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becomes a *reality*



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Photo by Heidi Kirn

Welcome to our Giving issue, which I hope will hold a few surprises for you. As a society we've been trained to regard this month as shopping season, whether you celebrate Hanukkah or Christmas or Kwanzaa. Our cover certainly reflects that, with a pile of gift possibilities, most of them made in Maine, covering a beautiful woman in a gorgeous retail space, Home Remedies on Commercial Street in Portland. But as we conceived of this Giving issue, I knew I wanted it to cover wide territory while also looking at the other ways Maine women give back.

To that end, on these pages you'll find a very personal piece by Genevieve Morgan about organ donation and from Amy Paradysz, a look at how and why hospice workers do their jobs. Then there's Sarah Holman's story about a Gouldsboro woman who wants the local library to be accessible to the public for more hours a week and is taking a very ingenious—but physically daunting!—approach to helping her community fund that. Editing this issue made me want to give more of my time and

energy as these admirable women do.

Speaking of time and energy, I have a lot of people to thank for their contributions to this issue, starting with Miss Maine, Carolyn Brady. Not only did Carolyn, who graduated from Bowdoin earlier this year, graciously agree to model assorted gifts, she showed up with props and then gamely went along with various uncomfortable poses we asked her to get into (like being draped with purses while she was wearing South Street Linen, Jill McGowan, L.L.Bean and a handknit hat from Bespolk). Home Remedies owner Rachel Ambrose and her team let us take over a corner of their showroom for most of a busy Friday afternoon.

Particular thanks to Bridget Lenahan at the exquisite boutique A Case of You on Portland's Exchange Street, who let me walk out the door with multiple borrowed pairs of No. 6 clogs, the most expensive, and insanely comfortable, clogs on the marketplace. Lynn Krauss at South Street Linen and her team loaned us more than a dozen beautiful pieces of apparel (and packed a slip and tights in case Carolyn didn't have them with her). Thanks to Jennifer Muller at Jill McGowan, Emily Smith at Rough & Tumble, Erin Flett, Eden Millecchia at Flowers & Candy and Emma Thiele at Maven Leather.

Happy holidays to all our readers. Here's hoping for the gift of time and peace and love to all of you. And a few goodies. As someone who obsessively reread *Little Women*, and can still quote its opening lines—"Christmas won't be Christmas without any presents"—I confess that I've already ordered myself an early gift of Dovetail overalls (see page 30), which truly are game changers, and I'm hoping that duck sweater from L.L.Bean turns up under my Christmas tree (size medium plz).

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ON THE COVER

Miss Maine, Carolyn Brady, decked with and surrounded by items from our Gift Guide.

Photo by Heidi Kirn



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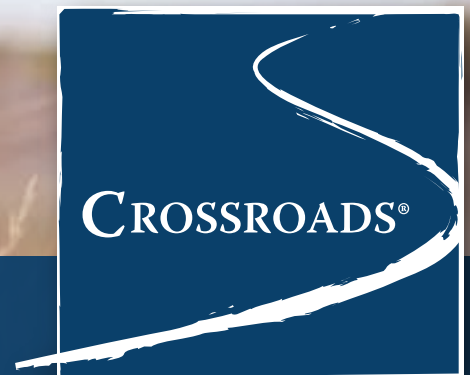
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Women in Science talk >>>>

Dec. 12, 6:30–7:30 p.m.

Community Room, South Portland Library,
482 Broadway, South Portland

Early in her career, Samantha Horn, the new director of science for the Maine chapter of The Nature Conservancy, spent some time chasing owls. She was a preserve caretaker at the McCloud River Preserve at Mt. Shasta in California. It was 1992 and the debate over protecting the spotted owl was at a fever pitch, with loggers at war with environmentalists.

It was Horn's job to track the spotted owls, staying up all night to observe their movements and count them, but she was warned by others not to advertise that. Don't use your real name on the walkie talkie, use a code for your location and whatever you do, don't look at the guys coming out of the woods on dirt bikes, who are most likely pot farmers who don't want to be identified. "I realized how extreme the conflict was that there were these folks that felt very strongly that having protection for spotted owls was going to affect their livelihood," Horn remembers. "I thought, this is nuts."

The human conflict was the driving force of a conservation effort, Horn realized. When she arrived at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst to get a master's degree in wildlife and fisheries conservation, it was that topic Horn wanted to study: human dimensions. Namely how human beings make decisions around natural resources and how to make those decisions more durable.

Her work included studying a Georgia paper company's environmental partnerships and giving the company feedback about what was working and what wasn't. She came to Maine in 1999 to work with the state's Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. "I ran the moose hunt lottery," she says. Then it was on to the Department of Marine Resources



Samantha Horn. Photo courtesy of The Nature Conservancy

to work as its aquaculture policy coordinator. Horn was most recently the acting executive director of Maine's Land Use Planning Commission. She worked for that body and its predecessor, the Land Use Regulation Commission, for almost 11 years, before joining TNC.

This month she's part of a panel of women from the conservation group discussing women in the sciences at the South Portland Library. Has it gotten easier to break in? "It certainly has changed," Horn says. "It used to be that it was a real struggle. We as women now are much more able to participate fully in the profession."

In her new role, Horn is looking forward to once again getting out in the field—without having to speak in code—at The Nature Conservancy's many Maine preserves. She'll also focus on climate change mitigation. "I see some opportunities, especially as the Governor's Climate Council is ramping up, they're going to need some support."



Little Women. Photo courtesy of Sony Pictures

>>>> Networking and Mentorships

Dec. 4, 2 p.m.

Elks, 1945 Congress St., Portland

Million Women Mentors is a national group that aims to advance women and girls in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math-

ematics) through mentorships. It's Maine chapter started up two years ago, led by Catherine Lamson, the chief accounting officer for the Maine Employers' Mutual Insurance Company. Learn more at this networking event.

>>>> Screening and tasting

Dec. 4, 4:30–7 p.m.

MECA's Osher Hall, 522 Congress St., Portland

Gather for videos of immigrant women making treasured recipes, followed by a tasting. \$10 benefits In Her Presence, the nonprofit that advocates for women from minority communities in Maine.

>>>> Jill Lepore

Dec. 5, 7:30–9 p.m.

Kresge Auditorium, Bowdoin's Visual Arts Center, Brunswick

The famed historian, *New Yorker* writer and Harvard professor will be at Bowdoin College talking about her one-volume history, *These Truths: A History of the United States*. The 932-page book has been called "sweeping" but also "readable." (Free and open to the public)

>>>> Film

Dec. 25

It's not just Christmas, it's *Little Women* day. Director Greta Gerwig is the 8th director to take on the Louisa May Alcott classic about the March girls, Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy and the movie opens wide today. Our hunch is that this might be the most modern and feminist version yet. Round up the women, little or otherwise, in your life and hit the theater. (Boys welcome too.)

CRAFT & MAKER FAIRS APLENTY

And in this state, you never know when you might pick up a work of art or a craft from a future artworld superstar. Here are a few highlights:

MECA Holiday Sale

Dec. 6, 5:30-9 p.m.

Dec. 7, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

MECA, 522 Congress St., Portland

This two-day event features work of faculty, graduates and students, and your purchases support MECA's education, outreach and student programs. (Free; meca.edu)

Art on the Hill

Dec. 6-8, varying times

East End Community School, 195 North St., Portland

This annual sale presented by the Society of East End Artists features a wide range of artists and makers. It starts Friday, 6-9 p.m., and is open all day Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Free; seaportland.org)

Confetti Bazaar

Dec. 8, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Pepperell Mill, 40 Main St., Biddeford.

Art, crafts and vintage items fill the upstairs event space at the Pepperell Mill for this relatively new annual event (heading into its third year). Food vendors as well. (Free; facebook.com/CONFETTI.craftshow)

Makers Market at The Point

Dec. 1, 15 & 22, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Brick South, Thompson's Point, Portland

This events featuring artists, makers, some food and cocktails, runs three Sundays in December, the 1st, 15th and for the procrastinators amongst us, the 22nd. (Free; thompsonpointmaine.com)



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MAKE MINE MERRY

*How to make holiday
entertaining simple*

WRITTEN & PHOTOGRAPHED BY CANDACE KARU

Sometimes I wish December had an extra week or two to fit in the frenetic activities of the holiday season. Celebrating with family, friends and colleagues takes time, energy, and imagination—all of which can be in short supply during “the most wonderful time of the year.”

Food is a big part of the celebrations in my house and that means both Christmas and Hanukkah, with a little Festivus for the rest of us, complete with the airing of grievances and a nice bottle of bubbly.

Holiday food doesn't have to mean fancy food. In fact, I'm of the opinion that holiday entertaining should be as simple and stress-free as possible, with a little whimsical fun thrown in to get everyone in the holiday spirit.

Here are two of my family's favorite holiday hors d'oeuvres. They're both fun, festive and simple to prepare. The wow factor is in the presentation.



SPINACH-STUFFED MUSHROOMS: HOLIDAY STYLE

These savory bites of cheesy goodness are just right for dressing up the holidays. Serve them in the shape of a holiday tree or a wreath or prettily arranged on your favorite serving platter. I often double the recipe; they disappear before your eyes! *Pro tip: If you have a little extra cheese filling, it is delicious spread on bread, then popped under the broiler until golden and bubbly.*

INGREDIENTS

20–30 small and medium sized white button or baby Portabello mushrooms

1 tablespoon olive oil

2 cloves garlic, minced

6 cups fresh baby spinach, rough chop (or 10 oz. frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained)

8 ounces cream cheese or Neufchâtel (Though they are quite similar in taste, and usually sit right next to each other in the supermarket, Neufchâtel has less milk fat and a lighter taste that goes well with stuffed mushrooms.)

1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper

1/4 cup Panko Italian seasoned breadcrumbs

1/4 cup Pecorino Romano cheese, grated

Salt and pepper to taste

Fresh thyme, pimento stuffed olives and tiny red Biquinho peppers for garnish

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Clean mushrooms thoroughly with a soft cloth. If rinsing, be sure to let mushrooms dry completely before stuffing.

Separate stems from mushroom caps, chop and set aside. Place caps on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper and mince the stems.



In a sauté pan over medium heat add olive oil and cook stems for 2–3 minutes until softened and moisture is released and evaporating. Add garlic and cook for another minute. Do not let garlic brown.

Add chopped spinach and cook until it is wilted, but still bright green.

Add cream cheese, cayenne pepper, salt and pepper and stir until all ingredients are combined.

With a small spoon, put a dollop of the mixture in each mushroom cap, being careful not

to overfill.

In a small bowl combine breadcrumbs and grated cheese and sprinkle over the filled mushroom caps.

Bake for 15–18 minutes, until golden brown.

Serve on a platter, arranging the mushrooms in the shape of a Christmas tree, larger mushrooms on the bottom smaller on top. Garnish with thyme and peppers.

You should have more mushrooms than you need to create the tree. Use extras to fill in as the tree gets gobbled up!



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AT THE TABLE



PIGS-IN-A-BLANKET HOLIDAY WREATH

I have been making variations of this simple, old-school snack since long before my children were born. These little piggies were one of the first things I remember making with my kids. They are on heavy rotation for parties, game days, sleepovers and yes...Christmas. My son's idea of turning them into a wreath made it even more fun. In our house they were always accompanied by "Magic Sauce," a combination of ketchup, mustard, sweet pickle relish and, when the kids got older, a healthy spoonful of Sriracha. They're not fancy, but they are a hit...every single time, and perfect when party guests include small revelers. *(Related: It has been said that Santa is a big fan of Pigs-In-a-Blanket.)*

INGREDIENTS

Piggies

- 1 tube of crescent rolls
- 1 14-ounce package of mini hot dogs or smoked sausage dogs
- Parsley for garnish

Magic Sauce

- 1/2 cup ketchup
- 1/4 cup mustard (*yellow or Dijon*)
- 1/4 cup sweet pickle relish
- 1 tablespoon Sriracha (*optional*)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
- Unroll crescent dough and separate pre-cut triangles. Cut each triangle into three strips.

Roll a mini-dog with a dough strip, starting with the wide end, working to the small end.

On a parchment lined baking sheet, arrange wrapped pigs into a wreath shape, making sure that the dough on each is touching its neighbor. They will expand as they bake and hold together.

Bake for about 12–15 minutes until golden brown.

While pigs are cooking, mix the ingredients for Magic Sauce together. It will keep in the refrigerator for a week to 10 days and is also fabulous on hot dogs and hamburgers.

Carefully slide wreath onto serving platter and place Magic Sauce in a bowl in the center of the wreath. Garnish with parsley.

SIX TIPS FOR STRESS-FREE ENTERTAINING

LIMIT THE LIBATIONS. You don't need a full bar for holiday entertaining. Sparkling water, wine—one red, one white—beer, and maybe a make-ahead signature cocktail—Mistletoe Mules or Cranberry Mimosas come to mind—will give your guests more than enough choices to make merry.

BE YOUR OWN DJ. Make a party playlist of your favorite holiday tunes on your phone and you're party ready. Or better yet, outsource this job to a musical guest.

MAKE SCENTS. Scented candles can set a festive mood as your guests enter your house. They'll make the best impact at your entry. Remember to keep scented candles off your dining or buffet tables, so their scent doesn't compete with the food.

RELAX & ENJOY. People come for the company. A relaxed host sets the tone for a party nonpareil.

K.I.S.S. Keep it simple, sister! A bountiful charcuterie board with a selection of meats, cheeses, nuts, fruits and crackers is simple to prepare and has something for everyone. You don't need to spend hours in the kitchen to throw a fabulous party.

PLAN AHEAD. Make lists and keep to a schedule that includes shopping, a little house cleaning and party prep. Leaving all the details until the last minute is guaranteed to make you miserable.

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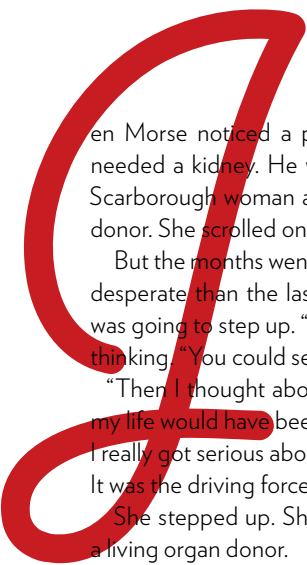
What gift is bigger than giving an organ to someone who needs one?

BY GENEVIEVE MORGAN

Life



Jen Morse just after donating a kidney to a friend's brother. *Photo courtesy of Jen Morse*



en Morse noticed a post on social media. A friend's brother needed a kidney. He was the father of three. The 28-year-old Scarborough woman assumed someone would sign on to be a donor. She scrolled on, the way one does.

But the months went by and more posts appeared, each more desperate than the last, Morse realized it was possible no one was going to step up. "This man is going to die," she remembers thinking. "You could see him getting sicker in the photos."

"Then I thought about my dad," she says. "And how different my life would have been if he hadn't been there, and that's when I really got serious about it. I wanted those kids to have their dad. It was the driving force behind my decision."

She stepped up. She exercised her superpower and became a living organ donor.

There's a scene in the first *Iron Man* movie where Pepper Potts gives Tony Stark the first ARC Reactor he ever made framed in a glass box. While not exactly a heart replacement, the machine acts like an extra-powerful magnet that keeps shards of metal from piercing his heart and killing him. Any one of the 113,000 people in the U.S. currently on the waiting list for an organ transplant might be able to relate. They too have metaphorical shards of death making their way to a vital organ and they, too, need a replacement before it's too late.

But technology has not yet caught up to our cyborg dreams and time runs out for 20 of those people each day. And every 10 minutes, a new name is added to the list. The majority are waiting for a kidney (about 9 out of 10) and, currently, 1,500 of them are children.

Organs fail for many reasons. Kidneys fail most often due to the scourge of diabetes and hypertension in our modern society. Livers get infected with hepatitis. Lungs fail from cystic fibrosis and breathing in toxins. Hearts give out. Disease, infection and injury do not discriminate and many of the people waiting for organs are young and otherwise fit and healthy. Some are babies. Many have just inherited a brutal genetic hand. All share a similar peril, a medical spiral toward the grave. For these people, each day is shadowed by personal darkness, but also a sense of Christmas Eve-like anticipation, because at any moment someone might volunteer to get tested to be a donor, or, even better, they might get "the call" that tells them a compatible organ has been found. When you are on the list, you are told to keep your phone on, charged and near your person at all times. Transplants never sleep, and often people wait for several years on the list.

Most of us have at least a passing acquaintance with organ transplants, even if it is just ticking a box at the Department of Motor Vehicles to register as an organ donor, or recalling when Dick Cheney got his new heart. Now and then we might read someone's heartfelt plea on social media and think as Jen Morse did—could I? Some of us have excruciatingly intimate knowledge because we or one of our loved ones are on the list or have been transplanted. Few, however, actually become a living donor. Approximately 6,000 of 33,000 transplants performed so far in 2019 were from living donors. About 95% of Americans support organ donation but only 58 percent have signed up to donate after death.

There are many reasons for this shortage in living donors—all as personal as the reasons of those who do step up—but Morse expressed the most likely prevailing one. "I just thought someone else would do it," she says.

As of this writing, almost 95,000 people in the U.S. are waiting for a kidney. In Maine, there are 125 people on the waiting list for a kidney. The Maine Transplant Program in Portland helps save about 50 of these people each year. Out of that number this past year, more than half came from living donors who "directed" their donations, while eight volunteered to give one of their kidneys to a stranger. This is an astounding percentage of "non-directed donations" relative to the rest of the country.

"There is just a different attitude of giving in Maine," says Dr. Ana Rossi, Associate Director of Transplantation at Maine Medical Center. "It's just the way people are here. There's more of a willingness to help others, so we are able to have a strong living donor program." Rossi says connecting with those in the program is one of the benefits of her work. "The transplant experience is extremely personal and I get to form these lifelong relationships with the patients, the donors, and all their families. It is very fulfilling. When I meet with these living donors, they are truly inspirational. I think they are just wired differently than a majority of people. Often they have had a pattern of giving in their lives—donating blood, volunteering, the Peace Corps—and they don't think of themselves as much as they think of others and their duty."

This is certainly true of Jen Morse, who casually mentions that she is the type of person who stops her car to help small animals at the side of the road. "I think I'm a nice person, and I had a feeling that if I signed up to be tested to give my kidney, it would happen—my friend's brother and I would be a match—because that's the way it is with me; so I spent a lot of time considering my choice before I called the transplant clinic and agreed to get tested. Throughout the process, which took seven months, I only had one moment of doubt, right before I went under. But the moment I woke up, I felt like a rock star. I ate a spaghetti dinner. I felt worse the next day, but I was home in four days and only missed two weeks of work, and now, six months later, it's almost like it never happened. I have a couple tiny scars, but otherwise, nothing is different."

When asked if she is worried about her own future health, she answers "No. I'm not a hypothetical person, and if anything were to happen to my own kidney, I would shoot to the top of the list to receive a new one. I mean, I might fall and hit my head on a rock, too." She stops herself and then adds, "I'm actually more confident of my health now. They checked everything and I'm still being monitored. Most people don't understand how hard it is to actually qualify to donate. It makes me wonder why more people don't sign up to at least get tested. They can opt out at anytime and if any medical concern or resistance comes up, it's a hard stop."

The minimum requirements to become a living donor are that you be 18 years old and in good overall physical and mental health. But that's a bit of an understatement. As Paul Conway, the head of the American Association of Kidney Patients and

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a kidney transplant recipient has noted, "If you get cleared to be a living donor, you are a superhero in more ways than one." That's because potential donors have to pass a succession of tests that drill down on every aspect of their physical and mental health—all paid for by the recipient's insurance or the National Living Donor Assistance Center. If the donor and recipient know one another and are a match, surgery can be scheduled at their convenience. If the donor is a non-directed donor or entering into an exchange, their data is stored, along with all the data from deceased donors, in a national database (called the United Network for Organ Sharing, or UNOS) that is continuously updated and filtered like some enormous game of digital Bingo. Once a compatible donor and recipient are found, the call is made and surgery gets the green light.

And what a difference that surgery can make. If you have ever watered a wilting plant and watched it revive, you have some idea. Like the Vermont woman whose husband received a transplant six months ago from a deceased donor in Maine. (She asked not to be identified by name; privacy is a concern for many, primarily because of fears around losing health care.) He had been on dialysis for seven years and was depressed to the point of wanting to give up. "He'd look at me and say, 'I just can't do this. I can't do it one more day, just let me go to hospice.' I kept telling him it would happen for him. But after you watch six or seven of your friends die on dialysis, you start to lose faith. I swear if we hadn't gotten that call when we did, he would have died that month." Now, six months later, her husband is playing with their grandkids and "doing absolutely fantastic. I mean, there are stumbles, but overall he's great. His donor made the fight worth it."

A few years ago, Johns Hopkins started an online trial with an app, which potential organ recipients can use to upload their information and personal stories to social media so potential donors can read about them. About 30 Mainers have participated so far. Johns Hopkins found in early trials that patients who used the app were six times more likely

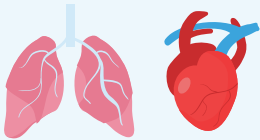
"There is just a different attitude of giving in Maine. It's just the way people are here. There's more of a willingness to help others, so we are able to have a strong living donor program."



to have a potential donor come forward. (To learn more about donating, visit mmc.donorscreen.org.)

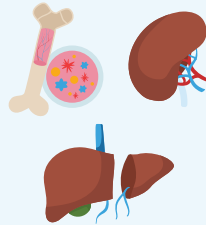
Despite the ability to set your karma up for eternity there remains the truth that most people feel freaked out by the idea of organ donation—even after they are dead. The medical data is sound around both kinds of donations and the long-term gains of living donation are felt by both parties—as any quick search of personal stories at #livingdonor

DONOR INFO



Living donors can give a kidney, parts of their liver, lung or intestine, bone marrow and blood.

A deceased donor has the potential to give a heart, kidneys, liver, lungs, pancreas, corneas, intestinal wall, skin, veins and many other tissues.



- **TO REGISTER** as an organ donor in Maine, visit your local DMV or online through organdonor.gov.
- **TO VOLUNTEER** to be tested to be a potential living donor, contact the Maine Transplant Program at 207-662-7180, or register on-line. The testing process begins with an online questionnaire. Donations can be directed to a certain individual, non-directed or used in a paired exchange if you want a directed donation but are not a good match. In a paired exchange, your donation will be paired with an unrelated matching recipient in exchange for an unrelated donation that matches your directive. To learn more about being a living donor from people who already are one, or read the personal stories of potential recipients with whom you might be a match, visit organdonor.gov.

on Instagram will attest—yet the queasy factor remains. Feelings about bodily integrity are foundational and deeply personal and not every living donor has a positive experience. They fear they will suffer or be disadvantaged, in this life or the afterlife, or not feel whole or healthy anymore. These feelings are reasonable and should be examined in light of the reality that another 20 people will die today and another 20 tomorrow. In the time it took to read this, one more name has gone on the waiting list. One day it might be yours, or your sibling, or your child. How will you feel then? What will you do?

I had to learn the hard way.

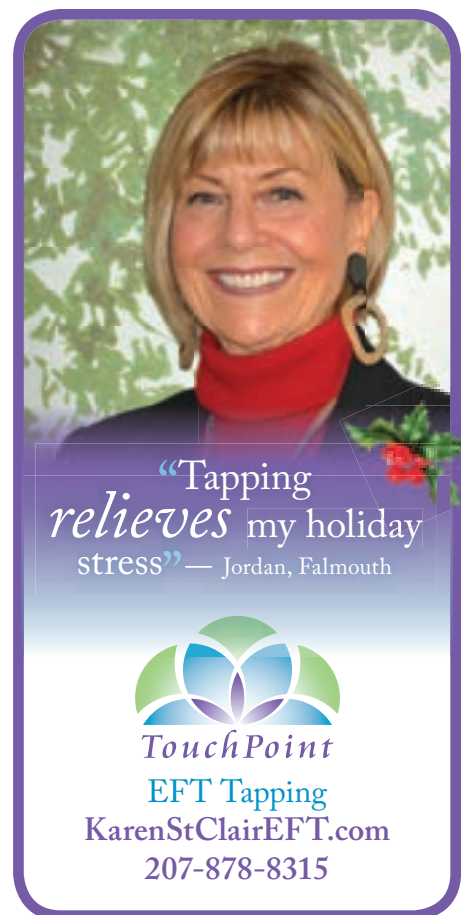
Ten years ago, I found out I had a genetic disease that was slowly killing my kidneys. I now carry the kidney of a 19-year-old who died a few days after Thanksgiving last year. I don't know anything else concrete about my donor, except that the first few months after surgery were filled with despair and an impossible guilt about him or her. I felt like a vam-

pire, fueling my life with theirs, and I wanted to trade back. All around me people were saying "congratulations" and it made me cringe. A kid—somebody's baby—was dead. It felt intolerable to me, grateful as I was. But, then, one day, a voice whispered through my body. It said, "C'mon, enough suffering. Let's do this." I knew who it was, and what they meant, so I took my donor hiking in Joshua Tree; and every day since then, I do things and say yes to things because I know my donor will like them. I am their portal to the earthly world, and they are mine to something far more vast and intangible: a future. Until you have wrestled heaven at the edge of your own mortality, you cannot know how profound a gift the future is. And to think, we, mere mortals, walk around every day with the power to give it to someone else.


Genevieve Morgan is an editor and the author of the *Three Stones Trilogy* (Islandport Press). She lives in Portland.




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The Last Gift

Hospice caregivers and how a ministry of presence can give us a peaceful, loving end.

BY AMY PARADYSZ

Eighty percent of Americans would prefer to die at home, but only 20 percent do. Those that achieve that good—or better—death often have the help of hospice. Registered nurse Julie Gilbert has invested the past six years in helping Mainers through their last days, lived at home, with dignity and surrounded by love. Death, she says, is a hard word.

But it is also just part of life, and a part of it she finds fascinating.

At 48, Gilbert has been working in home healthcare nurse for 25 years, including her time as a case manager with the Scarborough-based Hospice of Southern Maine. She sees about 13–16 patients a week in their homes. She goes from one family's stressful, heart-breaking situation to another, covering about 50 miles a day from Biddeford to Limerick.

"It's a calling," she says. "There are different psychosocial, spiritual and physical dynamics that come up at end of life. It's one of the real-est parts of life, when people face death."

"If my patient isn't actively dying right in front of me, I'm focusing on the life they still have left," Gilbert says. "I'm looking at what I can do to make them feel better, to visit with their family. It's about living for the day, getting their symptoms under control so they can

snuggle with their wife or they can make it to the end of the World Series. It's about having the best day with the day in front of them."

Last year, Hospice of Southern Maine cared for about 1,700 patients in Cumberland and York Counties, all certified by a physician as having a condition likely to end their lives within the next six months.

Mary Parsons, a volunteer at Gosnell Memorial Hospice House in Scarborough, says, "The biggest question is, 'How long will this take?' And the answer is, 'As long as it takes.'"

Each patient—whether they are at home, in a long-term care facility or at Gosnell—has a team that includes a nurse, a personal aide, a social worker, a chaplain and volunteers.

"They're dying and they have unfinished business," Gilbert says. "There's a lot of suffering that isn't physical. So we have a whole team to help the patient and the family deal with those issues. When you're faced with death, all the nonsense of life is stripped."

Interfaith Chaplain Lindsay Roan describes her work as a "ministry of presence." Simply put, she's there to listen and help. "If someone wants to talk with me for two hours, I can do that," said Roan. "It's about what moves their soul and what keeps their soul stuck. I



Julie Gilbert looks at her work as a hospice nurse as a calling. "It's one of the real-est parts of life, when people face death." Photo by Heidi Kim

once talked with a woman who had an abortion 60 years earlier, and she was convinced that she was going to burn in hell because of that.”

As she does with all her patients, Roan asked the woman about her concept of spirituality. She says most of her patients see God as love or as a father figure or mother figure. She asks them, “If that’s who is running this place you’re going to, then surely that person must offer forgiveness? Did you expect your children to do the right thing all the time, or did you forgive them?”

“The day that patient died, her family and I gathered around her, and she hadn’t spoken in two days,” says Roan. “She opened her eyes, held up her hand and said, ‘It’s beautiful.’ She put down her hand and took her final breath.”

“The end of life is very intimate,” says Parsons, who supplemented her Hospice of Southern Maine volunteer training with an End of Life Doula certification. That role, more casually referred to as a “death doula,” is the opposite of a birth doula—being there for patients and their families at the end of a life rather than the beginning of one. “I see what their needs are—they may need emotional or spiritual support—and I talk with them about the process and about what death is.”

Every journey, physical and spiritual, is different, Gilbert says. “While some patients have just days on hospice, for others there’s a slow dwindle.”

Some patients, like 95-year-old Maxine “Mimi” Schultz of Biddeford, are recertified to receive hospice care beyond the six-month mark. She was on hospice for more than a year, her condition stabilized for about nine months and then she had a mini stroke and went back on hospice.

Schultz moved in with her youngest daughter, Pam Manoff, 11 years ago and has since dwindled from being able to drive herself to bridge games to being “bed bound” and having to be reminded to take another bite of food, or to urinate or to even open her eyes. She sleeps about 18 hours a day. In addition to dementia and a history of mini strokes, she has congestive heart failure and chronic urinary tract infections. The last time she tried to get out of bed by herself, more than two years ago, she ended up under her bedside table with a broken ankle.

“For people with dementia, there is a mind-body disconnect over time, and the patient needs their family to care for all their physical needs,” says Gilbert, who sees Schultz at least once a week. “They’re not actively dying, but their terminal illness is becoming more debilitating. This is common with people with dementia or congestive heart failure. Our focus goes toward quality of life rather than quantity. My favorite goals are keeping them home, safe and comfortable.”

A Stanford School of Medicine study shows that 80 percent of Americans would prefer to die at home, if possible. Despite this, only 20 percent do. Sixty percent of Americans die in acute care hospitals, 20 percent in nurs-

ing homes. Hospice of Southern Maine strives to support family caregivers in making this wish come true. Sometimes it isn’t possible because some condition has made in-home care impractical.

“I can see why—and I’m not putting anyone else down when I say this—I can see why people say, ‘I’m going to put mom or dad in a nursing home,’” says Manoff, Schultz’s daughter. “It’s a 24/7 job.”

Schultz is only able to stay at home—with her daughter, son-in-law, two grown grandchildren and a 2-year-old great-grandson—because her family is willing and able to provide around-the-clock care with the Hospice of Southern Maine team making house calls. Even though Schultz relies upon her hospice team members, Manoff tries to keep the “H-word” out of her mother’s room.

“I was brought up thinking hospice was the end of the world,” Manoff says. “When she hears the word, she asks, ‘Am I sick? Is there something wrong with me?’”

Parsons was a caregiver for each of her parents to the end of their life, and she repeats advice that her own physician gave her: “At some point,

the caregiver need to become the daughter again—as opposed to the caretaker—and let somebody else do the needful things. You need to have that role so that you can be emotionally there instead of thinking about whether they need a bath or need to be repositioned.”

Long-term caregivers sometimes become so accustomed to caregiving in the sense of keeping the person alive that they need help letting them go. They see the loss of interest in food and drink, for example, as a problem to be solved. But the goal of

“It’s about living for the day, getting their symptoms under control so they can snuggle with their wife or they can make it to the end of the World Series.”

hospice is neither to hasten nor delay death.

“Death is as natural as birth,” Gilbert says. “Our body knows what to do, which is not wanting to eat, to drink, to stay awake or visit with family anymore. They don’t have the energy to deal with it. The body is on its way.”

Toward the end, families gather for what Gilbert calls “the vigil.”

“A lot of our patients arrive unresponsive or are unresponsive rather quickly,” Roan says. “I sit with the families and ask them to tell me about the patient’s fears, and we walk through those things while the patient can still hear—because no one really knows when hearing stops. I think we probably stop processing language the same way but we’re still aware that you’re surrounded by people who love you and you’re surrounded by love.”

Being part of that wave of love is what makes hospice work so compelling for the whole team—from the chaplain to the registered nurse, from the volunteer to the daughter.

“Healing happens with families at times of death,” Gilbert says. “It nourishes me as well. It’s a very precious journey, and I’m part of it.”

Amy Paradysz is a freelance writer based in Scarborough.



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GIVING (AND GETTING) ON THE



APPALACHIAN TRAIL

*One woman hopes to realize
a personal dream and
professional goal on the trail*

BY SARAH HOLMAN

For over 40 years, Faith Lane has lived with an unfulfilled dream. As a child growing up in Wilton, Lane watched pack-laden hikers cross Route 2, heading southbound on the Appalachian Trail from Mount Katahdin. Lane wanted to be one of them. Her plan was to hike the AT as soon as she turned 18. “I’ve always regretted not following that dream,” she says.

She’s following it now and with an unusual twist. Just shy of 60, she’s preparing to hike, but with a fundraising goal, raising money for her community and her workplace, the library in Gouldsboro.

Lane and her husband Craig hiked wherever they lived, which included his years in the military, years that took them to 14 states and to Germany. When they relocated to Maine five years ago, they both faced health challenges, but fortunately, ones that could be controlled with lifestyle changes. Their doctors recommended walking five miles daily, preferably in the woods to further reduce stress. Around the same time, Lane was taking classes for a master’s degree in Information and Library Science with a focus on rural public libraries. In March 2015 she was hired as the director—and first paid employee—of the Dorcas Library in Gouldsboro. The library was ready to grow and had a strategic plan that included a new learning center, advanced technologies, expanded open hours and two paid staff members. One of Lane’s first orders of business was figuring out how to fund the expansion. She knew that would be difficult in the small town, even with an enthusiastically supportive community cheering her on.

Finding money for overhead costs proved challenging. "Donors and grantors often want their funds to be put to immediate and visible use," Lane says. The library raises its entire operating budget through individual and local business donations and town funding. It also withdraws around \$10,000 annually in interest from investments. But it wasn't enough.

The library board and staff had been brainstorming ways to grow the investment account (and the resulting withdrawable interest) for a year, but no ideas seemed promising. Then one day when the Lanes were in Baxter State Park, they passed a woman starting out on her southbound AT journey. Lane's dream of hiking the trail was suddenly renewed, and she drafted a proposal for the Dorcas Library board to consider: She would take an unpaid leave of absence starting January 1, 2020, to train for and hike the trail as a dynamic fundraising effort. "Most of the board was very positive, which surprised me," Lane says. Ultimately her proposal was approved.

The Lanes will pay their own way along the hike (between food and the occasional hotel or hostel, it's not cheap to hike the AT). That means any and all donations can go directly to the library's investment account. "My goal to raise operational funds is not intended to line my own pockets later," Lane explains. She plans to pay the staff librarian a living wage with benefits, hire a person to maintain and teach new technologies, and offer the community more open hours.

Preparing for the hike is no small undertaking. Since May, the Lanes have been steadily increasing their daily mileage. They're averaging three miles a day with at least one longer hike each week, and their goal is 10 miles per day by the end of January. They carry packs weighted with 12 pounds, about a third of what they will carry on the trail, and will continue to add weight as the weeks go on. During the winter months, they'll continue to walk on Schoodic Point trails using ice claws and snowshoes, scramble over obstacles, walk on treadmills and climb stairs. They'll hike and walk in rain, sleet and snow, try out different gear, and get used to sleeping on the ground and floor. The intense prep work is about readying them for the challenges of the trail, but has already paid off in health benefits. "I've lost 20 pounds and my blood pressure is in the normal range for the first time since I was 40 years old," Lane,



Left: Faith Lane on a practice hike near home. Right: The plus side of this philanthropy includes much improved health. *Photos courtesy of Craig Lane*

59, says.

Lane is also working hard to spread the word about her ambitious fundraiser. She posts training updates and trail commentaries on her personal blog (freshlibrarian.org) and on the Dorcas Library's website and social media pages. Donations are being handled by

als would get them there.

The Lanes plan to set out from Mount Katahdin in late May or early June 2020, ending at Springer Mountain in Georgia next December. While Lane is away, the Dorcas Library staff librarian, Yumi Young, will hold the reins. The organization is still primarily run by volunteers and a very active board, and they foresee no changes in programming or event offerings during the hike. The community has been curious and interested in the fundraiser. "I think this is a campaign that will build over time as people engage with our story," Lane says.

And all of this, she says, is about securing a better future for the Dorcas Library. "My focus before, during and after the trail will continue to be the future of the library and learning center, fundraising, grant-writing and library advocacy."

Fulfilling her lifelong dream will be the cherry on top.

Sarah Holman is a writer living in Portland. She is enthusiastic about cheese plates, thrift shop treasures and old houses in need of saving. Find her online at storiesandsidebars.com.

**UPSIDE OF PHILANTHROPY?
"I'VE LOST 20 POUNDS AND MY
BLOOD PRESSURE IS IN THE NORMAL RANGE FOR THE FIRST TIME
SINCE I WAS 40 YEARS OLD,"**

DonateKindly. The Lanes are already handing out informational cards referring people to the various donation methods and will do so along the trail. Lane plans to update her blog whenever they stop in a town. She hopes all this effort will pay off, ideally in a sum exceeding \$1 million. The AT is 2,200 miles long, and the library's goal is to secure as many donations as miles. Donations of \$454 from 2,200 individu-

THE *Sisterhood*

OF THE



MEET KATE DAY, THE
MAINER BEHIND
THE COOLEST NEW
WORKWEAR COMPANY
FOR WOMEN.

BY MARY POLS



Above: Dovetail Workwear co-founder Kate Day, who grew up in Maine and whose parents live in Portland. Far left: Day, to the far left, with her co-founders, Kyle Begley (center) and Sara DeLuca. Much like L.L.Bean in its early days, Dovetail uses real people, from carpenters to landscapers and electricians, to model its apparel, including this logger in the company's overalls. *Photos courtesy of Dovetail Workwear*

PRACTICAL PANTS

Kate Day would like us to imagine a world where everything was as optimized for women's bodies as they are for men's. Where women astronauts like Caribou native Jessica Meir wouldn't have to wait around for NASA to special order space-suits sized for women. Where the size of crash test dummies weren't based on the average man, but rather, the average human. "So many standards and specs have not really been built with us and our bodies in mind," Day says.

In the meantime, she has tackled the dilemma of workwear for women. In a big way. Day, who lives in Portland, Oregon but grew up in Hallowell and Falmouth, is one of three co-founders of Dovetail Workwear, a company turning out pants and overalls designed to fit well and move with a woman as she gardens, builds houses, cuts down trees and so on. The opposite of "pink it and shrink it."

"That's an apparel term," Day explains. "That's what they do in workwear. They take the men's and size it down, without thinking what a woman's body needs. And they make it purple or pink and say, 'Here, this is for you.'"

Dovetail products are made in a kind of stretchy denim and

other fabrics that feel soft and flex.

"There are so many women that deserve great workwear," Day says. "Women ship captains, women in natural resources. Obviously all the women at Chewonki."

That's one of the Maine places Day feels a close connection to; she went there as a young camper and later, while at Cornell, was on the camp's summer staff. "Chewonki kind of wove in and out of my life," Day says. So did working outside. She left Cornell with a planning degree, then she spent a year in Tuscany, Italy, working at Spannocchia, the estate owned by the Cinelli family, which evolved into the Portland-based nonprofit that offers educational programming around organic farming and Italian culture.

"It was very hands on," Day says. "Some days I was making pizza for 50 guests, some days I was rebuilding stone walls or making sausage from the wild boars."

She went on to graduate school in Arizona and when she moved back to Maine, landed her first job at Terrence J. DeWan & Associates, the Yarmouth-based landscape architecture and planning firm. Eventually she and her husband went abroad, to Indonesia. He was working for the State Department; Day worked on tsunami relief and then on in-





Above: Carpenter Britt Smyton modeling a utility pant named after her, the Britt. Far left: A detail of the Britt pants, in black denim. Left: The Freshly Overall gets a workout in sawdust. Photos courtesy of Dovetail Workwear

ternational planning projects. Flash forward a decade, with them both working in Portland, Oregon, him with Nike's foundation on the health and wellbeing of girls and Day consulting, raising two young children and exploring a new career in landscaping with a partner, Kyle Begley.

"I like having my hands in the dirt," Day says. "Kind of harkening back to my Maine roots."

The two women's business, Moxie and Moss Landscape Design, took off. "We should have a uniform," Day remembers telling Begley. "But Kyle is super petite," she adds. "And we were never happy with our options. We were always moaning and groaning about it."

One of their new clients, Sara DeLuca, had a design background, having worked for The Gap internationally. "She knows everything, from sourcing to factories," Day says. "She's very modest. She never talks about it." DeLuca told the landscapers she'd make them some work pants that would also be stylish. Good fabric. Slim, "so we could tuck it into our boots," Day says. "A high rise in the rear. Let's have great coverage and fit. That is how it started."

They went through about six iterations of patterns, and then

DeLuca used her connections in sourcing and production to get them three pairs of pants. Those pants were suddenly the pants that all the moms at drop-off wanted. They made a few more. And so on, until they realized they had the makings of a new kind of workwear company, albeit a fairly upscale one (*overalls are \$129*).

When she returns home to Maine—at least once a year—to visit her parents in Portland, she often finds her mother wearing one of their tops (Dovetail has gone beyond pants). She passes out discount codes to old friends at Chewonki. And the company has a smart public relations team reaching out to influencers and working women; all of their models on the website are customers, who work as farmers, electricians, builders and so on.

About 18 months ago, Day hung up her landscaping hat to focus full time on Dovetail. They sell online and in some stores (The Trading Post in Kittery was the first Maine retailer to pick up the line). What started, she says, as "one tiny little thing" to make things easier for a pair of women landscapers has turned into something much bigger. "It is a mission more than a business in a lot of ways," Day says.

Mary Pols is the editor of *Maine Women Magazine*.

THE

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GIFT GUIDE

BY KATHRYN SKELTON // PHOTOS BY HEIDI KIRN

MWM is in the holiday spirit. We've got Bean boots. Beauty. Bags. Check out the coolest local hats and more in our 2019 Gift Guide. Turn the page and come on in.

Miss Maine, Carolyn Brady, pictured at Home Remedies in Portland with a whole lot of goodies for the holidays, including locally made bags and boots.



As the holidays approach, Maine Women Magazine has curated a shopping list for you. We love local, so we sent Maine business reporter Kathryn Skelton into the wilds of Maine (and Etsy) to come up with everything from the edible to the wearable for our Made in Maine list. It's got some highly practical items, like tick armor (okay, gaiters anyway) and a garden tool made in state. But we're all about indulgences as well, like South Street Linen's new capsule collection, L.L.Bean's ever-evolving Bean boots and some must-have handbags, including one dyed with Maine wild blueberries. We're also including a guide to shopping for Millennials, written by Hannah Johnston, a recent college graduate who put all sorts of unexpected things on the list but was kind enough to leave off all OK Boomer merch.

Finally we gathered for a photo shoot at Home Remedies on Commercial Street in Portland. We dressed up the extremely obliging and kind Miss Maine, Carolyn Brady in everything from Jill McGowan to the cutest hats we've ever seen, including one knitted just for us by Liz Polkinghorn of Bespolk hats. A few non-Maine made items snuck in as well, like the heavy sweater to die for that Brady has over her shoulders in the accompanying photo and the super soft sheepskin rugs she's sitting on (*New Zealand wood, in single length for \$135 or double \$265, at Home Remedies*). Then there are the furry clogs. A Case of You on Exchange Street is the only place in Maine to buy ultra-trendy No. 6 clogs, which prove that yes, a clog can be elegant. Black boot, lined with shearling, are \$400 and the shearing-topped clogs \$305. Learn more about Brady in Maine Style (page 58).



FLETCHERS' MILL, NEW VINEYARD

USA-MADE SALT AND PEPPER MILLS, STARTING AT \$17.48

Go classic (*Federal-style*), bold (*Marsala*), cute (*3-inch*) or big (*17-inch!*), but whatever the choice, "everything except two screws is American-made," according to Michael Conway, director of sales and marketing.

"All of the wood is cut from within 250 miles of our mill," said Conway. "Once it comes into campus—we have a 22-acre campus here—it is cut to size, kiln dried, turned, painted and finished and assembled all on campus." Each salt and pepper mill has a locking nut with 33 different positions for 33 different flake sizes. Decisions, decisions.

"If you're doing salad and you want a nice big flake, you back that off and you grate it to a nice big flake," said Conway. "If you want to season meat, close it down nice and tight and you'll get a very small flake of pepper that comes out."

The mills made by the family-owned company frequently appear on TV cooking shows and have a rare, lifetime warranty: if the inside mechanism stops working, easily pop it out and they'll send you a new one. Pictured here, the matching salt and pepper Federal Pepper & Salt Mill, 6" in Cinnabar for \$44.95 each. (fletchersmill.com/fletchers-mill-made-in-usa)



ROUGH + TUMBLE, BRUNSWICK

1904 PACK, \$428 & FIVE POCKET BOHO, \$388

Rough + Tumble bags are made one at a time in Brunswick at the company's design studio in Fort Andross, a light-filled space, rich with the smell of good leather. We'd take literally any bag founder Natasha Durham and her crew make. They're that good (and getting noticed nationally; Garnet Hill started selling them in 2018).

Featured here are a small Five Pocket Boho Adjustable (*above right, \$388*) in double gilded mink with vintage brown straps and a large 1904 Pack in suede (*above left, \$428*). The Five Pocket Boho includes two deep side water bottle pockets. It can be adjusted to carry backpack, crossbody or on the shoulder. The 1904 Pack here is in a limited combination of caraway suede and double gilded mink details. Most Rough + Tumble bags are available in over a dozen or more color combinations. You will find plenty of choices at the company's flagship store (*127 Middle St., Portland*) but you can also shop online. "We are excited to offer customers the option to go online to design a custom Rough + Tumble bag as well," says Emily Smith, brand creative strategist. "Where the colors and design options are endless." (roughandtumble.com)



SOUTH STREET LINEN, PORTLAND

NEW WOOL-LINEN BLEND CAPSULE COLLECTION

We love how Lynn Krauss, co-owner and creative director of South Street Linen, is shaking up the formerly all-linen line with a new capsule collection that incorporates just enough wool to make it irresistible for winter.

Designer Ann Lindsay and Krauss collaborated on six new silhouettes in the new fabrics. They're a little more fitted and youthful but still ridiculously comfortable. We'd happily march off to a holiday party in anything in the collection, but pictured here on our model Carolyn Brady is the stand-up collar top (25 percent wool, 75 percent linen) in winter white for \$239. The pockets! (She did not want to take it off.) There's a button-down version (\$249) and a pair of wide leg pants in black (\$239) as well as a sweet little dress (\$329) with a subtle pattern. There are also dreamy scarves, including in the same winter white (\$149). Drop by the Portland retail shop to check out the whole collection and more. (5 South St., Portland; southstreetlinen.com)



Courtesy photo

MAVEN LEATHER, CHERRYFIELD

FRANCINE HIP BAG, \$125-\$180

Emma Thieme wanted a bag she could wear while riding her motorcycle, so she could easily access her wallet. But busy moms and anyone else who's ever wished they had more than two hands will also appreciate Thieme's hip bag, a sweet triangle-flap leather purse that clips to the wearer's belt loops.

"It's great for concerts, too," said Thieme. "I feel like I go to a lot of places where I don't really want to put my bag down somewhere or hide it."

Her mom taught her how to sew when Thieme was young, and in college, she started experimenting with leather after someone gifted her a bag of scraps. "I treat leather like it's fabric because I don't know any other way," she said. "It's just really become my medium."

She makes every bag, backpack and even motorcycle seats herself in her downtown Cherryfield studio. In the summer, people pop in to shop while she works.

"The leather is all tanned in Maine," said Thieme. "I also have a collection called The Barrens Collection, which I naturally dye myself using a totally natural leather and putting sustainable plant and insect dyes on top of that." You can order online or visit one of the local retailers who keep Maven leather in stock, like Flowers & Candy (10 Exchange St., Portland), which stocks Francine in multiple colors or Suger (271 Commercial St., Portland). The gorgeous purple backpack (\$485) shown here is part of the Barrens Collection and available at Flowers & Candy. (mavenleather.com)

We also fell for the sweet little clutches made by El Bolso, a Maine company that uses textile scraps and vintage fabrics to create one of a kind bags. These two are each about \$42. (207-939-9770; elbolsoportland.com)



MIRACLE GARDEN HOE, LISBON

SINGLE TINE GARDEN HOE, \$45

When Susan Rowland's father, Robert Perdrizet, turned 89, he was done with gardening on his hands and knees. The family designed a single-tine hoe, light, with a long handle, so he could plant seeds and thwart weeds standing up. At 99, Perdrizet is still out there using it.

After Perdrizet gave a few of his family-designed hoes away to friends, others started asking, could they get one too? It's hard to find garden tools made in the United States, let alone Maine. The Miracle Garden Hoe business was slowly born.

"Because it's so skinny, you can make a row with it, you can do what my dad calls 'precision gardening,' you can go around flowers and delicate seedlings without disturbing the roots," Rowland says. "You can also go nice and deep and go down and get a dandelion. You can turn it sideways and use it like a regular hoe and just scrape the weeds off the top."

Is that the sum of its uses? Oh, no. She's just getting started.

"If you're landscaping, you can go around pavers and bricks and rocks up close, because it's so fine," Rowland says. "Also, if it's hard-packed soil in August and you just want to seed and water things, you can just take that and go right around the plant, and then the water and food go right to the plant, they don't pour off."

Hoe handles are ash and made by Peavy Manufacturing in Eddington. Blacksmith Jeff Jelenfy in Union makes the heads.

In her Lisbon basement, Rowland assembles the hoes with a drill press, sands each one, peens it together, paints it and voila—garden like you're 9 or 99. (etsy.com/shop/miraclegardenhoe or discounted at Paul's Shoe Repair, 22 Cumberland St., Westbrook)

L.L.BEAN, FREEPORT

SIGNATURE WAXED CANVAS MAINE HUNTING SHOE, \$189

There's some great design going on right now at L.L.Bean, particularly around its iconic boots, still made in Maine. We shot our model in an unusually sleek pair of Signature Waxed Canvas Maine Hunting Shoe in the 16" height (*at right*, \$189) and Marsh Brown colorway. You'll spot a couple more versions on the cover, the Signature Wicked Good 10" boot (\$249), with shearling just oozing out of a natural brown suede-like sheepskin, and an 8" colorblock limited edition in Camp Green (\$139). Very holiday. But can you go wrong with Bean boots? We think not.

While we were drooling over the boots, we also grabbed a Signature Archive sweater (*below*, \$189) in a Beige Fair Isle-style print with ducks on it that we promptly christened The Big Lebowski sweater. It's a "coatigan," meaning you can wear it instead of a coat until mid-January. It was the hardest item to return. Santa? Please? (*llbean.com and naturally, in Freeport*)



BESPOLK, YARMOUTH

WORDY WINTER HATS, \$98

Liz Polkinghorn's handknit hats (\$98) are so popular that we had to borrow a couple that had already been sold for our shoot. She passed us off a Grinch hat in red and a Nice-ish one and then handed us one with a big MWM knitted into it. Swoon. Polkinghorn is a Maine native (her dad was Bangor Daily News legend Ralph "Bud" Leavitt) who lived in California for many years and returned home with a new distaste for winter. She greeted the cold in the barn where she used to ride horses (and muck out the stables) with an appropriate expletive. After she knitted that word into a hat warm enough to make the stables bearable, she started thinking about marketing them. You can find her designs at Jill McGowan in Portland or order them online in various word choices Polkinghorn has already chosen, or ask for a special order info@bespolk.com. The wool is Quince & Co.'s osprey and it is thick and warm. (*bespolk.com*)

JILL MCGOWAN, PORTLAND

THE ASTRID SHIRT, \$175

You may know the longtime Maine-born designer as the queen of the white shirt and that's apt. She's got a spectacular holiday one of those in an eyelet fabric with a wrap-around bow. But her \$175 Astrid shirt in red (with tiny white dots) seen on our cover model got us in the holiday spirit and went with everything, including the Dahlia pant (\$198) in black ponte rayon spandex (no wrinkles, packs small, the perfect pant). McGowan grew up in a big Maine family, worked at the Hathaway Shirt Company and uses her niece as a model for many of her designs. The clothes are designed and made in Maine, the fabrics sustainably sourced. *Shop at the new flagship store, 107 Exchange St., Portland or online at jillmcgowan.com.*

HEARTFELT COOKIES, FARMINGTON

TRADITIONAL, VEGAN, KETO, SUGAR-FREE OR GLUTEN-FREE COOKIES, STARTING AT \$18/DOZEN

AnnMarie Comeau started Heartfelt in 1999 as a way to fill up her time when her husband was away long-haul truck driving.

"Gluten-free was for me because I'm gluten sensitive. Other people said, 'I'm diabetic, you should make sugar-free,'" she said. "I like to experiment, because baking is a science. It's basically just substituting different ingredients, seeing what works and what doesn't work, and if it works, let's see what else I can do."

Her cookie varieties include chocolate chip, pumpkin, snickerdoodle, peanut butter, orange and chocolate, lemon, molasses, ginger, blueberry and apple, with most able to be customized. (*heartfeltcookies.com*)



ERIN FLETT, GORHAM
BAGS, STARTING AT \$28

Erin Flett, whose creations have appeared in more than 50 magazines, opened a retail showroom and manufacturing space this year in Gorham.

"I have been obsessing over a lot of new ideas and product lines as well as how to connect with more hotels, hospitality and interior designers," Flett wrote in a shop journal she started in October. "My real love is pillows and home and I want to nurture this a bit more even though BAGS have literally exploded in the shop." If you visit (it's so worth the trip) ask to pop upstairs and see the sewing machines at work.

Her bags come in 8+ sizes and styles. Pictured here see the pencil case (starts at \$29.50), makeup zipper bag (\$33) and a clutch (\$38) as well as but the heavy duty canvas folder bag with leather handles is perfectly sized for laptops and work. It comes in 10 colors, all made to order, including the whimsical rain pattern in gold on linen (at left, \$95), sized just right for a laptop. (2 Main St., Gorham; erinflett.com)



Courtesy photos



WOODEN ALCHEMY, THOMASTON
VOTIVES, TRIVETS AND COASTERS, STARTING AT \$20

Rob Jones' whimsical wooden creations have been a high-end gift shop staple for eight years—his work is found from the Owls Head Museum to the Smithsonian, according to his wife, Barbie Jones.

Last year the couple opened retail stores in Damariscotta and Rockland. "He says the stores feed his soul. He can continue to create and design and he can make one of something, he can make five of something and never make it again," Barbie Jones says.

Jones' designs are heavy on repeating patterns, spinning layer after layer of delicate wood slices into any number of different geometric creations. "Everything that is laser cut is made right here in Thomaston. He uses geometry and math, all types of math, in what he does when he's designing," she says.

The family business includes four of the couple's children plus a cousin. (woodenalchemy.com)

TYGERLILY GLASSWORKS, SOUTH THOMASTON
MAINE BEACH MEMORIES PENDANTS, \$68-\$78

Heidi Small crafts each hollow glass bead with sterling silver or copper end caps by hand and fills them with sand, tiny shells and sea glass that she collects at beaches like Birch Point State Park.

"I've had a few people send their own sand from vacations or just shells and sea glass from a beach that means something to them," Small says. (etsy.com/shop/TygerlilyGlassworks)



Courtesy photo

KREATIONS MAINE, OLD ORCHARD BEACH

MAINE-SHAPED MAINE SEA GLASS ART WITH A RECLAIMED WOOD FRAME, \$30

Kris Fish was a firefighter in Old Orchard Beach when an autoimmune disease suddenly upended his life six years ago.

"I was in a wheelchair for a number of years," Fish said. "We got a dog for my company. Raina (his wife) walked the beach every day for her sanity and she would take the dog and they would walk for miles and miles. She'd find treasures and just pick them up. Once I was better, she had a whole bunch of sand dollars and just wanted me to make something for her, for the mantle."

His wife loved the piece. Friends asked if he could make something like it for them. Their side business launched earlier this year.

They make sea glass and seashell art in the shapes of flowers, trees and states mounted on reclaimed pallet wood. The designs retail at Whimsical ME in Saco and online.

The couple scours beaches from York to Boothbay for material. "We follow the storms, we follow the coastline," he said. "You don't want a smooth sandy beach if you're looking for sea glass, but if you're looking for sand dollars and driftwood, that's the right place to go. There's lots of rocky, coastal shoreline in Maine that sea glass is just abundant." ([etsy.com/shop/KreationsMaine](https://www.etsy.com/shop/KreationsMaine))



Courtesy photo

NORTHWOODS GOURMET GIRL, GREENVILLE

OOO LA LA SWEET & SPICY MUSTARD, WILD WOMAN JAM AND MORE, STARTING AT \$7

"Country Ketchup is the catalyst for the whole company," says chef and founder Abby Freethy. "I was pregnant and I wasn't a very good pregnant person in the beginning"—think lots of fries and the ketchup that she created to suit her appetite—"and here I was newly in Greenville, Maine, with a skill set that didn't exactly match a well-paying job. I decided to strike out on my own and become an accidental entrepreneur."

In the 15 years since, she's offered a number of different flavor-filled pantry staples and winnowed the list down to the most popular 15, all made in Greenville.

Find them in her Pritham Avenue shop in town, where she also has farm tables, blown glass glassware and "anything that relates to food," or online.

"We have a giant customer return base," says Freethy. "We'll see an influx of orders coming in soon. We really don't see an enormous lull anymore."

Dreaming of summer? Freethy also started Wicked Maine Pops in 2019, all-natural and organic frozen treats. Catch her at festivals and events around the state in warmer months. ([northwoodsgourmetgirl.com](https://www.northwoodsgourmetgirl.com))



Courtesy photo

DOG NOT GONE, SKOWHEGAN

NO FLY ZONE STRETCH GAITERS, \$28

These footless socks, infused with Permethrin, an insecticide approved for use in powders, sprays and treated clothing, snug up the calf and keep bugs at bay.

"The gaiters are our No. 1 seller just because that's how ticks get on you, from the ground up," says co-owner Julie Swain. "We can't keep them in stock, we're constantly making them."

The company came out with men's gaiters four years ago—they're olive green and slouched around the leg—and added a stretch style in four colors last year after hearing from women customers who wanted a more chic alternative.

"It's better than spraying (bug spray) on you—you just throw it on when you go out," Swain says. Customers wear them to do yard work, while hiking and at outside sporting events. "I am now a soccer mom (and) we go to these different fields, we sit there and who knows if they've been treated or not."

They're made in Skowhegan, where there's also a factory outlet on Dane Avenue that offers buy one, get one half-off or order online. ([dognotgone.com](https://www.dognotgone.com))



Courtesy photo

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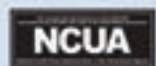
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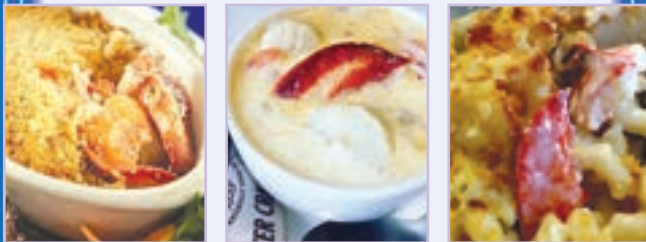


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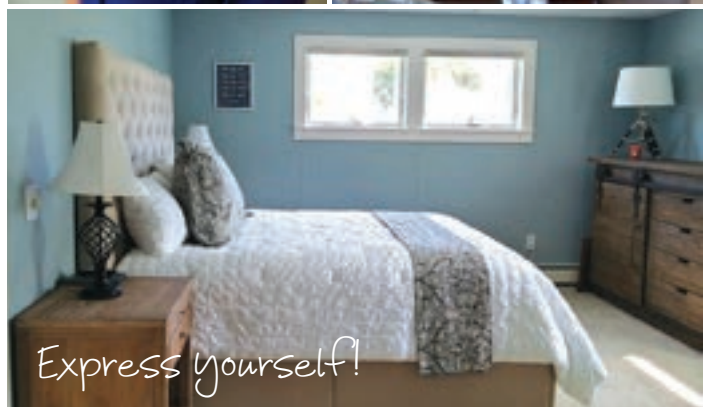
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THE MILLE NIAL WOMAN FAN

GIFT GUIDE

BY HANNAH JOHNSTON
PHOTOS BY HEIDI KIRN

We know we're not easy to buy for. We Millennials are products of an age where you can use your phone to find three new sweaters and a pair of jeans on Amazon, buy them, and have them delivered to your door in fewer than 48 hours. But our capacity for instant gratification doesn't mean you can't still surprise and delight us this holiday season. Here's a list born of a few simple truths. Sometimes we need permission to choose experiences and self-care over things. We love it when someone else gifts us with tiny little luxuries that are also practical and we could use your help prioritizing ideals over cost and convenience.

These items are guaranteed to take center-stage in a Gen-Y Instagram story come Hanukkah or Christmas. But if you want more general advice, go browse stores like the Old Port's Pinecone Chickadee (for anything quirky and cute), Gus & Ruby (for fabulous, well-curated stationery products), and Mexicali Blues (for colorful accessories and delicate sterling silver rings). Or Bullmoose, which has nine locations in Maine, each with an enormous collection of new and used media, as well as CD, DVD and video game mystery grab bags for a few bucks each.

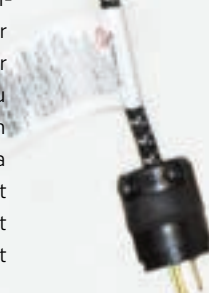
WRITING IMPLEMENTS

There are few things more satisfying for a color-obsessed, bullet-journaling type than a new set of pens. Paper Mate Flair Felt Tip Pens write like butter and fine-tip Le Pen pens come in unique colors. Or, you could go completely classic and get a set of 115 Sharpies in every size and color. You'll find plenty of these online but if you want to browse locally to choose the perfect set, check out one of Sherman's six locations, including on Exchange Street in Portland (*pictured throughout the gift guide photos in various sizes and shapes, from \$8.99–\$13.95*) or Portland's Artist & Craftsman Supply (540 Deering Ave).



THE CHARGING STATION

A dead phone battery is a constant and ever-present threat hanging over our heads. (Our moms are very familiar with our propensity for running out of juice.) What's worse, losing a charger is almost as easy as losing a sock at the laundromat. Chargers and portable batteries are expensive, though, and it's often difficult to justify the money when we can make do with whatever cobbled together option we keep by our bedside. Getting an extra charger or portable battery for your niece's iPhone will make you a holiday hero. If you really want to indulge us, get us an American-made Conway Electric gizmo. Seen here is a guaranteed-to-last power cord with two-USB ports that claim to charge 3X faster. You can find it with a 12-foot cord in bright red (\$148) or other fun colors locally at Flowers & Candy at 10 Exchange in Portland.



Miss Maine Carolyn Brady (Bowdoin '19) is wearing a top (\$239) from South Street Linen's new capsule collection of wool-linen apparel and Jill McGowan's Dahlia pant (\$198). Folder bag from Erin Flett, starting at \$95.

HOLIDAY HYDRATION

Drinking from plastic is quickly falling by the wayside. Young people are becoming more and more focused on reusable, environmentally friendly water bottles and straws. In fact, the city of Portland just banned plastic straws in October, so sustainable products are increasingly a necessity. Find glass straws and bottles at Grove Collaborative, and buy other non-plastic drinking products at local retailers from L.L.Bean to Target (and smaller gift shops in between; if you're passing through Wiscasset, Rock, Paper Scissors has the prettiest colors of the S'well brand flasks we've seen.)

THE SLIPPERS

Almost anything from L.L.Bean would be a slam dunk, but Wicked Good Women's Slippers would make an especially excellent gift. Look, the Millennial mindset is, why spend the money on slippers when you have socks? But that doesn't mean we don't want something with a sole (LOL) purpose of keeping our feet warm on frigid winter days. Bean's has sold 4 million of these in the last five years. The classics come in three colors and are \$89.99 at llbean.com or in the flagship store in Freeport. Miss Maine is wearing the moccasin style (\$79) in vintage red on the cover and has them tucked into her Erin Flett tote here.

THE GIFT CARD

We know that you're probably reading this list in order to avoid getting your daughter another gift card, but hear us out. Gift cards for experiences, like for making jewelry at local bead shop Caravan Beads or for concert tickets at the State Theatre in Portland, make it so that young people have an excuse to just have fun. It's difficult not to use gifted cash to pay for food or store gift cards to shore up a winter wardrobe, but a certificate for a nice dinner at Scales or a gift card for Bayside Bowl or Muse Paint Bar are opportunities to make memories. Also, we love massages, so consider Soma Massage & Wellness in South Portland or Nine Stones Spa in Portland.





HOME PRIDE

Maine is a special place, and we love to show it off, whether we live here or not. We're smitten with the hand-embroidered, finely-detailed Maine and Portland pillows shown on the cover (\$185 at Home Remedies, 83 W. Commercial St., Portland). For something wearable, check out LiveME, which produces well-designed products with simple slogans about Maine activities from fishing to hiking to drinking beer on hats, hoodies, t-shirts, stickers etc. Online at livememaine.com or available at stores in the Old Port.



THE STREAMING SERVICE

If there's one thing you can count on, it's the necessity of streaming in a Millennial's life. If your Millennial already has subscriptions for essentials Netflix (starting at \$8.99 monthly) and Spotify (starting at \$9.99 monthly), gifting them access to another streaming service could make their year, starting with HBONow (\$14.99 monthly). Hulu (\$5.99 and up monthly) is also a great option, but the exclusivity of HBO and the manic popularity of hits like *Game of Thrones* make it a special treat. Or, if you're feeling adventurous, try gifting a subscription to Disney's brand new streaming service, Disney+ (\$6.99 a month or \$69.99 for a year of visual comfort food) or Apple TV plus (\$5 a month), both of which debuted in November.

THE GADGET

Wireless earbuds are revelatory. Being able to listen to your favorite podcasts while keeping your phone safely tucked in your pocket and yourself free from the annoyance of accidentally yanking head phones away from your ears every two minutes is sublime. There are lots of brands out there, but Powerbeats³ Wireless earbuds have excellent sound quality, are good for Apple users, and the wire to connect them behind your head makes them infinitely more difficult to lose.

THE CONSCIENTIOUS COSMETIC

Tarte Cosmetics is a high-quality national brand of cosmetics that prides itself on “offering eco-chic, cruelty-free cosmetics & hypoallergenic, vegan skincare.” Their bestsellers include colorful eyeshadow palettes and lustrous face powders, along with mint-flavored matte lipsticks and luxurious body butters. If makeup isn’t your millennial’s style, but they do need some all-natural pampering, definitely check out Lush’s fun gift baskets, filled with bath bombs and face masks (*they are online and at the Maine Mall*). You can find Tarte products online or at Sephora at the Maine Mall.

THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

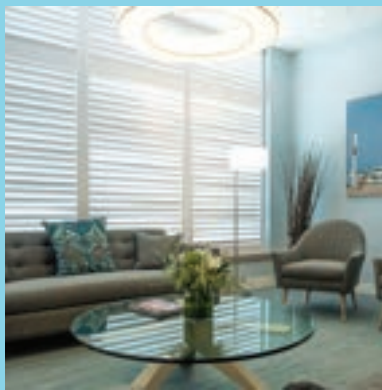
Subscription boxes make excellent gifts for millennials. They are monthly or quarterly reminders to practice self-care and revel in our favorite things, and they come with products curated by experts. There’s Causebox, a service that sends seasonal boxes with conscious and ethically designed products. Birchbox was one of the first and still one of the best for makeup. The Bookish Box gives a new book every month along with other little gifts that fit the theme. There are subscription services for every hobby and interest. *For many more ideas, check out mysubscriptionaddiction.com.*

Hannah Johnston is a recent graduate of Connecticut College, where she studied creative writing. She would like any of the things on this list for Christmas, but is particularly eager for a gift certificate for a massage.

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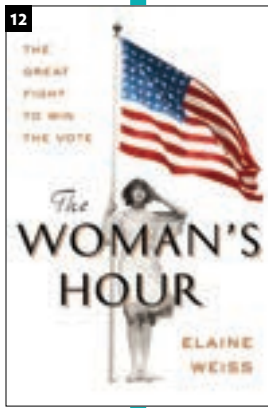
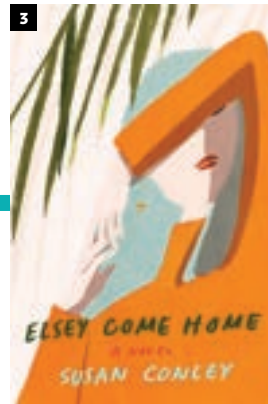
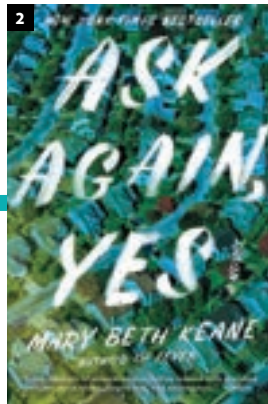
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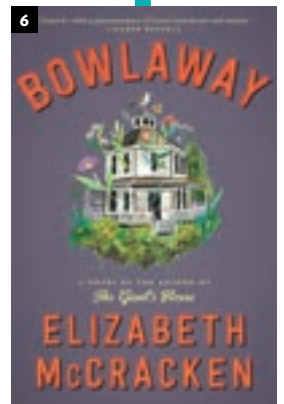
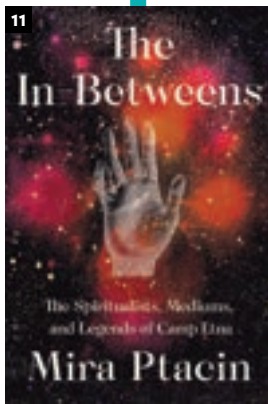
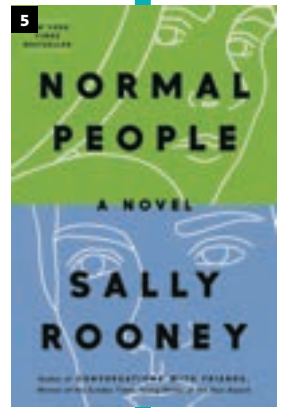


MWM'S GIFT BOOKS

Novels of family. The year's best sequel. Intriguing nonfiction from Maine. Here are a dozen of the best books from the past year, for everyone on your gift list who loves to read.

BY AMY CANFIELD & MARY POLS

Books, be they unputdownable novels or edifying non-fiction, are just about the greatest gifts we can think of. With so many great titles out there, the catch is knowing which to give to whom. Here are 12 picks among this year's offerings for discerning Maine women, whether she's a mystery lover, favors a family drama, prefers non-fiction or wants something with a local angle.



DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILIES

For those who love a good dysfunctional family story (and who doesn't?), two novels released this year are must-reads/must gifts. *The Dutch House* (1) by the wonderful Ann Patchett (*Bel Canto*, *State of Wonder*) and *Ask Again, Yes* (2) by Mary Beth Keane (*Fever*, *The Walking People*) transcend the typical tales of family messes. One of the best books of 2019, *The Dutch House*, is about the bond between a brother and a sister, their peculiar childhood home and the drama it houses and how their lives play out. Ignore Keane's ungainly title: *Ask Again, Yes*' examination of two families, in particular a couple in love since childhood, and the unusual tragedy that binds and alienates them over decades, is extraordinarily rich. Amy and Mary are both all in for *Ask Again, Yes*. And for a closeup look at the complexities of motherhood (and career), don't forget Portland's own Susan Conley's spare, wise *Elsie Come Home* (3), newly out in paperback.

RELATIONSHIPS & DATING

Amy picks *Fleishman Is In Trouble* by *New York Times* (4) writer Taffy Brodesser-Aker is a funny, profound and surprising novel about marriage, divorce, dating, parenting and modern-day culture. But mostly marriage, and the truth of "there's two sides to every story." Great twists. In the annals of dating and relationship books, Mary was blown away by how Sally Rooney's *Normal People* (5) took her back to the days of first love. We're talking digging out the old love letters and crying levels of engagement.

HARDCORE NEW ENGLAND

For the hardcore New Englander on your list, Amy recommends *Bowlaway* (6) by the always entertaining Elizabeth McCracken (*The Giant's House*, *Niagara Falls All Over Again*). This novel stars the formidable and eccentric Bertha Truitt, the self-proclaimed inventor of candlepin bowling. A corset-free feminist, Truitt changes for better the lives of many women over the decades in her New England town at the turn of the 20th century. Meanwhile Mary can't stop thinking about every perfect chapter of *Olive, Again* (7), Elizabeth Strout's sequel to the Maine-set, Pulitzer Prize winning *Olive Kitteridge*. Please read to the end and then let's talk about the magic of the last chapter, which brings in earlier Strout characters.. Another don't miss with local connections is Sarah Blake's *The Guest Book* (8), which turns the story of a family's ownership of a Penobscot Bay island into an epic of America in the last century.

MYSTERY

Need a good mystery to give? Amy loves *Whisper Network* (9) by Chandler Baker, previously known for her YA novels, is a blistering thriller about four top-notch professional women and a male boss, a longtime sexual harasser who soon may be in charge of the whole company. He ends up dead. Who did it? Find out and don't be surprised when this novel uncovers some stark truths about women's relationships in the workplace. Mary's pick is *Lady in the Lake* (10) by Laura Lippman, a mystery set in 1966, as Maddie Schwartz leaves her husband, takes a lover and investigates the death of another victim, this one a black woman who has been ignored by Maddie's colleagues at the paper. The combination of Lippman's insights about the era and the shifting narrators make this a page-turner.

NONFICTION

Amy's recommendation is to put a bow on *The In-Betweens: The Spiritualists, Mediums, and Legends of Camp Etna* (11) by Peaks Islander Mira Ptacin (*Poor Your Soul*) for the woman who believes in ghosts and for the woman who doesn't. Both will fly through this highly readable history of an enclave of feminist mediums right in our own backyard. Meanwhile Mary says every suffrage-lover on your list should get the new-in-paperback book *The Woman's Hour: The Great Fight to Win the Vote* (12), by Elaine Weiss, which is allegedly in development to be turned into a television series by Steven Spielberg's company (with Hillary Clinton executive producing). Set during the last weeks before suffrage was finally ratified in 1920, this book reads like a thriller, even though we all know the outcome. With the upcoming election year, it feels like a good time to be reminded of how women fought for the most basic rights.

Amy Canfield and Mary Pols are the editors of Maine Women Magazine.

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FINDING THE PERFECT HOSTESS GIFT

BY SARAH HOLMAN

December has the special honor of being the most anticipated—and most dreaded—month of the year. There’s the shopping and the decorating and the wrapping. The baking, the post office lines, the flu. And then there are the parties. Work functions, school events, family gatherings and friend soirées. I love a good holiday party. As long as I’m not hosting it. December parties are festive and fun and a lot of work during an already jam-packed time of year—which is why bringing a small token of appreciation is never a bad idea.

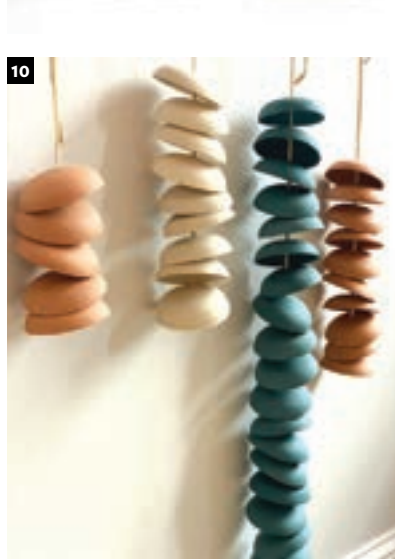
Wine is the item we most often reach for when in need of a hostess gift. I haven’t met a bottle of wine I didn’t appreciate receiving, but my favorite hostess gifts have been more personal. I was recently given shower oil from Abura, a new apothecary and skin care studio on Stevens Avenue in Portland. The ginger rose scented oil was meant to help me unwind after the work of hosting a big Halloween party. It was thoughtful and indulgent, not something I would have bought for myself, and I truly appreciated the intention behind the gift.

I set out to find more of these special gifts of gratitude for the women

in our lives—especially the brave hostesses—who bring joy and celebration to our holiday seasons.

JuJu opened last June on Congress Street in Portland run by owner Missie Yasko who sells “colorfully curated goods for your home and health.” Inside the small storefront, Yasko has artfully arranged items by colorways, which makes it very easy to put together the perfect little package. “Everything here is about good juju for yourself and others,” Yasko says. “Things with intention, or for self-care, or to elevate your everyday.” Ninety-five percent of the brands she carries are women-owned and founded, including a line of natural cleaning products (1) made by a coven of witches (!) in Salem, Massachusetts. Paired with a fancy scrub brush or reusable cleaning cloths, a basket of these goodies, which start at \$13, would certainly make party clean up a little more tolerable.

Yasko also sells reclaimed steel horseshoes wrapped in colorful yarn (2, \$56), meant to bring good fortune and protection to the home. The gift of luck is a unique, generous thank for an extra-special hostess or important friend, while sweet-smelling sage and palo santo bundles (3



1–3. JuJu in Portland. *Photos courtesy of JuJu*
 4–6. Freeport Antiques and Heirlooms. *Photos by Sarah Holman*
 7–10. Fitz & Bennett Home in Portland. *Photos courtesy of Fitz & Bennett*

right, \$18–\$28), sustainably sourced and wrapped with dried roses and vintage ribbon, can smudge away the past year’s negative energy and usher in new beginnings. Give one with a reusable glass jar of pretty matches (3 left, \$25).

I also like to give vintage gifts for their unique and unexpected factor. At Freeport Antiques & Heirlooms, which houses vintage items from over 40 vendors, the collections are carefully chosen and thoughtfully displayed. There are no toppling piles of dusty curios or creepy dark corners. It’s sunlit and clean and full of treasures. Their decanters and pitchers (4, ranging from \$25–\$45) have wide appeal and come in styles from Depression-era rose glass to retro mod ceramic. Accompanying mix-and-match glassware starts at just a dollar each. (It’s a bonus if the gift helps the hostess throw her next party.)

Sales associate Mariah Bintliff encourages shoppers to identify a unique interest of the recipient and steers them to related collections around the store. For an avid cook, an assortment of tins (5, \$7–\$10) that once held staples like lard, baking soda, tobacco or senna leaves makes a fun kitchen display. A more traditional holiday-themed gift could include German Krugel mercury glass ornaments, sleigh bells and even a light-up Santa from the 1960s. “People will come in to browse and find an item their grandmother used to have, or a piece that completes a set, or something nostalgic,” Bintliff says. “Antiques connect people through time.”

At Fitz & Bennett Home, which opened on Silver Street in Portland two years ago, Lauren Siviski is also ready to help shoppers find just the

right gift. “I advise gifting something that is practical but has a quality that makes it stand out or feel special [...] and will encourage the recipient to slow down and enjoy a moment in time.” Three favorites at Fitz & Bennett Home are brass bookmarks (9, \$18 each) that come in four styles, including a Venus figure and a lobster; pottery by Maine native Sasha Lennon, whose playful pieces, especially the small ones shaped like houses (8, \$17–\$25), are likely to bring smiles; and modern wind chimes from Pigeon Toe Ceramics made with tinted, matte-finished clay and strung on natural deerskin lace cord (10, \$48 for the small strand), which can be used as a home decor piece when they’re not outside.

Siviski also carries scented candles—another hostess gift staple—from local candlemaker Near & Native. They’re made from even-burning coconut wax, and the wooden wick sounds like a crackling fire as it burns. But these are unique—you can bring the vessel back in and have it re-filled for just \$10 (7, the large candle retails for under \$30).

With affordable local resources and shopkeepers eager to help, there’s no reason to feel like wine in a pretty bag is the only option for a hostess gift. And remember: tag your gift with a brief note of thanks and most important, your name. Chances are the host won’t be able to really look at and appreciate your gift until the next day, and she’ll be grateful for a reminder of where the lovely item came from.

Sarah Holman is a writer living in Portland. She is enthusiastic about cheese plates, thrift shop treasures and old houses in need of saving. Find her online at storiesandsidebars.com.

BAXTER BREWING TAPS A NEW PRESIDENT

Jenn Lever honed her leadership skills working for one of the world's biggest beverage companies. Now she's home.

BY AMY PARADYSZ // PHOTOS BY HEIDI KIRN





Jenn Lever, 33, is the new president of Baxter Brewing Co., the first woman to lead the Lewiston company, which is the third largest brewery in Maine, behind Allagash and Shipyard. It's now the largest run by a woman.

One of the first things Jenn Lever did when she started working at Baxter Brewing Co. in Lewiston in 2017 was get the whole staff involved in cleaning out a room in the historic Bates Mill, jammed with 12-foot and 16-foot planks of wood. Heavy lifting and not a lot of fun. But Baxter was housed in a tiny tap room. Everyone agreed it needed and wanted a tasting room and pub and Lever saw an opportunity to engage the staff around that goal. They might not be able to renovate, but they could get it ready for the work crews who would.

"You can look at this space and say, 'we played a role in that,'" Lever says. That room is now a flourishing pub space, filled with tables made from some of those old planks. Some of her new co-workers then may have thought she was insane, she jokes. But "I wanted the staff to feel that they had ownership of the area."

"I don't think we ever could have imagined it to be as beautiful as it is," Lever says. At 33, she's gone from consultant to director of operations to president of Baxter, and she's done it with a leadership style that echoes that cleanup effort, getting employees involved at every level. "They are our best asset," she says.

Lever, a graduate of Auburn's Edward Little High School (where she was president of her class for four years running) always knew she wanted to come back to Maine eventually. For one thing, she always promised her younger brother ("he's my favorite person on the planet") that she'd be there when he started raising a family. But she came back sooner than she expected, after making her way through the ranks at another company with canned beverages: the Pepsi Bottling Group.

She'd studied economics and sociology at Hobart & Williams Smith in Geneva, New York, and discovered during a summer internship at Cintas, a uniform company with a facility in nearby Syracuse, that operations was where she wanted to be. She was 21. The people she was working with—managing even—had been there on average 17 years. She knew she wasn't going to tell them how to run a forklift. But she could ask them about the obstacles they faced on the job, and figure out how to fix them. She could offer incentives. "So that everybody has an interest in winning."

AT THE HELM



“This is a tough industry, and I’m all in.”

Lever’s experience includes years at the Pepsi Bottling Group. The pace is a little different, with Baxter producing 44 cans a minute, versus 2,400 at Pepsi, but the skills translate. A key element to Lever’s leadership is involving the staff. “They are our best asset,” she says.





That work led to a job at Pepsi. During her first 90 days there, she led a recycling initiative that went way beyond bottles and cans to clearing out decades worth of Point of Sale collateral, including cardboard, poster board, metal racks and wheels—and selling the materials to a recycling company.

“I was covered head to toe in dirt for weeks,” she says. “But we were able to turn what would have been an expense line into a \$200,000 profit for that one location.”

Pepsi dispatched Lever to implement the same strategy at 10 plants in New York. Then Pepsi rolled out her approach nationwide. Over the six years that Lever worked for the bottling company in New York and Virginia, she took on several roles that are applicable to what she’s doing now at Baxter: warehouse, demand planning, quality assurance and operations. Around the time of her last promotion, she reached out to an old acquaintance in Maine, investor Tom Platz, to talk about manufacturing opportunities in the state. The plan was to just put out feelers. For later. But Platz connected her with Curran, a fresh-cut vegetable processing plant in Saco and she headed northwards.

“Within 90 days, we were able to become food-safe certified for the first time in the company’s almost 60-year history,” Lever says. “With a team of 150 people who spoke seven languages, it could not have happened without the engagement and trust of the entire team. We were able to completely change the culture around the strategy and processing of fresh-cut vegetables.”

Lever saw Curran through two re-certifications, facilitated the move to an expanded space in Biddeford and two years of over 500 percent growth. By 2016, the owners were in a position to sell the company to Growers Express.

Lever took that as her cue to move on, and in 2017 she moved to Baxter, putting her beverage background to work. The scale of production is very different though, with Baxter producing craft beer at a rate of 44 cans per minute, versus Pepsi’s 2,400 a minute.

In September, Baxter founder Luke Livingstone, another Edward Little graduate, passed the presidential torch to Lever. He says his gut told him she was the woman for the job. “It felt right,” he says. Baxter is the third largest brewery in Maine, behind Allagash and Shipyard, and it’s now the largest run by a woman. (Other brewery leaders in Maine who are women include Heather Sanborn at Rising Tide, Matthea Daughtry at Moderation Brewing and Pam Powers at Bigelow Brewing.)

“She had experience running operations in the beverage industry, but she didn’t kick down the doors at Baxter with the attitude of knowing everything,” said Jamie Colpoys of Nappi

Distributors. “She knew it wasn’t the same as craft beer. In the craft beer industry, it is tough to be relevant. Everyone wants the next new thing. It takes nimbleness on the part of craft beer brewers.”

Lever gets it. “This is a tough industry, and I’m all in,” she says. It’s fairly male-dominated as well. Last month Lever organized the first Women in Beer event at Portland Beer Week, and plans to host one with the Pink Boots Society every month through March, with the idea to provide a venue dedicated to women who are part of (or curious about) the beer industry in Maine.

Other improvements she’s made have been structural, like upgrades to the production line that enabled the brewery to upscale quantity and quality. Baxter has always been revolutionary. It was the first New England brewery to release all its beer in cans. Nine years in, the company continues to recreate itself, supplementing its 10 full-scale year-round production releases with seasonal brews and recently incorporating special releases tied to community initiatives into the mix. Limited availability releases have included a wet hop blonde ale called Limb-It-Less to benefit the Travis Mills Foundation and an India Pale Lager called MHT in partnership with Maine Huts & Trails.

Two years ago, Lever challenged the brewing team to create a beer with a flavor profile reminiscent of a White Russian—the drink of choice of her ski lodge friends. The brewers came up with light bodied, amber in color, palatable White Russian stout called Apres Chalet that they ran as a pilot. It proved so popular in the taproom that Baxter planned full-scale production release. Marketing Manager Adrienne Beaulieu had an epiphany; align the release with last November’s 20th anniversary of the 1998 cult film *The Big Lebowski* (White Russians are the drink of choice for the main character, Jeff Lebowski). The White Russian stout was released in the fall of 2018 under the name Innuendo—with a sketch on the can that looks a lot like Jeff Lebowski. It was back this fall by popular demand.

“Our team had the ability to take a flavor request and bring it to life,” Lever says. “That’s the magic of craft beer and the thing that keeps us going. Starting with an off-the-rails idea or ingredients is what we do day in and day out. The fact that it developed to a full-scale production was interesting because it was unexpected. It was never intended to be that. The beer is what brought this to life for us.”

Amy Paradysz is a freelance writer who recommends Baxter’s sweet potato brew Gather Round with holiday dinner. No wine opener necessary.

THE CROWN OF MAINE

It's not all gowns for Carolyn Brady, Miss Maine (but there are a lot of those)

WRITTEN & PHOTOGRAPHED BY AMANDA WHITEGIVER



As Miss Maine, Carolyn Brady has to do a lot of dressing up. Her costuming sponsor is Maine's own Ashley Lauren Kerr, whose Scarborough-based company makes sparkling evening wear (and pageant perfect garments).

When Carolyn Brady came to Maine from Philadelphia to attend Bowdoin College, she came with a lot of academic ambition and a gift for the violin, which she'd been playing since she was 5. But a suggestion from a former Miss Maine contestant who saw her playing with Bowdoin's symphony set her on a path to pageantry and led to her becoming Miss Maine. This month she's headed to Connecticut to represent the state in the Miss America 2.0 pageant at the Mohegan Sun casino in Uncasville (*it airs live Dec. 19 at 8 p.m. on NBC*).

Her long term goals are a career with the U.S. State Department, and her hope would be an assignment in China, where she spent the summer after her freshman year. "I just ended up falling in love with Chinese culture," she says. (And also with the language, which she minored in at Bowdoin along with majoring in government and legal studies.) It's been a busy year for Brady. She graduated from Bowdoin in the spring and is teaching math and literacy at Reiche Elementary school in Portland. She works retail jobs, including a few hours a month at J. Crew and some shifts at Nordstrom Rack. Then there is her philanthropy work as Miss Maine, including with Catholic Charities Maine and Gateway Community Services. The state's first-ever African American Miss Maine is also teaching spin classes at the recently opened CycleBar in Portland, where we caught up with her. Multitask much? "I am like the poster child for young America," Brady says.

DESCRIBE YOUR STYLE IN ONE SENTENCE.

I'm either in a ball gown or leggings. The in-between happens rarely, but when it does I tend to wear jeans, ballet flats, and some sort of colorful or interesting blouse. I'm all about the pop of color!

IS IT "MAINE" STYLE?

I think Maine style is very open ended. While I am not a native Mainer, I have come to find that Maine style is interpreted differently by everyone I meet, and I absolutely love that. I think it is very reflective of the state as a whole.

FIRST OUTFIT YOU REMEMBER PICKING OUT AND LOVING, FEELING GREAT IN?

Girl Scout Summer Camp. Elementary school. Pink socks. Pink shorts. Pink shirt. Pink hair tie. 'Nuff said.

HOW OLD WERE YOU WHEN YOU FELT LIKE YOU DEVELOPED A STYLE OF YOUR OWN?

I don't remember developing my own sense of style until high school. I attended an all girls school for grades K-5, so I was required to wear

a uniform. During my time in middle school, I spent the majority of the time that I spent devoted to fashion determining what that word meant to me. Finally, by the time I reached ninth grade, I think I had found my stride.

LAST MEMORABLE OUTFIT:

White leggings with a scallop hem. Matching white sports bra. Navy headband with a bow and metallic polka dots. The only way to be an indoor cycling instructor is to wear a giant bow every once and awhile.

FAVORITE BRICKS AND MORTAR PLACE TO BUY CLOTHING IN MAINE?

Alaina Marie!!! Love love love everything she makes, not to mention that it is a female-owned business so I am always 200% on board. I have both the clutches and a few pairs of their custom Keds. I can't wait to see what fun collaborations they will create next.

MOST YOU EVER SPENT ON SOMETHING TO WEAR?

Oh golly! That would probably be my gown for Miss Maine. I would say it was well worth

"While I am not a native Mainer, I have come to find that Maine style is interpreted differently by everyone I meet, and I absolutely love that."

it though since it allowed me to bring home the crown!

BEST BARGAIN OF ALL TIME?

I found a pair of embroidered blue and black Sam Edelman flats for \$8 at a Nordstrom Rack Sale. I have discovered that it can be very difficult to find flats that go with navy dresses, and this pair works perfectly, so I consider it a steal simply because I paid about 15% of the original price, and I wear them constantly.

WHO IS YOUR STYLE ICON OF ALL TIME?

Michelle Obama. I have always admired her ability to make a statement but also gain respect with her style choices, and I strive to do the same with my selections as well.

MAINE STYLE ICON?

I am a big fan of the Instagram page, @5thandmagnolia (Margaret Ybarra). Most of her style choices come from either local Maine boutiques or easily accessible factory stores, and they always have a classic element with a pop of chic.

WHERE YOU DO GET YOUR STYLE INSPIRATION? MAGAZINES, MOVIES, SOCIAL MEDIA?

While some of my inspiration comes from social media, I would say that I often garner fashion ideas by interacting with people on a daily basis. Whether that is with my students at school, with my riders as a cycling instructor, or even just with people I pass in the grocery store, I am constantly inspired by the everyday Mainer.

WHAT WOULD YOU REFUSE TO WEAR?

Birkenstocks. I'm sorry, I recognize that they are a staple, but I just can't do it.

Amanda Whitegiver is a lifestyle family photographer who adores dark chocolate and singing with her two daughters.



Because she moves so fast between retail jobs, teaching and Miss Maine duties, workout gear might be the ideal clothing for Brady right now. But she's also fond of ankle pants. "I can wear them to my day job, then to my closing retail shifts, and even to my appearances as Miss Maine."

BITE THE ELF

BY MAGGIE KNOWLES

The last present is wrapped with a glittering bow, the stockings dangling in a festive row. Crystal ornaments dazzle and glisten...and this is when you realize you have no traditions.

Some of you likely have generations-old rituals that tumble down from the quaint times of Christmas past. Some of you don't require annual festivities to make your holiday merry and bright. I am of the ilk where I am angry there was no ancient grandmother's silver tea set passed to me on my wedding day and the only tradition was on December 24th, when we would read "The Night Before Christmas," and get to open one of "the good presents," from our neighbor.

Jaw set in hard determination, I swore my son would have Huge Traditions he would share with his offspring, each story starting with a jolly, "Back when I was your age..."

Yet my best laid plans, as the best laid plans often do, never got traction.

Loving fresh greenery, I thought the easiest way to kick off Memories-to-be-Made was to turn the house each year into a living postcard of what a Maine winter should be: Boughs like green icing along the porch, glowing candles in the windows and a giant wreath with an even gianter red bow on the barn. When the local soccer team came knocking for their fundraiser, I asked a helpful sophomore which size would be proper for the barn doors. We both squinted at all of the measurements, until his dad honked from the car to hurry up.

I pointed to the largest one.

The following week when The Wreath arrived in a horse trailer, with three annoyed soccer dads, I yelled from the porch, "What the hell is that?"

As I stared at the prickly monster, one dad said, "We figured you owned a car dealership."

It took the four of us quite a time to drag The Wreath around to the back of the house, where it sat in a gigantic slump until April when we had to pay a handyman to tow it away.

Wreaths be damned, there is that one other modern tradition which seemed so easy, no measuring required. The Elf on the Shelf.

There are two schools of thought on the Elf: For some moms, it is the highlight of their year to create mischievous elf scenes for their children to find in the morning. These are the same moms

that make owl costumes by hand with actual feathers. For moms like me, who run to Target for the last Ninja costume on clearance, planning out the Elf's exploits is a low priority. He's lucky to get flung from the kitchen to the guest room just before my boy bounds down the stairs.

No harm, no foul.

(Note for you non-elf readers: There is but one rule in Elf Club. Never touch the elf. Human contact murders The Spirit of Christmas.)

Last year, my son was having a sleepover around the holidays with his best bud, and I designed an actual SCENE for Elfie. Hanging upside down from lights twisted up the staircase he pointed down at mugs of hot chocolate especially delivered from Santa.

Unfortunately, as soon as the boys saw Elfie, so did the dog. All of a sudden the Hallmark movie of Elf-life-lessons turned into a horror movie as our normally sweet Daisy, ran in mad circles, growling, with Elfie hanging from her sudden wolf mouth.

The children's blood curdling screams for my help snapped me out of attempts not to cry-laugh. And remember the Only Rule of Elf Club...what was I to do?

I flung open a drawer and grabbed giant grill tongs. Both kids were clinging to each other up on the couch like the floor was suddenly flooded with mice and snakes, I am chasing the dog like a BBQ Shark while the dog was most certainly puncturing Elfie's face with her hatred of this red felted bastard.

Finally, the tongs found their mark. Elfie was now safe, if not slobbery, as I tucked him on a high branch of our white, disco-themed tree. Panting for breath, the three of us stared at each other, heroes in our own minds having saved Christmas for all.

And I was also a hero, having created, if not a tradition, then a damn good story to be told for years to come. Because perhaps that what holidays are for—dropping the expectation of a perfect moment and letting the unpredictable magic of the season take over.

Maggie Knowles writes about all things kid. She and her son live in Yarmouth, where she gardens, keeps bees and refuses to get rid of her stilettos.

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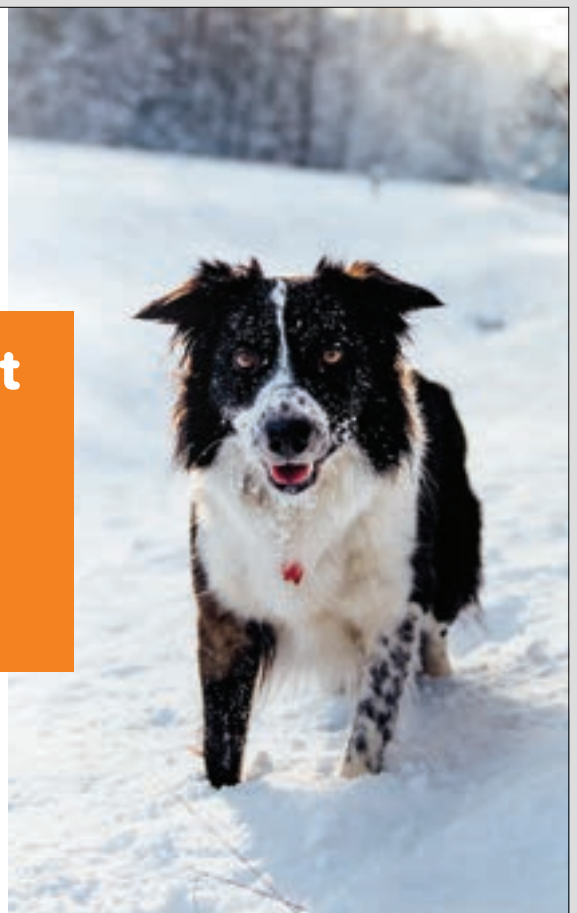
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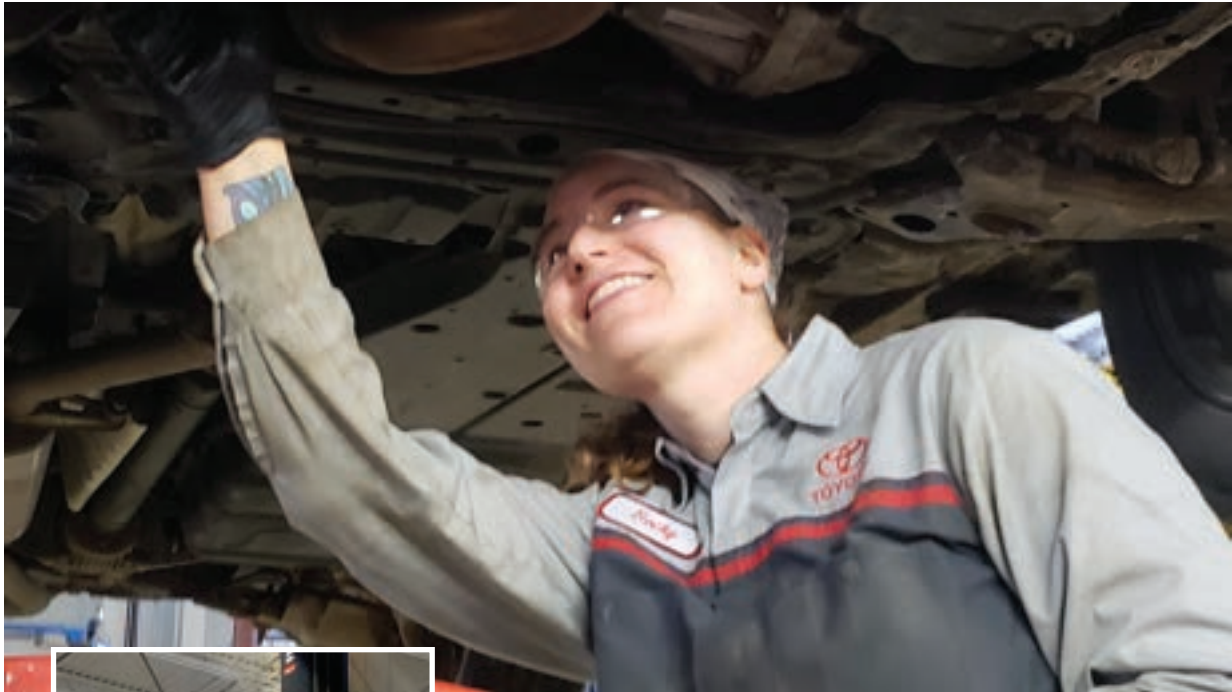


Photo by Jenny McNulty (*Wylde Photography*), Wells

By E.F., Freeport

I should have got it when I saw it at Marden's
But I had eaten all the goldfish
And drank all the juicy boxes
Screamed all the screams
Kicked off all the sale boots
Clutched the germy cart in my hot hands
And gone to sleep.
My mother will take care of it.
She always does.

No, I wasn't raised in a garage...



No, I wasn't alone in a house full of brothers. I wasn't a tomboy. But when I finished college, I realized a job behind a desk wasn't for me. So the question isn't "Why am I a mechanic?" It's "Why not?"

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