or 3 a.m., we saw this large ball of light with a long tail flash across the sky. We just stopped and were breathless! It was such a remarkable gift.”

Never one to sit still for long, Dr. Mills has struggled with the concept of finding a quiet spot and sitting for 20 minutes. Recently, she gained new inspiration and insight from actress and author Goldie Hawn, who wrote *10 Mindful Minutes*.

“I had the good fortune to meet her a few months ago,” said Dr. Mills. “One of her major goals right now is to teach mindfulness to children throughout communities. My conversation with her, and reading her book, really changed my views of things. I always thought meditation was a smart thing to do, but I had a hard time doing it. Goldie worked with a lot of researchers and has come up with some very easy strategies that don’t take 20 minutes of finding a quiet place.”

Now that she has a bit more free time, Dr. Mills is also achieving better physical health.

“I’m able to exercise more regularly and I always feel better when I do that, but when my kids were younger and I was working 50 hours per week, it felt impossible to take care of myself. I think that’s true of young mothers. Taking that time and effort is not easy. It’s actually very hard with our society and our busy lifestyle to eat healthy and exercise regularly. But, if I had it to do over again, I’d spend more time taking care of myself instead of everyone else.”

Dr. Mills credits the MaineHealth Diabetes Prevention Program for her recent 25-pound weight loss. Diabetes Prevention is for anyone predisposed to diabetes that does not yet have the disease. “I started the class last summer, and I am a walking advertisement for it! It’s a great group of people, a year-long program, and MaineHealth is offering it for free across our service area. People can just go to our website to find a class near them.”

That web address is <https://mainehealth.org/services/endocrinology-diabetes/diabetes-prevention-program>.



Dora in the Dominican Republic in 2017.



# Ditching Plastic, Once and For All



*How one Mainer turned a New Year's resolution into a planet-saving business*

BY SARAH HOLMAN // PHOTOS BY ELLE DARCY

On April 22, millions of people around the world will pitch in for our planet—planting trees, picking up trash, donating to conservation groups, talking about sustainability, and volunteering in many ways. Established in 1970, Earth Day was created to demonstrate support for environmental protection, giving people a special day to promote awareness and take action.

Fifty years later, it's not enough. Based on the current state of environmental affairs, it's time to make every day earth day.

A few years ago, Laura Marston, who lives in Cape Elizabeth with her husband, two kids, and a dog, was ready to reduce her family's impact on the earth. Marston, now 40, made a New Year's resolution to never again purchase a single-use plastic bottle. It was an ambitious goal. If the 80 percent resolution failure rate wasn't enough, the prevalence of convenient plastic packaging was certainly stacked against her.

According to the independent environmental organization Greenpeace, over eight billion tons of plastic have been produced since the 1950s. For reference, that's roughly the weight of a billion elephants. Only 9 percent has been recycled, 12

percent has been burned, and the remaining 79 percent has ended up in landfills, the ocean, and the environment. Looking specifically at plastic bottles—the target of Marston's resolution—1 million are bought around the world every minute, the *Guardian* found. By 2021, that number is set to increase by 20 percent.

At the time of her resolution, Marston was working as a software project manager. Many of her clients were startups, and she was dreaming of building her own business in the future. A high-efficiency light bulb went off in her brain. "It started out as kind of a joke," Marston says about the idea to turn her resolution into a business.

She began talking with friends and quickly realized she wasn't the only one searching for ways to eliminate single-use plastics. "I started researching what other plastic refusers were doing," she says. Marston found that refill stores were popping up all over the world. "[That's when] GoGo Refill started to take shape in my imagination."

Often referred to as "zero-waste" stores, businesses that shun all single-use packaging are creeping onto the retail scene.

This model goes far beyond "bring your own shopping bag" and aims to eliminate all prepackaging as well. Shoppers bring glass, cloth, or plastic containers and bags of all shapes and sizes to purchase food, cleaning supplies, and toiletry items from bulk bins. Food cooperatives have used this system for decades, but some still offer plastic for take home packaging. The goal with zero-waste stores is to leave with nothing but the products you purchased.

Marston envisioned a place like this in Maine, where consumers would bring their own refillable containers and load them up with non-toxic home and body products. As she dug into her business plan, Marston clarified and broadened her goals. "I wanted to be a resource for people at any point in their waste journey," she says. "And to build community around the efforts to reduce waste."

Once her mission was clear, Marston spent months tirelessly researching and making wholesale relationships. She looked at waste as the most important factor for any product she would carry, but she also considered price, environmental impact, carbon footprint for shipping, and more. While building her product assortment, Marston was also searching for a retail location. She found a bright, open space in South Portland's Knightville neighborhood, just across the Casco Bay Bridge from Portland. She and her husband took on the painting and retrofitting themselves, and GoGo Refill opened in July 2019.

The shop now carries about 75 refillable home and body products, with more added every week. Shoppers bring containers and weigh them pre- and post-fill. (GoGo has clean, repurposed containers if you need them.) Marston also sells reusable food and beverage containers and items like drinking straws, non-paper towels, plastic-free razors, zero-waste dental floss, refillable candles, and wool dryer balls. She sources products from Maine vendors whenever she can and counts on her customers to let her know what else they'd like to see offered at GoGo.

Most zero-waste stores are relatively small and locally owned, but that pattern is beginning to change. Loop is a new global shopping platform based on



the concept of a circular economy, which keeps resources in use and cycling through the system for as long as possible. Major grocery, household, and personal care brands are on board with Loop, as are the mega-retailers Kroger and Walgreens. Consumers order familiar products (think: Tide, Pantene, Seventh Generation, Tropicana) on Loop's website to be delivered in a Loop tote (no boxes or bubble wrap). Everything inside is packaged in durable, multi-use containers. A small deposit applies to "borrow" the packages and, depending how much you spend, you could pay a flat shipping rate.

When the products are used up, the containers go back in the Loop tote for free pickup, cleaning, and reuse. Loop calls their system a modern take on the milkman. Reusing, unlike recycling, eliminates the need for new energy and resources to turn one object into another. Currently Loop is only available in the Mid-Atlantic United States and Paris, but expansion continues across the US and internationally.

As consumers become more aware of the issue of plastic pollution—and the reality that we can't recycle our way out of the problem—local responses to places like GoGo Refill have been enthusiastic. Marston says people are coming into GoGo ready to learn and shift their habits. Asked about cost implications, Marston says most reusable products will save customers money in the long run, and the refills are generally compa-

able to a non-toxic brand you'd find at the grocery store. "When you start to shift habits towards low-waste, you'd be surprised at how much money you can save," she says.

GoGo Refill only has one location (for now), but plastic-free options do exist across the state. Litterless.com lists zero-waste food stores in Maine, and many local grocers and retailers are open to bring-your-own packaging. For example, my neighborhood butcher will weigh meat on paper and pack it in my glass container, and almost every coffee shop will fill your thermos instead of using a paper cup.

Admittedly, half the battle is remembering all your bring-your-own containers before you go out, but Marston calls the BYO commitment "one of the most important habits of a good zero-waster." Also, speak up. Ask for non-plastic options whenever you can.

Marston has made reuse and refill her life's work, but what about that ambitious New Year's resolution to forgo single-use plastic forever? She's well on her way. Marston hasn't purchased one single-use plastic bottle since her commitment to go plastic-free, and she's making it easier for the rest of us to succeed with her.

April 22 is still a great day to plant a tree, collect trash, and donate money, but so are all the other days in April, and in the year ahead. Making permanent changes that support the health of our planet—and our population—can no longer be a once-a-year event. •

## QUESTIONABLE ADVICE

BY L.C. VAN SAVAGE

***I love going to the movies, and my new boyfriend does, too. But the problem is, he's a talker. He'll ask me questions all the time, and it ruins the show for me. Is he just trying to connect with me, or is this an actual problem?***

When's the last time he visited a competent ophthalmologist? Is he totally dense or has he just not noticed the big bright screen at the front of the theater? Well, maybe he only has eyes for you. You could always ignore his gabbage and let the audience be the heavy, having them tell him to shut the blank up. Or you could get a nice big burly usher to come to your seat armed with a club-like flashlight (if they still have ushers these days) and have your new boyfriend removed forcibly from the theater. But lastly, and this one has my vote, he's figured out a clever way to thoroughly tick you off with his perpetual babbling, thinking you won't make a scene in a public place. Disabuse him of that plan at once by showing him how very, very wrong he is.

***Every day, I take my keys, purse, and phone to work. And every day, the next morning, I find I'd misplaced my keys the night before. Each time I find them in a different place around the house or in coat pockets. I'm getting tired of looking for my keys for fifteen minutes every morning. Help!***

Have yourself medically examined immediately for a possible nightly alien abduction. But first—and this is really important—somehow make certain the doctor isn't one of them.

***I have a bit of a confession: I (accidentally, I swear!) ate a coworker's homemade sesame noodle salad from the fridge for lunch. When I found out whose it was, I apologized and offered to buy her lunch to make up for it, and she just laughed and said it was fine. Still, I feel awkward about it. How can I make it up to her?***

Personally I'd start by knocking off the "accidentally" malarkey when you filched your co-worker's sesame noodle salad. I mean come on, who would steal that by accident or even on purpose? (Well, apparently you would.) It's not exactly a typical brown bag lunch, after all. You could maybe sling the "accidentally" bunkum if you'd scarfed down her PBJ, but sesame noodle salad? Nice try. And, "make it up to her?" You're kidding, right? You got busted, you know it, she knows it. Shame on you. She gave you a mercy laugh and said it was "fine" because she's now officially afraid of you. I know I'd be.

***I do drawings and illustrations on commission, as a freelancer. My friends have found out, and now several of them are trying to get some of my work, at a "friend discount." I need to earn money! How can I let them know that they're going to have to pay full price?***

Ummmmm... by saying so?



**Shilo Doherty**  
Parts Manager  
Lee Nissan of Topsham

## From fridges to fan belts

Shilo Doherty began her career in the Sears appliance department. But it wasn't a good fit and the Automotive Service manager invited her to come to his department. She says, "I didn't know the difference between a headlight and a bumper." She started learning, though, and has been in automotive parts for 20 years.

About being Parts Manager, Shilo states, "I like helping customers and they know I'll always find what they want."

## Lee Auto Malls

Providing leadership opportunities for all motivated individuals



**LEE is for Me.**

HACIENDA LA ARBOLEDA  
JARDIN, ANTIOQUIA, COLOMBIA



**COFFEE BY DESIGN**

# COMMON GROUND

At Coffee By Design, we nurture relationships as carefully as our farm partners cultivate the land. The owners of Hacienda La Arboleda share our goals for environmental and social sustainability – and crafting the best coffee!



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