

# MAINE WOMEN

JULY 2022



this month

## NEW MAINERS

PLUS

JULY HAPPENINGS + PLAYLIST  
A LUMBERJACK'S FAVORITE THINGS  
UNCONVENTIONAL STRESS REDUCTION  
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worth it

**EXTROVERTED**

Come cheer for your team on **Thursday, July 14th at 12:05pm** at Hadlock Field as the Portland Sea Dogs face off against the Somerset Patriots.

Come join the 2022 Greater Portland Festival of Nations at Deering Oaks in Portland on **Saturday, July 30th from 11am - 7pm**. Bring the family to sample ethnic food, listen to music and dance.

Join SUP Yoga at Bar Harbor KOA Campground **July 19 - 22** for a Camp Hike SUP Yoga Acadia weekend retreat. Offering three nights, four days of camping adventures, hiking, yoga, and paddleboarding. Choose from oceanfront tent sites or shared cabins.

**SEDTARY**

The Bar Harbor Music Festival at Belfast. Join to hear Dr. Kayoung An, pianist, on **Sunday, July 24th, 12 - 1pm** at Belfast Free Library, 106 High St.

The Maine Renaissance Faire will take place at the Acton Fairgrounds on **July 23rd and 24th**, and the next weekend, **July 30th and 31st**. Dress up and come join the fun!

**ACTIVE**

"9 to 5 The Musical" at Bangor Opera House **Sunday July 10th at 3pm**. Pour yourself a cup of ambition and join the Penobscot Theatre Company for the story Dolly Parton, Lily Tomlin and Jane Fonda made famous in 1980!

Make it a "Good Day" and go see the Nappy Roots at Morgan Hill Event Center in Hermon on **Saturday, July 30th at 10pm**. 'Cause you don't want to be caught saying "Awnaw" if you miss it!

**INTROVERTED**

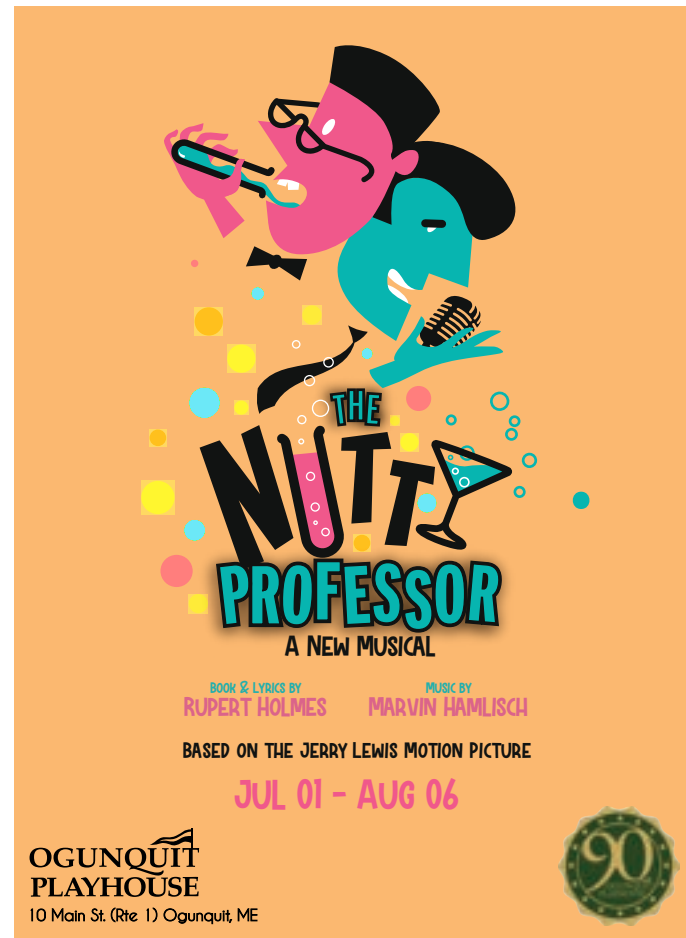


# welcome to the new maine women magazine

**F**i and welcome to the new *Maine Women* magazine. Each month we will strive to bring you content that will enrich your daily lives, brought to you by your fellow Mainers. We will deliver information on poetry, art, music, movement, reflection, as well as legal, financial, career, and mental health advice. This is just a start, and we would love for you to be a part of it. Please contact us at [agoslin@mainewomenmagazine.com](mailto:agoslin@mainewomenmagazine.com) with your thoughts and ideas. We also welcome submissions of poetry, fiction, artwork, and photography at the same address. ●

## our mission

**MAINE WOMEN** SUPPORTS THE WOMEN OF MAINE IN TANGIBLE WAYS THAT GO BEYOND JUST INFORMATION AND ENTERTAINMENT. WITH A SOLUTIONS JOURNALISM FOCUS ON THE ISSUES THAT MATTER MOST, THIS PUBLICATION IS SIMPLY A REFLECTION OF WHAT IS TRULY A COMMUNITY THAT CONNECTS AND EMPOWERS WOMEN - AND PUSHES THE SYSTEMS THAT SUPPORT THEM TO BE BETTER.



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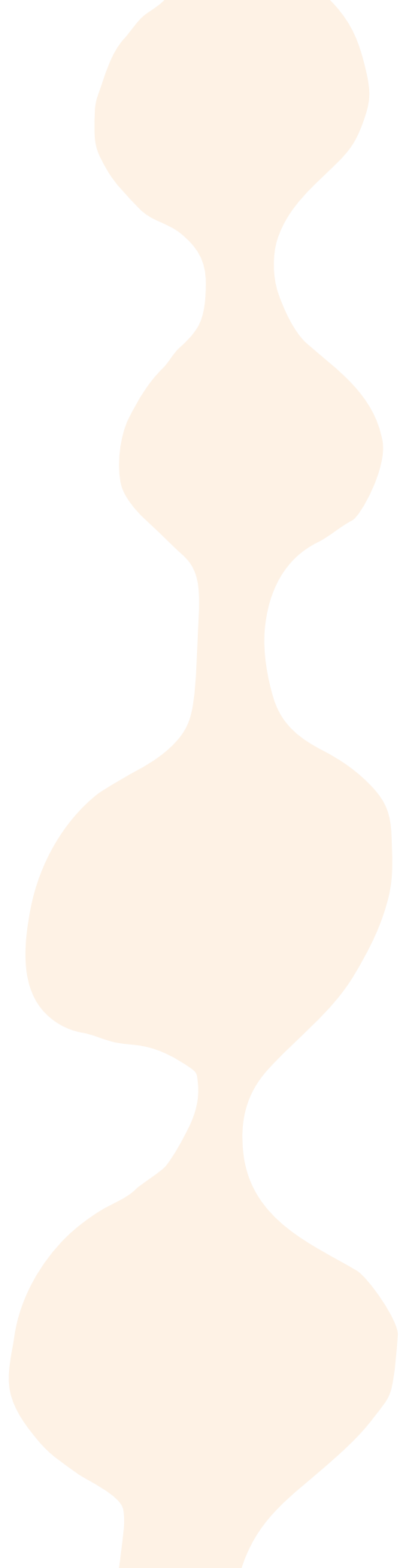
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# your thoughts

● Fantastic! The new magazine is the best that's ever been produced. I read from beginning to end and was interested, engaged, felt thoughtful, emotional and resonated with every article. Seriously! Great work, I'm loving the change. Keep it up!

● **Sara Goldberg**

● Hi, I just read the May, 2022 issue of Maine Women and I loved it! I moved to Maine 6 months ago after having lived in New Hampshire for 36 years. I've always felt very much at home while visiting here, so now that I'm a Maine citizen, I was excited to find your magazine.

● **Lori Santora**

● I finished reading your May edition of Maine Women and felt this beautiful connection to the depth of each writer's joy, sorrow and growth. I appreciate the inclusion of themes like recovering from addiction and challenges in parenting, as well as the suggestion that women get to have favorite things that are beautiful, small, big, precious and delicious. We need this. Thank you!

● **Grace Guerette-Plummer**

## *we welcome submissions of*

**YOUR ORIGINAL POETRY, VISUAL ART, OR FICTION**

**YOUR "BIG DREAM"**

(500-ISH WORDS ON THE THING YOU WOULD LOVE TO ACCOMPLISH IF NOTHING STOOD IN YOUR WAY)

**A MAINE WOMAN WHOM YOU FEEL DESERVES AN "ODE" TO HER WORK AND DEDICATION**

**LEGAL, HEALTH, FINANCIAL, OR OTHER ISSUES YOU'D LIKE OUR PRACTICAL LIFE COLUMNISTS TO TACKLE**

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# Away

BY GRACE GUERRETTE-PLUMMER

I come back here to a place that doesn't feel like home.  
Empty. Silent.  
The food is tasteless here tonight.  
The birds are quiet outside the window.  
It feels cold. Still. Dark. Lifeless.

I sit down.  
I stand up.  
Nothing satisfies.

I cry.  
I weep.

Another glass of wine.  
Though no distraction, poison or fascination will take this hurt from me.  
I've tried.

What are you doing there?  
The picture you colored this morning, a rainbow, sits awaiting finish on the table.  
I move it away.  
I put it back.

A to-do list stares at me.  
A plan I planned for this plan when you are away.  
It doesn't work to fill the hole, the deep, hollow abyss that is here,  
when you are there.

Nothing does.  
Maybe nothing will.

Even my bones hurt.  
*Lean in*, I tell myself.  
*Lean in*, others say.  
Lean into the space where my heart sinks, where my breath is shallow, the space  
where you'd be if you were here.  
A pool of wet now in the pit between my clavicles. My chest, where you'd be close  
if you were here, it says something is wrong.

I cannot move away from this. I know. My body knows.  
Like you, born from my blood, this grief too is a part of me now.

No remedy for this time when you are away.

.....  
WRITER'S NOTE: "I WROTE THIS POEM ABOUT WHAT IT IS LIKE WHEN MY CHILDREN GO TO THEIR DAD'S HOME. I AM A DIVORCED WOMAN NOW AND SHARE MY TWO CHILDREN WITH MY EX-HUSBAND (WHO IS GREAT, BUT NOT FOR ME IN MARRIAGE). THE SILENCE OF AN EMPTY HOUSE CAN BE BONE CHILLING. I TRIED TO CAPTURE THAT IN THIS POEM."

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# gloria dilanni

Gloria DiIanni is a freelance illustrator and designer based in Maine. She graduated with a BFA in Illustration from Montserrat College of Art in Beverly, Massachusetts. She enjoys taking inspiration from childhood memories, traditional folk art, and the bright bold designs from

Mid Century modern aesthetics. Through her art, she hopes to celebrate the magic and wonder of connecting with nature, animals, and your inner child. Her work can be seen at [www.gloria-diianni.com](http://www.gloria-diianni.com). ●



ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE "GIRLS AROUND THE GLOBE" SERIES BY GLORIA DILANNI

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# PLAYLIST

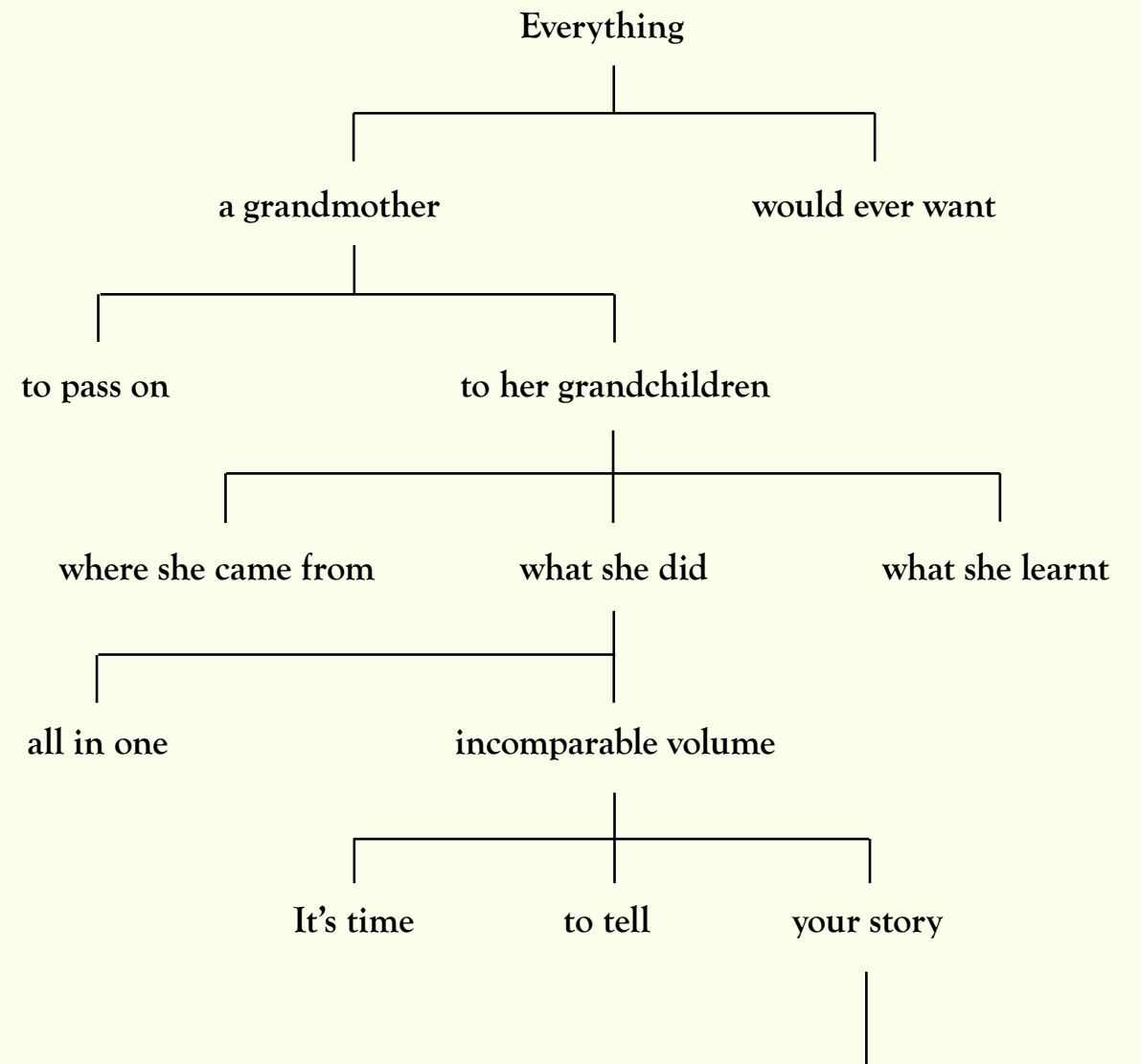
BY ALISHA GOSLIN

**SARA TRUNZO** WRITES COUNTRY SONGS FROM THE HEART. SHE GREW UP IN NEW JERSEY, ATTENDED COLLEGE IN MAINE, AND WAS LIVING IN NASHVILLE TRYING TO FURTHER HER SINGING CAREER WHEN THE PANDEMIC HIT. BACK TO MAINE SHE CAME.

SARA WRITES ABOUT TOPICS THAT AREN'T ALWAYS SUNG ABOUT. WHEN I FIRST HEARD HER SING "FOOD AND MEDICINE" LIVE AT THE SONGWRITER'S CIRCLE AT ALL ROADS MUSIC FESTIVAL, I WAS OVERCOME WITH EMOTION. SARA DOESN'T JUST SING ABOUT FOOD INSECURITY, BUT HAS ACTUALLY DONE SOMETHING ABOUT IT, WITH HER WORK WITH THE COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION WALDO COUNTY BOUNTY. WITH THEIR GIVE-AND-TAKE TABLES, THEY PROVIDE A PLACE FOR PEOPLE TO DROP OFF SURPLUS HOME-GROWN FOOD. HERE ARE SARA'S OWN WORDS ABOUT EACH SONG IN THIS MONTH'S PLAYLIST.

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <p><b>1</b> <b>FOOD AND MEDICINE</b><br/>FROM 2019'S DIRIGO ATTITUDE<br/>A first person telling of some of the issues facing rural people in Maine: food insecurity, aging housing stock, oppressive fixed living costs, elder care, and health care—all exacerbated by poverty.</p> | <p><b>2</b> <b>FREE FOR THE TAKING</b><br/>FROM 2021'S CABIN FEVER DREAM<br/>With a hat-tip to the Uncle Henry's catalog, this song rattles off some of the items one might find in the "Free for the Taking" section, including the narrator's busted-up, second-hand heart.</p> | <p><b>3</b> <b>NASHVILLE TIME</b><br/>FROM 2021'S CABIN FEVER DREAM<br/>A song about the funny, magical, heartbreaking bubble that is Nashville for songwriters.</p> |
| <p><b>4</b> <b>LIBERTY TOOL</b><br/>FROM 2021'S CABIN FEVER DREAM<br/>A country waltz about when the alternative-American-Dream (homesteading in Maine) goes wrong. Also a play on the iconic Waldo County tool/junk/art shop of the same name.</p>                                  | <p><b>5</b> <b>KIND BONE</b><br/>FROM 2021'S CABIN FEVER DREAM<br/>An on-again-off-again toxic romance finally gets the cord cut.</p>   | <p><b>6</b> <b>UP TO CAMP</b><br/>FROM 2019'S DIRIGO ATTITUDE<br/>A disheartened woman goes 'upta camp' to escape her family.</p>                                    |
| <p><b>7</b> <b>DON'T GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN</b><br/>FROM 2019'S DIRIGO ATTITUDE<br/>This play on the traditional tune 'Go Tell it on the Mountain' details the end of a relationship for a stubbornly independent woman in a small town.</p>                                     | <p><b>8</b> <b>SHRIKE</b><br/>FROM 2019'S DIRIGO ATTITUDE<br/>A song about a small, dark-eyed predatory bird that impales its prey on nails or thorns. Also a song about being called a witch.</p>  | <p><b>9</b> <b>I WORK SATURDAYS</b><br/>FROM 2019'S DIRIGO ATTITUDE<br/>A folky groove about a single mom working in Maine's seasonal food service industry.</p>     |

FIND THIS PLAYLIST ON SPOTIFY UNDER  
**MAINE WOMEN MAGAZINE SARA TRUNZO PLAYLIST**  
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## The Tri returns in person Sunday, July 10, and as always, we'll be cheering you on.

To the survivors, the women who signed up to challenge themselves, those in it to honor someone who has battled cancer, and everyone simply volunteering for the cause, you're all contributing to the ultimate victory of supporting cancer prevention, early detection and access to care. And for that, we celebrate you.

We wish you a great day out on the course.



*Breast cancer survivor Sarah Emerson finishes the 2020 Tri for a Cure, then celebrates with her care team from NECS. (L to R: Amanda E. Magnoli ANP-BC, AOCNP, Chrissie Chase RN, Ashley VanBuskirk, Sarah, Dr. Chiara Battelli).*



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# Tina Scheer

## A MAINE LUMBERJACK'S FAVORITE THINGS

"Timber" Tina Scheer is one astounding Maine woman. She has the only woman owned lumberjack show in the world, and we are lucky to have it right here in our great state. Her accolades are many, as she has been on Survivor Panama, as well as featured on many other shows. Tina is boisterous, with a hearty laugh and an amazingly sunny disposition. She has unending energy. She's up every day by 4:30 a.m., and will often just run outside and start raking leaves or take down a tree. She ends her day like any good lumberjack should, with a campfire. Here are a few of "Timber" Tina's favorite things.

- 1 PERFORMING IN LUMBERJACK SHOWS**  
My favorite thing in the whole world is doing shows with my crew for the people that come to visit. We love doing lumberjack shows. It's just really, really, really wonderful. My new favorite thing we recently started doing is hour long lumberjack lessons, where we teach ax throwing, cross cut sawing and log rolling to the visitors. It's so much fun!
- 2 COFFEE YOGURT**  
I love coffee yogurt. I freeze it for like, 30 minutes and eat it nice and icy. So it's almost like my favorite ice cream, too.
- 3 TEACHING CHAINSAW SAFETY FOR WOMEN**  
I have been volunteering at my local adult education for 10 years. It's the most amazing course you could take. It's grown so much. The first year, we did one. The next year, so many people signed up for it, we had to go to two. Then that got so busy, we had to do two in the spring and two in the fall. Then last year we had to go to three in the spring and three in the fall! It's just so amazing, the transformation in the students. When they come into class, they're kind of hunched over, shoulders forward. By the time they leave, their chests open up, and they are like proud peacocks!
- 4 THE SMELL OF CHAINSAW OIL, GAS, AND PINE TREES**  
I am serious. I love the smell of a chainsaw, just being out in the woods and how a pine tree smells when you cut them. Just like balsam pillows, it's the same thing.
- 5 PAUL BUNYAN**  
Because he is the biggest, baddest lumberjack of all time!
- 6 PORK RIBS**  
They are delicious!
- 7 SURVIVOR**  
If you don't know why Survivor is my favorite show then you don't know me! If it's on, I'm watching!
- 8 CAMPFIRES**  
I have one every night. After I've watched Survivor, I go out and have a glass of chardonnay near the campfire before bed.
- 9 RIDING MY HARLEY**  
I love getting on my Harley and going to the post office and the bank. Just doing that for 30 minutes, wind in my hair, I call it my mini vacation.
- 10 WORKING THE LAND ON MY PROPERTY**  
I just love to get up in the morning, run right out the door and start in. Definitely one of my favorite ways to spend my time!



# this keeps me sane

INTERVIEW BY ALISHA GOSLIN

SUZANNE WOOD MAKES ART WITH HER UNIQUE, WHIMSICAL TOUCH.

*I think it does wonders for my inner child.*

**How did you find this activity?**

Art has always been part of my life, so I would say when I was very young, 4 or 5 years old.

**When did you first start?**

I have a distinct memory, one of my very first memories, I think I was maybe four or five and I was set up at the kitchen table and I was painting with watercolors watching Big Bird Goes to China and I can remember I just sat there for what seemed to me like hours and painted and painted along with them and long after they moved on from painting the the Chinese symbol "speak" with brushes and ink and I just remember being so mesmerized and so in love with the action of the dipping into the paint, dipping into the water, and so on, and just the feeling

of the brush going onto the paper was just so fabulous! I don't think that I've ever lost the love for that feeling.

**How do you come up with what you're going to paint?**

When it comes to the owls, I really love to paint them doing ordinary things like gardening, sewing, reading tarot cards, maybe a little bit of social activism from time to time, but often times I will be daydreaming and I will picture the owl doing whatever the topic is, and what details would be the most important, then I get to sketching.

**What does this fulfill for you?**

I think it does wonders for my inner child. There is not much difference in the way the act of painting is making me feel, no



matter how much I have improved my skill set. I may be nearly 39, but at heart when I'm painting, I am 5 again. There is also something magical to me about taking materials and creating the picture you see in your mind, it that brings me a lot of joy.

**Where do you see this going in the future?**

The sky's the limit! I would like to get to a point in my life where my art is my entire career focus, but that's a little further down the road for when my kids are off on their own. Who knows though, I am always open to opportunity, so I'll go with the flow and see where the wind takes me. People tell me that my paintings bring them a lot of joy, which is enough of a reason to do it for all of my days. That's definitely my plan. ●

FIND SUZANNE'S WORK AT CLOTHES ENCOUNTER IN ELLSWORTH OR AT WWW.REDBUBBLE.COM/PEOPLE/LVSUZ/SHOP.



*Art has always been a part of my life.*

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# MY GRAMMIE

BY ALLISON NEW



**G**rammie was one in a million. Where do I even begin in describing who she was and what she meant to me? She was one of those old timey Grammys. A real Mainer. She was full of sass and brass. She had a sharp tongue and a heart made of gold.

Grammie never lived a life of luxury. She grew up in an orphanage in Wisconsin. When she turned eighteen she married my grandfather. Shortly after they married they settled in Maine. They didn't live an easy life together. They worked hard sewing shoes and raising six kids. They were poor. Like dirt poor. My mom once told me of a memory she has from early childhood, when the Salvation Army came to the house on Christmas to deliver gifts for her and her siblings. There would have been no gifts under the tree if the Salvation Army hadn't selected the family for their program that year. That's the kind of poor they were, but through it all they persevered.

Grammie used to watch me after school when I was really little. I remember she would pick me up in this huge black coup. It had red interior fabric and it smelled like cigarettes. She'd bring me home to her little trailer house, where we'd watch Lamb Chop and Barney on PBS. She'd work on crossword puzzles in the back of the National Enquirer magazines that she bought weekly. I used to love reading those magazines. I was especially interested in the issues that featured cryptids like Bigfoot and Bat Boy. Bat Boy was this hybrid bat/child boy who was on the loose in North America. I'd ask Grammie if these creatures were real, and she would always tell me, "Of course dear. It wouldn't be in the paper if it weren't."

On nights I'd sleep over at her house she would tell me that Sasquatch would get me if I didn't go to bed. I'd fall asleep to the sound of her watching "Touched by an Angel" in the living room, as I imagined the claws of a giant beast tapping on my bedroom window.

As a teenager I spent a lot of time visiting Grammie. She'd pay me \$5 to mow her lawn. When I was done mowing we would sit on her front steps. She'd be drinking a Tab (it was her favorite soda), and she'd toss me one of those colorful juices that came in a little plastic barrel. I hated those juices, but she thought I liked them, so I'd drink it. I knew she had used her food stamp money to buy them for me, and I didn't want to seem ungrateful.

We'd sit there on her steps. I'd tell her about the boys I liked at school. How things were going with my friends and schoolwork. Typical teenager stuff. She would listen happily, interjecting here and there to give me a piece of advice. At the time those front step chats seemed unremarkable, but now that she's gone... I would give anything to be able to chat with her one more time.

I found out I was pregnant with my son shortly after she died. I was devastated at the thought of her never meeting my child. I had cried myself to sleep one night while pregnant thinking about this and feeling sad that my son would never know her. When I fell asleep I started dreaming about this crazy mall, where everything looked like it was straight out of the 1980's. In the dream I was walking down an escalator. I looked across the way at the escalator going up and my grandmother was standing on it. She looked beautiful! She smiled at me and waved. We didn't exchange any words. I just felt this incredible feeling of warmth and love. When I woke up the next morning, I didn't feel sad about her not meeting my son. I had a feeling she already knew him.

So this is an ode to my Grandmother. I will forever miss you Carol Jean. You were one in a million. I love you. ●



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ABOUT HOW YOU  
CHOOSE TO LIVE.**

---

**WHAT FOLLOWS ARE THE  
STORIES OF WOMEN WHO  
HAVE CHOSEN TO MAKE  
MAINE HOME.**







SAFIYA KAHLID

# DEAR MAINE

EXCERPTED FROM THE BOOK BY **MORGAN RIELLY** AND **REZA JALALI**  
PUBLISHED BY **ISLANDPORT PRESS** WITH PHOTOGRAPHY BY **LILIT DANIELYAN**

**M**ORGAN RIELLY IS AN AUTHOR AND STATE REPRESENTATIVE. REZA JALALI IS A FORMER REFUGEE AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE GREATER PORTLAND IMMIGRANT WELCOME CENTER. IN THEIR 2021 BOOK OF ESSAYS TITLED "DEAR MAINE," THEY RECOUNT THE TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS OF TWENTY IMMIGRANTS WHO HAVE ARRIVED IN MAINE OVER THE PAST FEW DECADES. THIS IS AN EXCERPT.

## CHAPTER 1, SAFIYA KAHLID

Seven-year-old Safiya Khalid, who had never been to a cinema in her life, was terrified when she first sat down to watch a 3-D movie in a New Jersey theater. She had only recently arrived in America from war-torn Somalia and the actors on the big screen looked like giants, while the 3-D technology seemed to bring them right into the theater. But while those special effects images may have been scary, the true story of her childhood and struggle for survival in a Kenyan refugee camp is as frightening as anything screenwriters can dream up.

Luckily, her remarkable story also features a feel-good Hollywood ending. Safiya, who arrived on American shores in the early 2000s speaking no English, found her way to a struggling old mill town in Maine and garnered national headlines by overcoming prevailing wisdom and vicious Internet trolls to become the first Somali American and Muslim to win election to the city council. And she was just twenty-three.

Such a plot seemed a fantasy when Safiya, who had fled violence in her home country, was a malnourished three-year-old, lying near death on an outdoor hospital cot, too weak to even lift her head. She was underweight, malnourished, and suffering from an undiagnosed intestinal bacterial illness. While her mother kept a steady vigil, doctors and nurses put Safiya through medical procedures, including tests, injections, and blood transfusions. At one point, Safiya's body was so compromised, the nurses could not find a good vein. "They had to inject me on the sole of my foot," Safiya said.

That part of her story is not unique. According to the United Nations, malnutrition and disease were common in refugee camps, but Safiya could have been the poster child for the devastating problems of food insecurity and displacement created by the civil wars and famine in Africa.

The country of Somalia is located on the eastern side of Africa, bordering Ethiopia, Kenya, and the Indian Ocean. Safiya was born in 1996 in the port city of Kismayo, located in the southern Lower Juba, more than three hundred miles southwest of Somalia's capital city, Mogadishu. When she was born, Kismayo, which sits along the Indian Ocean and is the commercial capital of the autonomous Jubaland region, had a population of more than 150,000 people.

Safiya was born into a time of extreme chaos and violence. In the late 1980s, rebels rose up against the military junta that controlled the country. Across the countryside, Somali national forces battled the numerous armed rebel groups.

When the rebels overthrew the existing government, no one group filled the vacuum. The nation devolved into civil war, customary law collapsed, and at one point Somalia was declared a failed state. Overall, it is estimated that more than a half-million people died during the civil war, while millions more were displaced either internally or by fleeing to massive refugee camps in nearby countries. As part of all this fighting, violence exploded in Kismayo, and the city became the site of many battles. "At one point, my stomach was even bigger than my mother's, who was pregnant with my baby brother," she recalls.

By the late 1990s, as violence and its brutal ripple effects continued, young Safiya, just a toddler, and her family sought safety. They joined a larger group of people who decided to escape Kismayo and walked the three hundred miles to find safety in Mombasa, a coastal city in southeast Kenya, the closest African country. The family stayed in Mombasa for just a few months before heading out again on foot, this time looking to cover the four hundred miles



necessary to reach one of the world's largest refugee camps, Hagadera, which is part of the Dadaab camp complex.

In 1992, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) established the Hagadera camp so refugees in Africa could escape violence and the famine that followed. Today, roughly thirty years later, the three camps in Kenya's Dadaab complex—Ifo, Dagahaley, and Hagadera—are still home to more than 200,000 refugees, according to the United Nations. This number now includes third-generation refugees, meaning refugees are being born in Dadaab to refugee parents who themselves were born in the camp. The camps were originally designed to host up to 90,000 people. Since 1991, violence, ongoing drought, and famine have left Somalia one of the world's least developed countries and displaced millions of people from their homes—many facing extreme poverty and malnutrition. More than 70 percent of the country lives in poverty, and in 2021 nearly 650,000 Somali refugees still live at camps in four nearby African countries, according to the UN Refugee Agency.

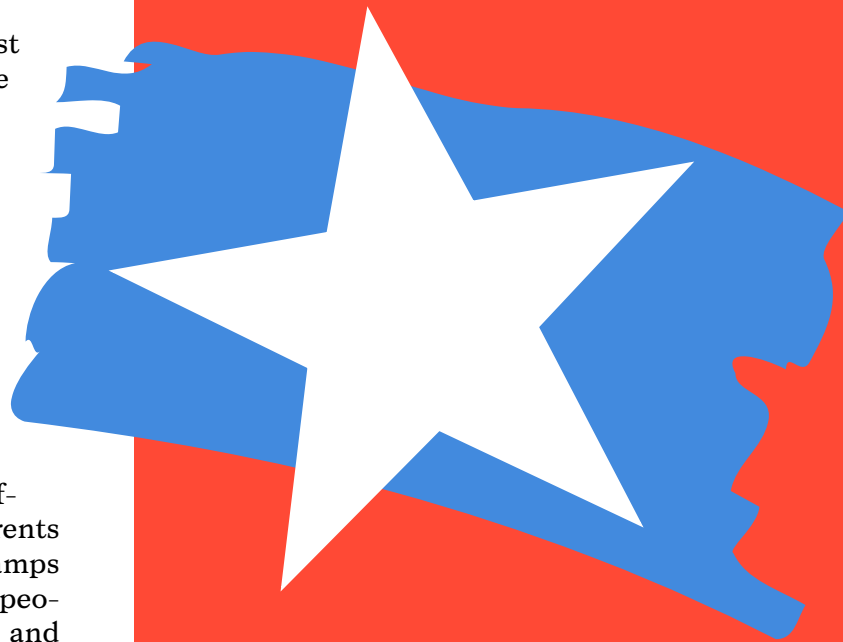
Meanwhile, as Safiya and her family trekked across the countryside toward the camps, violence and danger trailed close behind. One time, a boy traveling with them was hit in the leg by a bullet. Another time they tried to hide in a cave, only to find a lion already living there. United Nations relief workers came to rescue the group of women and children, and took them the rest of the way to the refugee camp, where they would live for the next four years.

Safiya has few direct memories of her life at the camp.

"I was extremely sick," she said. "I only remember the hospital."

At one point during Safiya's four years at the refugee camp, her father, frustrated with her prolonged illness and slow recovery, sent Safiya to live with his brother on his cattle farm in a remote village. Safiya's father believed all she needed to heal was "good air."

"I was basically abandoned and left there by my father," Safiya says. Her mother had other ideas and set out to bring her back.



**SAFIYA...FOUND HER WAY TO A STRUGGLING OLD MILL TOWN IN MAINE AND GARNERED NATIONAL HEADLINES BY OVERCOMING PREVAILING WISDOM AND VICIOUS INTERNET TROLLS TO BECOME THE FIRST SOMALI AMERICAN AND MUSLIM TO WIN ELECTION TO THE CITY COUNCIL.**

**AND SHE WAS JUST TWENTY-THREE.**

## CHAPTER 2, FILIP AND GORDANA MANJENCIC

On the eve of war, Gordana Manjencic and her husband, Branislav, escaped Bosnia on the last plane out, the first leg of a frightening and often dangerous journey that took them through Serbia, Greece, and Germany—places where they were often unable to speak the language, struggled to find work, and lived under the constant threat of deportation. When the couple and their young son finally reached Maine and what seemed like a happy ending, Branislav suffered a heart attack and died, leaving Gordana in a still-strange land trying to find work and raising Filip as a single mother.

Filip, now in his twenties, looks back at his mother's journey and is both humbled by her sacrifices and in awe of her perseverance.

"She is probably the hardest-working person I know. I don't know how she did it," he said. "One thing she told me that I will never forget, that stays with me always, is that when something happens, you can't do anything about it. There is no sense in crying over spilled milk, so you might as well make the best of it."

### Bosnia Before War

Gordana was born and raised in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina when it was part of Yugoslavia, a communist-controlled state. Following the end of World War II, Yugoslavia was set up

as a federation of six republics, with borders drawn along ethnic and historical lines—Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia. In addition, two autonomous provinces, Vojvodina and Kosovo, were established within Serbia. After longtime dictator Josip Broz Tito died in 1980, the government could not cope with the escalating economic and political instability of the 1980s, a decade that served as a run-up to the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe in 1989,

symbolized by the fall of the Berlin Wall.

"If for some reason they lost their jobs, they knew they were going to get help. Here I am terrified if I cannot work for three months."

The turmoil prompted many Yugoslavs to rally behind their ethnic and religious groups, and the growing independence and nationalist movements helped to increase the turmoil in Yugoslavia and in Bosnia. Several republics declared independence in 1991 and 1992, and then, following a series of



FILIP AND GORDANA MANJENCIC

inter-ethnic incidents, the Yugoslav Wars erupted, first in Croatia and then in Bosnia. Before it ended, the Yugoslav War and the Bosnian genocide would claim the lives of more than 100,000 people and displace millions as refugees. The war's economic and political damage and tensions are still felt there decades later.

The Yugoslav War was still years away when a



young Gordana and her family lived in a cramped apartment in Sarajevo. While she did not enjoy much privacy while growing up and the family didn't have much money, she said that because of their circumstances, she learned to appreciate what she had and to share with others.

"Nobody was happier than me when I got my bicycle," she said. "My parents invested in that and I took care of the bicycle. Here, you buy toys and tons of things, but they are worth nothing."

Like many families in Yugoslavia, Gordana's family learned to carve out small measures of freedom under communist control. As long as she did not question the Communist Party, Gordana felt she could mostly do what she wanted. As a young adult, she listened to rock 'n' roll music and partied with friends without getting into trouble.

While Yugoslavia was a communist country, it was not dominated by the Soviet Union like East Germany or neighboring Hungary. Bosnia was a historically diverse region. The Yugoslav Communist Party provided job security and some guaranteed income.

"We were all feeling supported," she said. "I was never scared because my parents were never scared. If for some reason they lost their jobs, they knew they were going to get help. Here I am terrified if I cannot work for three months."

Gordana graduated from college in Sarajevo with a degree in civil engineering. When she could not find a job in her field, she worked a variety of temporary but interesting jobs. She worked at a resort on the Adriatic Sea, in what is now Croatia, and as a hostess at the 1984 Winter Olympics. When her sister called about potential work at an electrical company, Gordana returned to Sarajevo. It was there that she met her future husband, Branislav.

"He saw me," she said. "He wanted to meet me and I didn't know that."

Some friends at work eventually introduced them. "He was calling me constantly and I finally said 'Okay.'"

Over time, Gordana fell in love. Branislav was

different from other guys.

"I was a little different, maybe," she said. "I always loved mysteries, history. I loved legends. I was interested in space and stuff like that. And that was what I read." She was surprised that Branislav shared her interests. "That's something I had with Filip's dad," she said. "We would talk and talk about that stuff."

#### Last Plane Out

The stability Gordana had prized was shattered when war finally erupted and ripped Yugoslavia apart, forcing the couple to flee for their lives. When the war started on April 6, 1993, Gordana did not want to leave Sarajevo, the city she calls the most multi-cultural in all of Yugoslavia. She and her friends did not believe that the war would reach Sarajevo.

"This won't play here," she thought. "We are tight. We don't hate each other. But it kind of just started happening. You know, people get desperate."

They only stayed two weeks, and Gordana's hope for peace was dashed over a single weekend.

"Friday, when I came from my work, we were joking about 'See you Monday, hopefully,'" she said. "We didn't know what was going to happen."

Gordana did not go to work on Monday. "The snipers started working," she said. Her husband was nearly shot while on the balcony of their apartment. As the city quickly devolved and became increasingly dangerous, Gordana and Branislav decided to flee the violence. They escaped on the last plane to leave the country.

PUBLISHED IN 2021, DEAR MAINE IS AVAILABLE FROM ISLANDPORT PRESS AT WWW.ISLANDPORTPRESS.COM PRODUCT PAGE DEAR MAINE.

# TOTO MUTEBA

## A SURVIVAL & SUCCESS STORY

BY ALISHA GOSLIN

When Toto Muteba first arrived in the country in August of 2011, she was 40 years old, 5 months pregnant, could not communicate with anyone unless they also spoke French and was sick from stress and worry. She had fled, carrying only a suitcase, from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where she was a lawyer in the security department and liaison to Parliament in Kinshasa, the Capitol of Congo. She had to leave her husband, their 4 children and her parents all behind. She was the victim of terrible violence during her pregnancy because she is the granddaughter of a traditional chief from part of the Congo that was in opposition to the current regime. "I had to leave them all or I would die," Toto states.

Toto first went to New York. From there, someone put her in touch with the Congo community in the Portland area. She traveled to Portland and arrived at the shelter, where she stayed until she was able to get a General Assistance voucher for a shared apartment. She had her youngest child, a daughter, Alliance, at Maine Medical Center on December 3rd, 2011.

In February of 2012, Toto filed the immigration paperwork for asylum. It would take 8 long years to be granted. Toto knew she needed to learn English to begin working, and adult ed classes had a long wait list, so she found herself at the Salvation Army.

There, Toto would meet Mary Irace, whom she credits with being the biggest help to her. Picture this: Toto, standing with a note of paper in her hand, stating she was there for English classes, baby in tow, trying to communicate with Mary. Toto noticed that there was a class taking place and showed Mary that she wanted to go. Mary let her into the

class, but, unfortunately, it was not a day for English classes as Toto had thought. It was a Tools for Life class. "I went in and sat down for the end of the class. Then, class was over, and everyone got up and left. So, I did too," laughs Toto.

But Toto came back, and eventually ended up in the English classes as well as the Tools for Life classes. It was key for her, she says. "First, I was attending the classes with my baby. Mary would watch her for me. But after a while she said, 'We need to find a daycare for her. You need to do your classes and then find work. I can't watch her for you all the time,' so she helped me find her daycare. Then, I was able to get my first job here at the Regency Hotel as a housekeeper. Mary was my reference for that, too."

Finally, in 2018, Toto's husband and children were able to join her and the daughter and sister they had yet to meet here in Maine. Toto explained, "Mary and the Falmouth Foreside Community Church put on one fundraiser and raised enough money to bring my family here. It covered their medical reports, vaccinations, photographs and passports, interviews at the embassy in Kinshasa, visas, and plane tickets."

Toto says life is good now. Her oldest son, Jorin, who is 19, just graduated from Biddeford High and will be going on to college in the fall. When asked her favorite thing about living here, she says it is the hard workers of Maine that she likes the most. When she isn't working hard herself, she enjoys time spent with Mary, shopping or just chatting. "She was the right person. Sometimes, you meet the right person at the right time. Mary was that for me."



# MARY IRACE HELPS NEW MAINERS FIND THEIR WAY

INTERVIEW BY **ALISHA GOSLIN**

**TOOLS FOR LIFE** IS A LIFE AND CAREER SKILLS SERIES OF CLASSES, LED BY DIRECTOR MARY IRACE, PROVIDED THROUGH THE SALVATION ARMY. IT IS A FREE PROGRAM FOR PEOPLE WHO WANT TO LEARN THE TOOLS TO OBTAIN A HIGHER QUALITY OF LIFE. MANY OF THE PARTICIPANTS ARE REFUGEES OR ASYLUM SEEKERS, LEAVING THEIR HOMES WITHOUT MUCH MORE THAN WHAT THEY CAN CARRY WITH THEM. MARY HELPS THEM LEARN THE THINGS THEY NEED TO KNOW TO MAKE IT – AND BE SUCCESSFUL – IN A NEW PLACE. EVERYTHING FROM ENGLISH CLASSES, TO HOW TO COOK, APPLY FOR JOBS, GET A BANK ACCOUNT, FIND HOUSING, AND EVENTUALLY BE INDEPENDENT.

## HOW DID THE PROGRAM DO AMIDST COVID?

The unique thing about the Salvation Army is that we are usually the first thing people see when they come into Portland. We have a lot of people still coming across the borders. There are well over 1000 people in shelters now. When we had what they call the big surge a couple years ago, it was only around 400. A lot of families now, too. The price of rent is really a lot higher than it was, and it's just very difficult.

Consistency and being there are really important. During the pandemic, I called people up and asked how they were doing, and they were always very gratified by it, just that you are thinking of them. A lot of them had COVID, or were recovering, so just that check-in made a difference. I think it was a crazy time for everyone. For the recovery community, it was very hard. They lost a lot of people through death and overdoses. I think we found out how important everyone is to each other over that time. It's

good to be able to see people again. Makes your heart happy.

## TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT SOME OF THE SUCCESS STORIES OVER THE YEARS WITH THE PROGRAM. ARE THERE CERTAIN PEOPLE WHO STAND OUT?

Well, at this point over 2000 folks have gone through the Tools For Life program. There is Toto, who was fleeing DRC Congo for her life. She's here now, as are the rest of her family. And Khalida, who is now a citizen. Philomena and her family. One thing that is significant is there are people who have been here since 2014, '15, '16 and their cases haven't been heard yet. They are still waiting. Then I have some other people who have just been here for 6 months, and they are going before the immigration court in Boston already. A lot stopped during COVID, of course. It is just a real tangle, a real suspension of their lives. Sometimes, when people are seeking asylum, they have fled for their lives, so they are trying to keep a low profile. It makes it hard. But when we are able to reunite the families, that is just

the best. To be there at the airport when they get to see their kids again. It's just so moving.

Sometimes, in social services, there is a lot of coming and going. So, when I started this job 10 years ago, I decided I would do what I had to, to stay. And to just be there over that period of time. To see someone in the beginning, and what their needs were then, and to see where they are now. I feel that God puts us here for a reason. This is something that brings me joy, and I am happier because I am able to spread that joy and be there to encourage others. I feel like I am paying it back, being there for others. So many people need to know how unique and special they are, and nothing that they have gone through, or things that people have said or done to them can ever in any way diminish their incredible value. ●

## HERE IS A SUMMARY OF THE NEW TOOLS FOR LIFE CLASS OFFERINGS.

- Tools for Life skills and career classes Tuesday's 10AM-12PM
- Tools for Life classes for new immigrants (with translation in French/Portuguese and Lingala) Wednesday's 10AM-12PM
- Microsoft Computer classes Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. New summer hours will be posted along with class content on website
- ESL Pronunciator lab (over 160 languages) Monday-Thursday 10AM-3PM
- Good Shepherd cooking classes Thursdays 10AM-12PM

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT TOOLS FOR LIFE PLEASE VISIT [SALVATIONARMYME.ORG/TFL](https://salvationarmyme.org/tfl) OR EMAIL [MARY.IRACE@USE.SALVATIONARMY.ORG](mailto:MARY.IRACE@USE.SALVATIONARMY.ORG).





# NEW MAINER

**SIERRA PULIS AND HER HUSBAND RYAN DECIDED TO MOVE TO MAINE IN MAY OF 2021 WITH THEIR TWO DAUGHTERS, CORINNA, 8, AND ALAYLA, 6. THEY SETTLED ON A BEAUTIFUL PIECE OF PROPERTY NEAR THE RIVER IN FRANKFORT. SIERRA AND I HAD A CHANCE TO TALK ABOUT HER FAMILY'S MOVE TO MAINE AND WHAT SHE LOVES ABOUT OUR GREAT STATE.**

**How did you decide on Maine?**

Well, my husband Ryan and I had never been to Maine before and we wanted somewhere we could experience the seasons. I'd only been to New Hampshire when I was a teenager and had always wanted to come to New England. It was really just no specific reason, more that it just felt right. We had thought, Vermont, maybe? We knew nothing about any of the places we were looking at, really, but Maine just felt like the right place. It was so appealing.

**So, how did the move come about then? Did you come visit?**

In May of 2021, we became more serious about it. We came for a visit and to look at a couple of different properties but they were all over the state. We didn't really realize how far apart they were, as far as driving time. At that point, we had never been to Maine, had no idea about it, so we were just looking on Zillow at homes. We said, well, we will just look in our price range and see what comes up. We were working with a realtor out of the Portland area, and she brought us to Skowhegan and some homes in central Maine. We were also supposed to go up north to Aroostook County, but we never made it all the way. We got to where the Ap-

palachian Trail ends and we turned around. It was just too far for us. We were coming from someplace that was so different. Anyway, all of the houses we had liked, we had been outbid on. It was about an hour from the time that we were supposed to start driving back to Virginia, and Ryan found this property in Frankfort. He called our realtor, who unfortunately was already back in Portland, but she was able to get us in to see what is now our home. When we met at the house, with the river being right there, a good school district for the kids, and right close to Belfast and Bangor, but not a city area itself, we knew it was perfect for us.

**What are some of your favorite things about Maine?**

Definitely nature. Just how much of it is here. Coming from the Virginia Beach area, which is just like a sprawling suburbia, it's such a change. We owned one property in Norfolk with a small forested area behind it. One of the last ones. And there were plans to put up an apartment complex there. And that was it. We couldn't stay there. We want to raise our kids somewhere that's safer and has an exposure to nature. I love that it still feels wild here. Not everything is tamed. In Virginia, you wouldn't even see weeds anywhere, unless it was an overgrown highway median. Everything was sprayed with RoundUp and manicured with ornamental plants. I feel like here, there is such a value placed on natural spaces and trees and forest. It's a big deal and very different for us. I could see us living here for a long time. For a child to grow up here, it's such a magical place. I want that for my children. ●

# SIERRA PULIS

..... INTERVIEW BY ALISHA GOSLIN



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## sidebar

in the past 14 years  
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**198,973 miles biked**  
**41,625 miles run**  
**4,398 miles swum**  
**5,700 volunteers**

**16,359**  
**participants**

# Tri for a Cure

## a landmark race

July 10, 2022. Race day. This date marked the 15th annual Tri for a Cure, an all-women's sprint triathlon founded in 2008 by Julie Marchese and her friend Abby Bliss. All funds raised by participants go toward Maine Cancer Foundation's work.

*Maine Women* connected with the race organizers to understand the full scope of this amazing event:

Tri for a Cure raises funds to support Maine Cancer Foundation's work. MCF leads a statewide endeavor to foster and grow the most promising and effective cancer-fighting efforts available to the people of Maine through a combination of grant-based financial support and coalition building. Maine's cancer rates are higher than the national average, and it is the leading cause of death in our state – killing more than 3,000 people each year. The good news is that nearly 50% of all cancers can be prevented through healthy lifestyle choices and 1/3 of cancer deaths can be avoided with early detection; MCF is funding programs across the state to encourage these lifesaving choices and opportunities. Access to the best care can also be difficult in our state and MCF is funding programs to improve this, as well by fostering cancer prevention programs to prevent cancer before it starts, increasing cancer screenings to detect cancer in its earliest stages when it's easier to treat, and improving access to the best care for all Mainers.

Women join the Tri by entering a lottery that's drawn on February 1 each year; nearly 20% of the women are offered guaranteed entry for the following year by reaching a specific fundraising target. Our very generous business sponsors offset the costs to host the event so that all funds raised by participants go to support Maine Cancer Foundation's work. Volunteers – we could not do this event without them! Each year upwards of 500 men and women volunteer across all areas of the Tri race course.

Why the Tri? Because MCF's work has to happen and we're so very fortunate to have an event like Tri for a Cure that makes it happen! As for the 'why' of our participants, there are too

many to list, many very personal. What always comes through is that the 'why' is two-fold; women do this race for their own deeply personal reasons AND because they are determined to make a difference in the lives of others- women, men, children, family, friends, total strangers- cancer tries to chase down all of us, these women Tri Harder to make sure it can't.

Home base for the race is Southern Maine Community College in South Portland, but the event course runs through Cape Elizabeth and Scarborough, by three different lighthouses: Spring Point Ledge lighthouse for the swim (1/3 mile), Portland Headlight as they cycle (15 miles) down Shore Road and Bug Light for the run (3.2 miles).

Drawing upon what we learned in 2020 and 2021, we have kept the option to participate in Tri for a Cure virtually. For 2022 we have 67 who will participate virtually. It's up to the participant to decide where and when between June 24 to July 10 she would like to do her own Tri (swim, bike, run as described above). This is a great opportunity to do the Tri at your own pace and in an area where you're most comfortable! For example, one might opt to swim lengths in the backyard pool, do some long loops around the neighborhood and then run on a treadmill because the weather has suddenly turned bad.

Event day kicks off early at the beachfront of Spring Point Ledge Lighthouse. A moving opening ceremony at 7:30am is followed by cancer survivors in their pink swim caps heading into the water in the first swim waves.

Tri for a Cure happens thanks to the over 100 sponsors who have committed their money and services over these 14 years to make sure the necessary costs to keep the event safe and exciting are covered. The army of volunteers, many of whom return each year, not only provide structural support but their cheering, TLC, and smiles keep the participants moving forward through the toughest parts of the course. The unbelievably generous donors who contribute to support the participants are the funding that drives MCF's granting. Last but far from least, thanks to our dedicated participants who inspire us all! ●

*Details at [triforcure.org](http://triforcure.org)*



# Neighbors Making a Difference

To all participants and supporters of Maine Cancer Foundation's Tri for a Cure® event, **thank you!**



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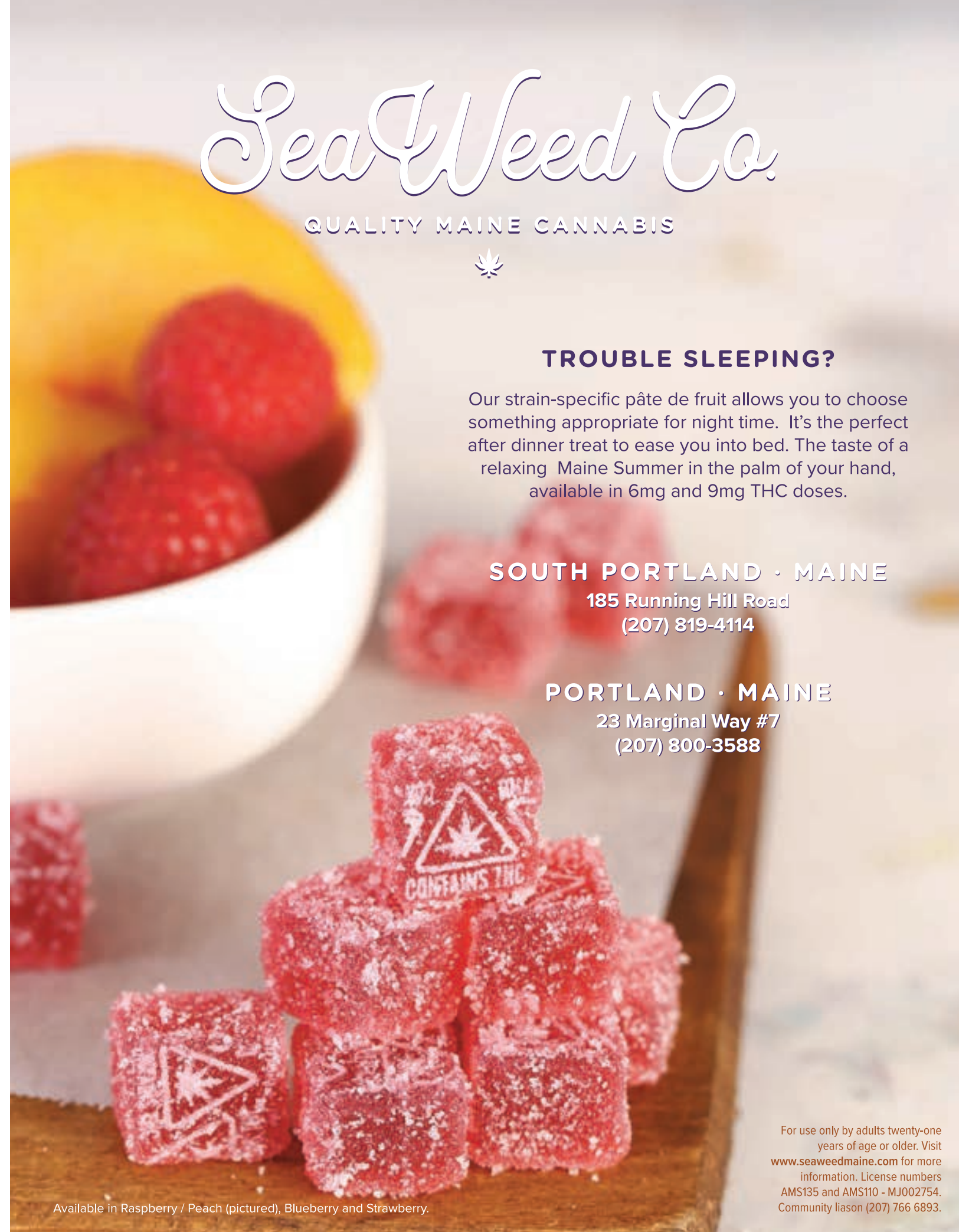
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I looked at several senior communities in Portland and South Portland over the past six years, but after seeing The Park Danforth I was certain of where I wanted to live when the time was right. Ongoing home maintenance and being isolated in my own home helped me make the decision to finally move into a senior community. I wanted to spend less time on home repairs and more time learning, doing, and growing as a person. The Park Danforth has given me these opportunities. The Park Danforth is the place for me. - Barb F.



## Are you Considering Senior Living?

The Park Danforth has been providing quality senior housing since 1881. Situated in the lively community of Portland, The Park Danforth offers active seniors the choices and options that they deserve.

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- Free and Ample Parking
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# MENTAL HEALTH unconventional stress reduction

It seems the obvious answer to minimizing stress is to reduce the number of stressors in your life, right? However, we are not always in charge of our stressors. The world unfolds in its own way, so unless you live in a remote cave (however appealing that is from time to time) you will be impacted by your community's greater narrative and circumstances. That's when it might be time to bring some intention to the other side of the stress equation by cultivating joy, soothing yourself, and nurturing meaning in your life.

Here's how: Seek experiences that counterbalance stress. When things feel over the top it can seem counterintuitive to add something to your calendar, but when that addition is joy, some meaning, or a self-care booster, it is worth considering. In addition to scheduling your work and home/body maintenance tasks, you could also pen in your fun, family connections, and down time to relax, read, or do absolutely nothing. Focus on soothing your nervous system. Hack your amygdala (the trigger for your body's fight, flight, freeze, or fawn response) so you can stay more emotionally regulated. Humans like to think we are logical, thinking beings who sometimes feel emotions, the truth is we are feeling, emotional beings who are sometimes able to think. In many ways we are our nervous systems. Because of this, understanding how it works is vital.

### A few facts and approaches to consider:

Your brain's most basic function is to improve your chances of survival. One strategy it employs is known as a "negativity bias," meaning that you are naturally inclined to see the glass as half empty—yes even those of us who consider ourselves optimists. Just knowing this can help you stay out of the negativity rabbit hole.

Your vagus nerve, also known as the body's "communication superhighway," is one of the biggest nerves connecting the brain to the gut. It has many functions, among them are regulating appetite, metabolic functions, and heart rate. However, stress can cause fatigue and/or overstimulation. Some simple

ways to soothe your vagus nerve are to splash cold water on your face, practice deep breathing (the only automatic bodily function that you can also take charge of) or listen to relaxing music.

Use your five senses to support your nervous system by busting out the good smelling lotion or essential oil, melting a lozenge or piece of chocolate in your mouth, looking at a beautiful photo online (use your computer wallpaper to your advantage) or hugging yourself and massaging your own temples, shoulders, and arms. Listening was already mentioned, but you can also try a "sound bath" in addition to traditional music. Focus outside yourself and aim to serve your community. Sometimes you really need to take care of yourself. Other times it can help to center someone else's needs. It can be a real gratitude-builder and perspective-broadener to step outside your own bubble and give back. See sidebar for some suggestions. While it is certainly a good idea to reduce stressors when you can, aiming to offset things with positive, "protective" experiences may also counterbalance the tensions you face. Start small and give yourself grace. Managing to stretch every day, take a 2-minute "peace break," go on a short walk, or any of the other things suggested here are small wins to be celebrated. ●

SARAH MACLAUGHLIN IS A SOCIAL WORKER AND AUTHOR; HER MOST RECENT BOOK IS RAISING HUMANS WITH HEART: NOT A HOW-TO MANUAL.

BY SARAH MACLAUGHLIN



## Care Connection

## LIVE-IN HOME CARE

### FCP Live-In's Live-In Professional Caregiver Services Helps Seniors With Affordable Home Care!

Guy Stoye worked as a tree surgeon for 25 years in the Rochester, New Hampshire area. So, it's no wonder that his home is nestled in a scenic area with a lake right next to the house. Unfortunately, Guy had a stroke and was hospitalized. When Guy recovered, he was eager to get back home. However, he faced a dilemma: Guy could not care for himself nor manage daily household responsibilities.

One option was to move into a senior living facility. But, Guy did not want to leave the home he loved and its beautiful surroundings. Guy heard about FCP Live-In, a New England-based company that provides professional live-in caregiving services.

Hiring a live-in caregiver sounded ideal, but Guy was suspicious about it. Did he want a stranger living in his home to care for him? But, after contacting FCP Live-In and learning about the company's live-in care services that allow clients to stay in their homes, Guy decided to forge ahead and arrange for live-in care. He's glad that he did.

"It's surely been the luckiest thing that has happened to me since the stroke," Guy said. "And perhaps, the luckiest

thing that has happened to me in my life."

Regardless of their health challenges, many older adults want to remain independent and stay in their homes instead of moving into a nursing home or an assisted living facility to have someone care for them.

Thanks to FCP Live-In and his caregiver, Guy was one of the fortunate seniors who did not have to leave his home. FCP Live-In caregiver, Deslyn, has been

*"She [caregiver] notices every little thing that needs doing! She's eager to fix anything that needs fixing or needs adjustment. She sees if I'm not totally comfortable. I couldn't ask for anything better."*

-Guy Stoye

helping Guy for the past two months.

"She notices every little thing that needs doing," Guy said. She's eager to fix anything that needs fixing or needs adjustment. She sees if I'm not totally comfortable. I couldn't ask for anything better."

FCP Live-In's caregivers are nurse's aides, home health aides, and personal care aides and have at least two years of professional experience. Each caregiver undergoes a thorough state and national

background checks, and all are bonded and insured.

In addition, the company conducts multiple interviews and requires applicants to pass a skills assessments and a day-long orientation to evaluate the capabilities and professionalism of each applicant. FCP Live-In also has a unique process for matching caregivers with clients.

The company's caregivers help clients who have various health conditions, including cancer, Parkinson's disease, depression, Alzheimer's disease, and other forms of dementia. The compassionate caregivers also work with hospice programs to provide hospice in-home care and end-of-life care.

Although older adults and their families are thankful for the company's services, live-in caregivers also receive benefits from their job.

"It has been totally amazing," Deslyn said. "I couldn't ask for a more wonderful family. I also have a wonderful team behind me. It has become quite the experience. And I've never been in New England, so my weather changes are amazing."

Deslyn says she doesn't feel as if she's working, she feels as if she's part of Guy's family.

"She feels that she is a part of the family; well, she is part of the family," Guy confirmed. "Never a day goes by that I'm not glad to see her coming into the room all smiles."

## FINANCIAL ADVICE investing for retirement – a smart woman's guide

BY LISA A. CHERRY

**An early start on investing is a great way to build retirement wealth...and it's never too early to start investing.**

Investing for a longer period of time is largely recognized as a more effective strategy than waiting until you have a large amount of savings or cash flow to invest. Whether you are planning for a first home purchase, or thinking about saving for retirement, an early start may help you achieve your dreams at a faster pace.

### Take Advantage of Time

Compounding investment returns is the snowball effect that occurs when your earnings generate even more earnings. Essentially, your investments grow not only on the original amount invested, but also on any accumulated interest, dividends, and capital gains.

The longer you are invested, the more time there is for your investment returns to compound. Time also enables you to take advantage of long-term historical market returns to effectively grow your portfolio over the long run.

### Frequent Investing

In addition to starting early, investing often is important. A regular investment plan allows you to choose when and how often you make contributions

to ensure that investing remains a priority throughout the year, not just during certain periods—like the IRA contribution deadline. This enables you to apply a disciplined savings approach to help successfully build wealth over time.

For example, if you are enrolled in a work-offered 401(k) program, investing with each paycheck instead of making an annual contribution allows you the opportunity to ease into any type of market (rising, falling, flat) and help reduce long-term portfolio volatility. This is the case because investing a fixed dollar amount on a regular basis gives you a chance to buy more investment units when prices are low and fewer units when prices are high, thereby potentially reducing the average cost of your investment over the long term.

### Get Started Today

Generally, the more you save today, the less you may need to save in the future to achieve the same goal as someone who invested more over a shorter period of time. Your current income is a useful starting point for calculating certain long-term goals—like your retirement savings needs—since the more you make today, the more savings you will likely need to fund your lifestyle in retirement. ●

LISA CHERRY IS THE VICE-PRESIDENT - FINANCIAL ADVISOR AT RBC WEALTH MANAGEMENT IN BANGOR. SHE IS A WIFE AND MOTHER FROM WINTERPORT. FMI CONTACT LISA AT [LISA.CHERRY@RBC.COM](mailto:LISA.CHERRY@RBC.COM).

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# CAREER ADVICE SOAR initiative connects new mainers to the trades

BY HEATHER DOUGLASS

A new workforce initiative is underway to help new Mainers continue the careers they had in their homeland. The pilot, named SOAR Maine, will focus first on trade occupations, and will also provide a pathway for Mainers looking to switch occupations. The Skills and Occupational Assessment Rating helps individuals quantify their work experience and skills and present it to participating employers in a resume form. The workgroup also addresses some of the major barriers to employment like transportation, translation services, and transition support.

“Our goal is to interview a candidate, establish a skill and language rating by completing a hands-on assessment with an instructor, create a resume, and connect that individual with a participating employer. We know new Mainers have so much to contribute to our communities. It all starts with them being gainfully employed in a field they’re already experienced in; what better way to assimilate? Everyone needs help and they want to work. Let’s remove the barriers and provide the pathways. It’s that simple.” said Shawn Moody, owner of Moody’s Collision and organizer of SOAR.

Nationally, The Asylum Seeker Work Authorization Act of 2022, authored by Senator Susan Collins and cosponsored by Senator Angus King, has been

introduced in Congress. If passed, the bill would reduce the waiting period for employment authorization to 30 days; often, asylum seekers are forced to wait one year before they can become employed.

“This initiative brings together businesses, adult education partners, career and technical education, Maine’s community colleges, and community resources to meet our new Mainers where they are at,” said Dan Belyea, Chief Workforce Development Officer for the Maine Community College System. “This is such a skilled talent pool. We’re working with community members to pilot the first ten SOAR occupations.”

The SOAR workgroup held its first meeting in May and plans to have pilots running by early fall. For more information on the initiative, contact Heather Douglass at [hdouglass@mccs.me.edu](mailto:hdouglass@mccs.me.edu). ●

HEATHER DOUGLASS IS THE WORKFORCE COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR FOR THE MAINE COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM.



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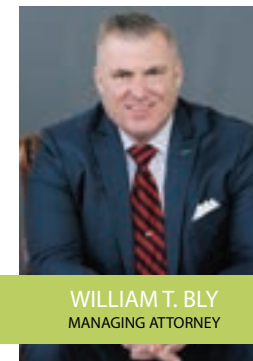
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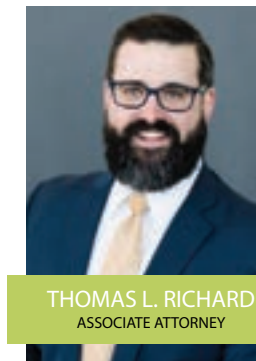


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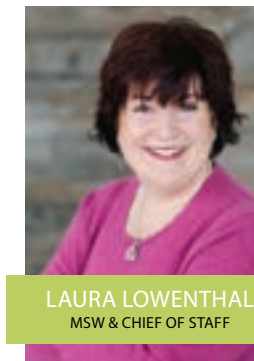
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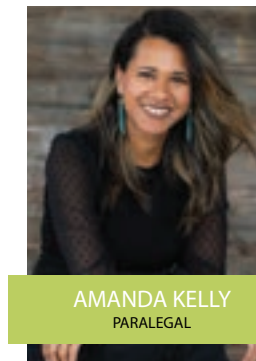
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IF I HAD A MILLION DOLLARS.....

mufalo chitambala

As executive director at the Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition, Mufalo Chitambala had an answer immediately when asked what her Big Dream would be if nothing stood in her way. She said it was a very timely question since she is so overwhelmed currently with supporting newly arrived asylum seeker families in our state.

## This is Mufalo's Big Dream

I would create a multicultural campsite to be used as a transitional shelter for newly arrived immigrants. I would build a huge solar-powered chalet-style heated tent to use during summer and another barn style open concept and self-contained huge space to use during the winter months. The grounds would have outdoor showers and bathrooms and a commercial kitchen with a fire-place, playground for the kids and a fresh vegetable garden. ●

IF YOU CAN HELP MAKE THIS DREAM A REALITY, HAVE IDEAS ABOUT HOW TO DO SO, OR CAN DONATE TIME OR FUNDS, PLEASE CONTACT MUFALO AT [MUFALOC@MAINEIMMIGRANTSRIGHTS.ORG](mailto:MUFALOC@MAINEIMMIGRANTSRIGHTS.ORG).

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE MAINE IMMIGRANTS RIGHTS COALITION PLEASE VISIT [WWW.MAINEIMMIGRANTSRIGHTS.ORG](http://WWW.MAINEIMMIGRANTSRIGHTS.ORG).



## Frozen Yogurt Bark

Treat yourself to a little something sweet. Let your imagination run wild with flavor combinations by using different fruits, nuts and extracts!

SERVES 8

### Ingredients:

2 cups	Stonyfield® Organic 0% Fat Plain Greek Yogurt
3 Tbsp.	Honey
2 tsp.	McCormick® Pure Vanilla Extract
1/8 tsp.	Salt
2 cups	Assorted berries, diced
1 cup	Planters® NUT-rition Wholesome Nut Mix, chopped

### Directions:

1. Line a rimmed baking sheet with aluminum foil or parchment paper.
2. Whisk together yogurt, honey, vanilla and salt. Pour onto the baking sheet and spread into an even layer (about 1/2 inch thick).
3. Scatter the fruit and nuts evenly over the yogurt mixture, lightly pressing them in.
4. Freeze the baking sheet, uncovered, until solid, about 4 hours. Cut into bite-sized pieces. Store in an airtight bag or container in the freezer.

Source: Recipe adapted from [guidingstars.com](http://guidingstars.com)



**Nutritional Information**  
(may vary depending on fruit used):  
Amount per serving: Calories 170; Protein 9 g;  
Carbohydrate 18 g; Fiber 2 g; Fat 8 g;  
Saturated Fat 1 g; Sodium 85 mg; Added Sugar 12 g

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