

# MAINE WOMEN MAGAZINE

MAY 2020

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at the  
*Beautiful  
River*

*Kris's healing*  
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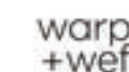
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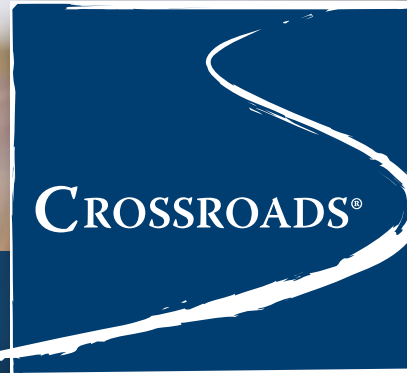
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This is the month of May, when we celebrate all mothers . . . everywhere! Mothers have become this year such a focus of life and feeling safe. They've had to become pioneer women overnight, cooking and mothering within the confines of small spaces. I want to honor all the mothers this month for taking on this challenge with grace and caring.

There are many of you who are not mothers, but you have extended yourselves for the good and wellbeing of the people around you. A mother is a nurturer. She sees the truest and deepest in us. She shows compassion and empathy when we're hurt or fearful.

Most of all, a mother cares about your dreams and your path.

I was more than blessed with a mom who showed me the truth of love. I never heard her say a word of ill will against another human being.

I didn't even know that was an option. She extended her hand to anyone who needed her. Her smile was never ending; it was given to every child and soul she encountered. Her love gave the people around her inner peace and comfort.

I lost my Mom way too young. Maybe all of us lose our moms too young, but for me, there's not a day in my life when she is not in my thoughts. There is not a day when her love does not guide me.

She taught me how we can walk in this world, offering love. We can choose to be the seeds of kindness and empathy towards every one of our sisters and brothers . . . every day.

*Mary Frances Barstow, Publisher*



Eight-year-old Mary Frances Barstow and her mom, Alice.

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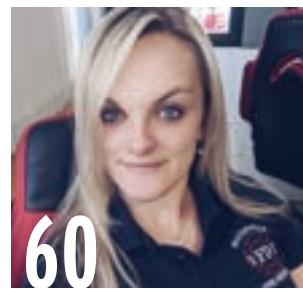


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Public health remains a top concern

Cover photo by  
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Maine Women Magazine neither endorses or critiques the women featured in our magazine based on their belief system or political viewpoints. We wish that political and personal differences be respected and used to start conversations based on curiosity and learning. We believe in freedom of speech.

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# Maine HEROES

BY CHRISTINE SIMMONDS

## FALLYN ADAMS

Fallyn Adams is a 5th grade teacher at Union Elementary School and was named Knox County Teacher of the Year in 2015. She and her husband Chris have two children.

The district Fallyn works for closed all schools in mid-March, after Maine had its first positive case. “Our in-person school year ended suddenly,” she says. “We got the message Sunday afternoon, and we haven’t seen our students in person since. It has been the most challenging of my 15 years in education.” She has been working from home since the second week of school being closed.

Fallyn started by putting together a six-week work packet for the students, with color-coding to help them stay organized and work from every school subject. She has 20 students, and says, “I have been able to touch base with every family in one way or another.”

Other teaching activities that Fallyn has been doing include daily read-alouds for her students, with a Google Doc for discussions. “The daily videos are also a great way to just say hello,” she says.

This is just some of the tireless work Fallyn has done to keep in touch with her students and provide them with learning opportunities during this time. She says she has also been sending out post-cards in the mail, “as an additional way to let them know that I care and that I miss them.”

“My heart is constantly missing my kiddos,” she says. •



Photo courtesy Fallyn Adams

## DR. REGAN THIBODEAU

You may recognize Dr. Regan Thibodeau from the daily Maine CDC media briefings. She is the American Sign Language interpreter for these briefings and is a Certified Deaf Interpreter (DI). This amazing



Photo courtesy Dr. Thibodeau

woman has a PhD in public policy with a concentration in educational leadership and policy, as well as a master’s degree in teaching American Sign Language as a foreign language.

While Dr. Thibodeau is most definitely a public figure now, she says she does not feel like one because everyone is quarantining. She is happy to be exposing more Mainers to the reality of American Sign Language and the need for Deaf Interpreters. “I have a bigger opportunity to highlight the work of Deaf Interpreters being part of a whole team,” she says. She also hopes using a DI for critical news briefings will become “the new normal” in the future.

Dr. Thibodeau has received stories and feedback from the public about her work with the CDC, and says she really appreciates it. “It helps us build a bridge of understanding that all of us are humans, just experiencing life in different ways,” she says.

Dr. Thibodeau did stress that she is only acting as a translator for Governor Mills and Dr. Nirav Shah. “It is their moment,” she says. “I am only there because I am an expert in both languages.

...It is an honor to be trusted to use my interpreting expertise, and that of my hearing team, to ensure most of our Maine deaf and hard of hearing residents have access to the information.” •

## LYNN ARCHER

Lynn Archer is the owner of two restaurants in the downtown Rockland area. She has stepped up to serve food to the community and support the food pantry during the coronavirus.



Photo courtesy Lynn Archer

Lynn opened Brass Compass 20 years ago, serving breakfast and lunch every day. “This project took a lot of guts and determination,” she says. “Right from the beginning my business has been supported by my community.” Several years later Lynn opened Archers on the Pier.

She feels the pandemic provides the perfect opportunity to pay back the support she has received. She cooks up a giant batch of food, voted on by the community each week. Then on Wednesdays she serves it, for free, with donations. The donations all go to the Area Interfaith Outreach food pantry. “The pantry can no longer accept food items,” says Lynn, “so 100 percent of all donations I give directly to the pantry.”

So far Lynn has cooked up haddock chowder, lobster macaroni and cheese, and chicken pot pie. She has really enjoyed giving back like this. “People seem so happy to just come out for a home-cooked meal,” she says. She enjoys seeing all the people who stop by for her food, and calls it, “one of the greatest rewards of my life.”

Lynn excitedly reports she has been able to raise over \$1,600 for the food pantry in two weeks. “I am a blessed woman,” she says, “trying to spread good will, sharing, and kindness in a trying time.” •

## ELIZABETH BREEN

Elizabeth Breen is a Registered Nurse working at Pen Bay Hospital in the Obstetrics Unit. She helps laboring moms, eases with delivery, and assists post-partum women, answering their breastfeeding questions and providing lactation consulting and other outpatient services. Now she reports to the pediatric office and meets with moms and babies who have been at home for a few days.

For women giving birth, “we are [right now] the only unit at the hospital that allows the patient to have a support partner,” says Elizabeth. “The woman can [now] designate one person for birth and post-partum, if the numbers [of COVID-19 cases] continue to stay down.”

“There are changes every day,” she continues. “It’s hard to keep up with all the changes and protocols. We’re using N95’s and testing policies, but the equipment changes—when to use it, when not to use it. We have lots of meetings, including some staff meetings on Zoom. We run through drills of what to do if we have a corona-positive patient.”

Elizabeth sees the importance of these safety protocols every day, for her patients and for herself and her family. “I have three kids,” she says. “The virus is definitely on my mind. I think about it all the time. I try to be really careful and wash my hands and wear my mask. I change my clothes from work and leave my shoes outside. I’m not scared, but I’m extremely careful.

I’m also concerned about giving the virus to my parents, who are older. We haven’t seen our in-laws either, who usually babysit for us.”

Elizabeth knows, as many parents do, that juggling work and family life is tough under the best of circumstances, but even more challenging now. She sees that sometimes the kids are bored and at loose ends: “They’re walking the dogs. It’s hard keeping kids home, and it’s hard homeschooling. It’s hard trying to work. It can definitely be overwhelming. Definitely stressful. And it’s hard to know exactly what to believe when you watch things on the news. We

are trying to do the social distancing, staying home, and trying to take care of our children and entertain them.”

At work, Elizabeth says, “The biggest challenge is wearing a mask for 13 hours. It’s distracting and hard to get used to.



Photo courtesy Elizabeth Breen

Volunteers have made headbands with buttons on the side. That was really nice. The community has been really good. We’ve had dessert and pizza delivered to us. The community has been supportive. People have made thank-you signs for the hospitals. It is nice to see. Little gestures mean a lot. Just a simple message saying thank you means a lot to a nurse.”

In parting, Elizabeth delivers a powerful message: “Everybody at Pen Bay Hospital is prepared. There has been a lot of education. I feel supported. We’re all in this together. We’re ready.” •

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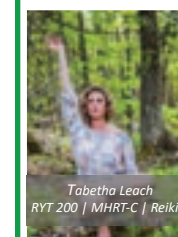
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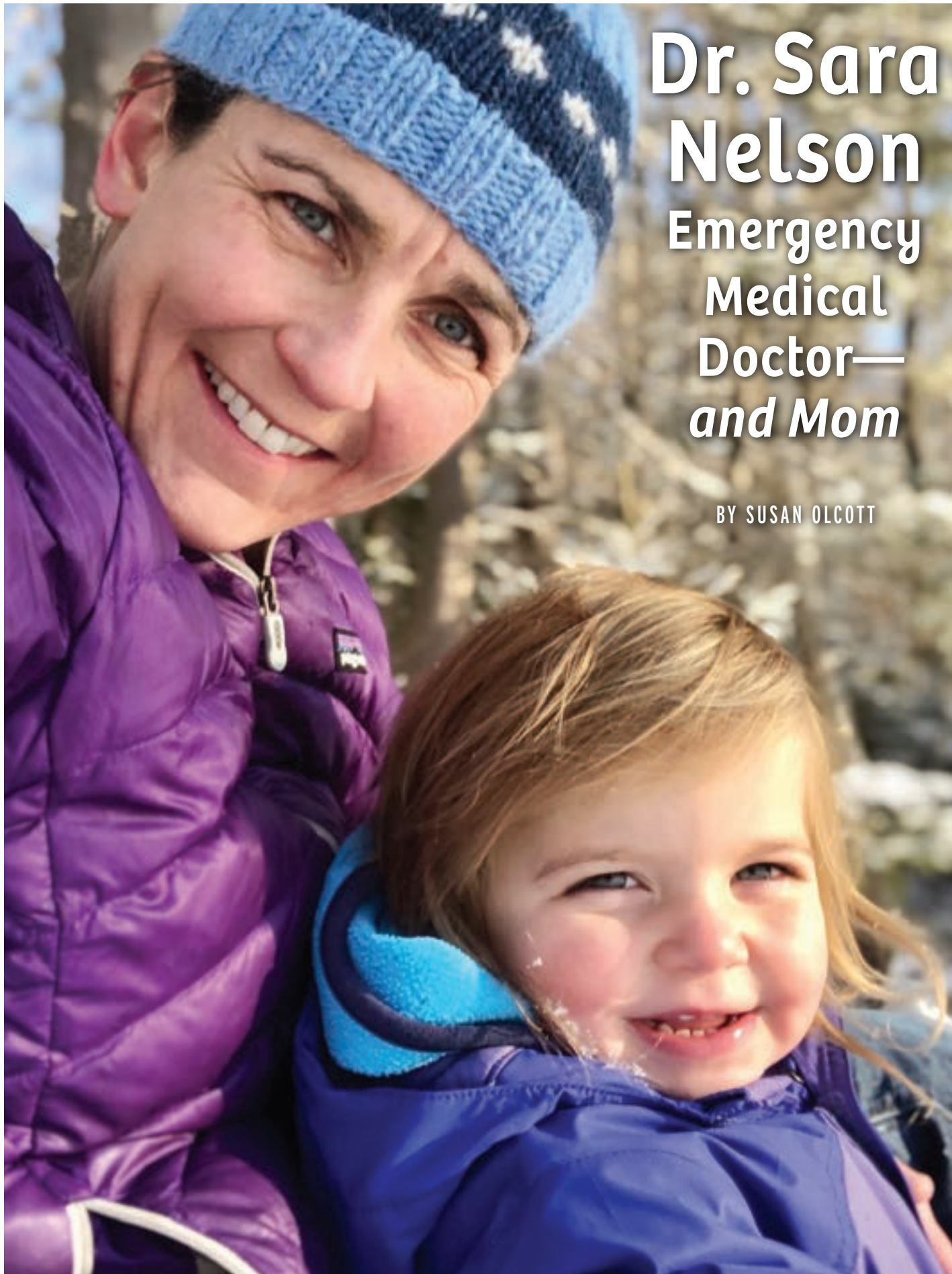
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# Dr. Sara Nelson Emergency Medical Doctor— and Mom

BY SUSAN OLCOTT

Dr. Sara Nelson and her daughter, Rye.

“I call my nanny on my way home, sneak into the garage, take off my scrubs, and head straight to the shower. Then, I get to hug my daughter.” That’s Dr. Sara Nelson, Emergency Medicine doctor at Maine Medical Center in Portland, describing the complex motions she goes through to isolate her home life from her work life. She is a first responder for incoming cases of COVID-19, and she is a single mom of two-year-old Rye.

Sara has always had a balancing act to care for her daughter and juggle shifts at the hospital. But now she has a few more obstacles. Not only does she have to do a stealth re-entry and quick change at the end of each shift, but also the daycare where Rye usually goes three days a week is closed. Nevertheless, she’s managing the challenges. “I’ve been working more, but I’m finding space to do it,” says Sara. “And, it’s all worth it. It’s what I’m trained to do. I take care of patients that have corona virus every day—that’s my job and I’m proud to do it.”

Her job has certainly changed in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. She’s working many more long nights and weekends. And she, along with many of her colleagues, is splitting her duties between two sides of the now split Emergency Department (ED). The ED is divided in half right now, with half designated as the Biothreat Unit. “For patients on that side, we act as if everyone who comes into that unit has COVID,” she says.

Changing scrubs at the end of the day is nothing compared to the futuristic suit she dons when she goes into the Biothreat Unit. “We each have to wear a PAPR (powered air-purifying respirator). You have this big white hood attached to a pack on your back that blows air through the hood. You have to put it on in a specific way and then enter a sealed unit,” she says

“It’s pretty much like walking around in a space suit,” she says. It’s not only uncomfortable, but it changes the way that she can interact with both her colleagues and her patients. “You have no peripheral vision, and it’s really hard to talk and to hear others,” she adds. “You feel disconnected from the patient. And you can’t do some of the normal things like use a stethoscope to listen to a patient’s heart and lungs. It has really changed the ability to have an intimate connection with a patient.” Still, she and the other doctors have had to adapt to protect themselves and the patients. We’ve learned to speak loudly and make better eye contact,” says Sara. “We’re learning to work within this new normal.”

While adjusting to the new normal, Sara is trying to retain some sense of normalcy in her personal life. “I’m staying socially distant like everyone else right now, but I also feel fortunate in a weird way because I get to go to work and talk to people.”

It’s a tough choice to maintain her life at home, when some of her colleagues have chosen not to live with their families during this time. “It’s hard, because I’m potentially exposing my daughter by being a frontline provider, but I can’t imagine being without my daughter, so I do the best I can,” she says. She’s also formed a new kind of family unit. Her nanny, who is working more hours these days, does the grocery shopping and lives nearby. “She has decided that she is part of our family and we are part of hers.”



Free time is not something Sara has a lot of these days, but she is grateful to live in a place like Maine where the outdoors is so accessible. From her home on Littlejohn Island in Yarmouth, she can go for runs or hikes in the woods or play on the swing set with her daughter.

“From a recreational perspective, I’m lucky I don’t have to leave,” she says. “One of my favorite things in Maine is the ability to get outside,” she says. “I’m an avid biker and runner, but what I love most is getting out on the water either on my stand-up paddleboard or my Whaler. I love to explore Casco Bay.”

She isn’t from Maine originally, but chose it after medical school at Harvard and a residency at the Massachusetts General Hospital and the Brigham and Women’s Hospital. After those experiences, she was eager to leave the city environment. She hadn’t spent much time in Maine, despite growing up in New Hampshire and then living in Boston, but she found that Maine was a good fit for a woman who spends most of her free time out of doors.

In fact, one her past jobs was as a wilderness medicine instructor for the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS)—not your average resume line for an Emergency doc. She also helped found Global Emergency Care, a non-profit organization that trains local nurses to provide emergency care in Uganda, and she did relief work following the 2010 earthquake in Haiti.

Sara Nelson is used to challenges—from medical school to outdoor leadership to single parenting. Still, her role in the current situation is something different. “What’s so hard is that we don’t know when it’s going to end,” she says. “But, I’m grateful to have the skills to help during something like this. And, I’m hopeful that good things will come out of it, too. I try to focus on the positive things people are doing for each other, and I think, “Let’s make the world a better place after this is all over.” •





A Conversation with Holly's Mom:  
*Jaja Martin*

BY MARY FRANCES BARSTOW

The Martin family on one of their adventures. Photo courtesy Dave and Jaja Martin

**H**olly Martin, 28, has set out to accomplish one of sailing's ultimate feats—sailing alone around the world. She grew up in a sailing family, which prepared her well for long-distance sailing journeys. After college, she searched carefully to find just the boat she wanted. In Salem, Massachusetts, Holly finally found her boat to buy—a Grinde, 27 feet long and 10 feet wide, built in Denmark in 1983. She renamed it the SV *Gecko* and gave it a thorough, ten-month overhaul, working from her home base in Maine.

After a stint when she left the boat in North Carolina to work for United States Antarctic Program as a marine technician, Holly sailed to Culebra, through the Caribbean, to Aruba, Bonaire, and Curacao islands. She then passed through the Panama Canal. When last we heard, Holly was headed for Fatu Hiva in the Marquesas Island Group in the middle of the Pacific, and then she planned to sail on to New Zealand in December. We will be following her journeys in future issues of *Maine Women Magazine*.

This month, however, with an unexpected change in Holly's plans due to the global pandemic, we spoke instead to Holly's mother, Jaja Martin, to get the latest news of Holly's trip. We appreciated her taking the time to give us an update and to answer a few other questions as well!

**MARY:**

How is the spread of the COVID-19 virus around the world affecting Holly's trip? Where is she now?

**JAJA:**

Currently, Holly is sailing around Las Perlas Islands in the Gulf of Panama. There are several islands in the archipelago. Many of them are deserted. There are many cruising boats that are in limbo, waiting and anchored in the Perlas. The Panama navy is there for safety, and cruising boats have been able to stay. It's sort of a grey area.

One of the smaller islands, Saboga, is the main island in the Perlas. That is where the bulk of the cruising community is anchored. The island has a few cases of COVID-19, and officials are not allowing anyone to set foot on the island. There are local fishermen who bring food out to the cruisers in their dinghies. Sailors can also arrange for a "curbside pick-up." They call using their VHF, pay via credit card, and pick up their groceries on the beach.

Currently, French Polynesia, Fiji, and New Caledonia are closed to all visitors and boats. Anyone wishing to cross the Pacific will not be able to stop at these islands at all. This is a problem for many cruisers.

Holly is fortunate because she is a New Zealand citizen, so she can ultimately land there and stay. It would probably take her at least five months to sail to New Zealand, and she is unable to carry enough food or water for this length of passage. Luckily, it's still early season, so if those islands open up, she could leave in a month or two and still hit the season for a Pacific crossing. Her plan, as of now, is to wait and see. Her goal is to cross the Pacific and get to New Zealand this season.

**MARY:**

How is Holly doing in this unexpected lull?

**JAJA:**

She is doing well! She's swimming, fishing, foraging, and hanging out with the cruising community. There's a lot of group support, and she's making the best of her time. The Perlas Islands are beautiful!

**MARY:**

How do you see Holly's background preparing her for this trip?

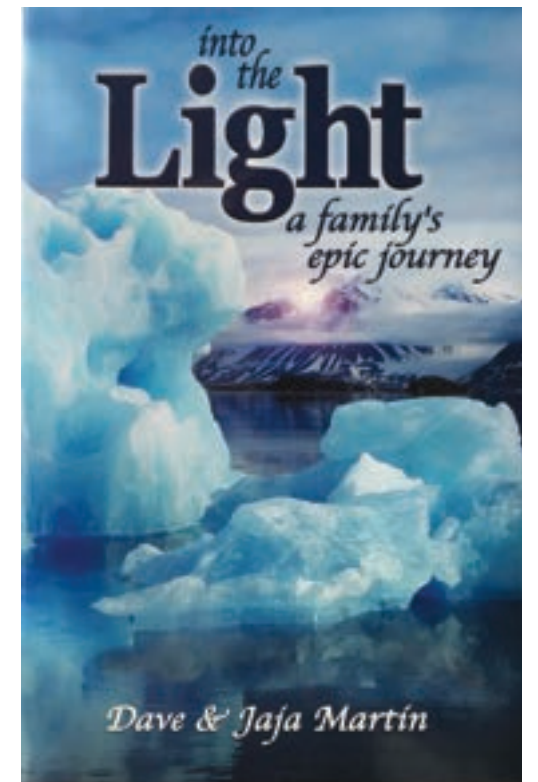
**JAJA:**

Holly is an amazing kid. I was always surprised and delighted by the things she would create and build during her childhood.

She's always had a strong sense of self-sufficiency, and sagacity. She's never been afraid to invent new things or push forward to make her dreams (and ideas) come true. She's very strong both mentally and physically.

Growing up abroad has given Holly the perspective to think out of the box. Actually, it wasn't until we came to the States (which felt like a foreign country to us) that she even realized there was an "in the box." She was born in New Zealand and didn't come to the States until she was almost 13 years old. Learning new languages and attending foreign public schools also broadened her horizons. She learned how to do math in Norwegian and Icelandic. At a very young age, she had history and language classes which were taught in the language of the country we were living in, plus the subject matter concerned the country we were living in, not the States (of course!) Knowing other cultures, and seeing that the way we do things in the States is not the only way, opens up numerous possibilities!

As for the long journey: One of Holly's early childhood dreams was to own her own boat and sail around the world. This dream came about because she grew up on a boat.



Jaja Martin, at the time of one of the family's sailing journeys, 1999. Photo by Dave Martin



Holly Martin aboard the *Gecko*. Photo courtesy Holly Martin

MARY:

So, Holly was always independent?

JAJA:

Yes! She is also stubborn, resourceful, and determined. She loves people. She loves the differences in all kinds of people. She celebrates what makes each individual unique. Age, gender, nationality, ethnicity, opinions, disabilities . . . she seeks out what makes each person special and celebrates those qualities. She is very open-minded.

MARY:

How is Holly's boat similar or not similar to the one that you and your family sailed on for so long?

JAJA:

Holly's boat is small, and bullet proof, just like the one we sailed around the world. Dave (my husband, Holly's dad) surveyed it and approved it—which is very high praise!

MARY:

Did you ever want to go along with her on the long trip? Do you miss sailing? Or that time of your life? Does her trip bring up memories?

JAJA:

I would love to go on the Pacific crossing with Holly. It would be a dream come true. We'd have so much fun together. I also know she would be thrilled to have me along for the passage. But she needs to do it on her own because that is her dream.

Over the years people have asked me if I miss the cruising life. Yes! is the answer. Then when they ask me what I miss the most, I say, "My youth."

MARY:

Have you and Holly read Joshua Slocum's *Sailing Alone Around the World*, from 1901? If so, any impressions of that classic sailing memoir, in connection with Holly's trip?

JAJA:

We have all read Joshua Slocum's book. Did you know that he anchored in Round Pond Harbor before his circumnavigation? It's Holly's home port, and it's the place she left from on her trip!

*Jaja and David Martin are the authors of Into the Light: A Family's Epic Journey (2002). It is the story of how they and their three children lived aboard a 33-foot sailboat for many years, traveling the world and setting their own adventurous and satisfying path.* •



Photo by Lynn Fantom

# Artist Judy Taylor: Painter, Neighbor, and Teacher

*Portraying people who have made Maine what it is*

BY LYNN FANTOM

The fundraiser for the Southwest Harbor Public Library on Mount Desert Island kicked off with a reservation-only event. Maine artist Judy Taylor looked intently at her subject, author Christina Baker Kline, then back to the blank canvas in front of her. With rapid brush strokes, the painter outlined hair, shoulders, face.

Self-conscious as she sat frozen on a stool, Kline began asking audience members what they'd read lately. A library staff member requested silence.

For the next half hour in a room of 60 onlookers, only the artist moved, standing back from her easel with brush poised like a conductor's wand, then approaching the canvas to paint. The audience was tense with anticipation. Not a whisper or fidget interrupted the artist's concentration.

Then gradually, as if by magic, the novelist's image appeared on the canvas, with her blue eyes, blonde bob, and cautious smile beautifully emerging. Taylor took a deep breath and described how she would finish the



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"Tumble"  
by Judy  
Taylor.



A painting of trail workers by Judy Taylor.

portrait in her studio. Indefatigable, she smiled and began articulately answering questions from an eager audience.

That kind of performance takes courage, which Taylor says she derives in part from making Maine her home. "It stabilizes me. I think an artist needs some kind of grounding."

Maine is a magnet for artists of all types. Poets come for the quietude. Musicians seek summer audiences. Painters covet the landscapes. But Taylor is different. She is, well, of Maine, even though she is from away.

"To have so much talent and to be so unassuming" is how Mary Anne Mead, Assistant Director of Public Services at the library, describes Taylor. "Yet she stands tall. There's pride. She could live anywhere, but she chooses to be here."

Born in Kansas City, Taylor grew up in the Chicago suburbs and spent summers with her grandparents, soybean and wheat farmers in Fullerton, Nebraska (population: 1,234). Her grandmother wore overalls and had a big part in managing two farms. "Saturday nights were like this: dress up, go downtown, walk around," Taylor says.

Something about that ethos stuck, even though her life routed her through advertising jobs in Chicago, atelier-style training with leading figurative artists in New York City, and teaching at the Austin Museum of Art. By the time she became an artist-in-residence at Acadia National Park in 1996, not only was she a prolific painter, but she brought a multitude of experiences, including where to find an affordable rental in Brooklyn and how to make a mean chicken-poblano soup.

Taylor's paintings, primarily oils but also gouache (an opaque watercolor), include figuratives, portraits, and landscapes. They are found in three galleries, as well as at her own studio on the Quiet Side of Mount Desert Island.

Judy Taylor created this private commission portrait of brothers.



Lobsterman Wayne Davis is featured in this piece by Judy Taylor.



Designed with her husband, the son of a Swan's Island lobsterman, the studio has exhibition space, a large room where she hosts a summer lecture series, and a second floor with raised stage and coveted northern light, where she paints.

She works with students there, too, as well as outdoors, and, during the COVID-19 crisis, remotely. Twice a year, small groups have joined her to study in museums in London and Paris, and en plein air in Amalfi, Sicily, and the Pyrenees. For Barbara Springer, who has taken one of these art workshops, Judy Taylor has proven to be an attentive instructor, who picked up on "an illustrative quality" in her drawing. "It was an inspiration for me," she says, and one that led to her drawing political satire. "Judy believes that you should be honest with who you are," Springer adds. And she helps her students get there.

Art history plays a big role in Taylor's instruction. She rattles off references to Velasquez, Caravaggio, Sorolla, and Sargent as if they were daily necessities, like detergent. Yet, their impact on her is almost physical: "They create a vibration in your gut," she says.

Like the painters she admires, Taylor receives both private and public commissions. One of those was to portray pediatrician and geneticist Barton Childs, and it is now in the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutes' collection with other portraits of physicians by John Singer Sargent, William Merritt Chase, and Jamie Wyeth, among others.

Another commission to depict the Maine labor movement received national attention. That's because in 2011 then-governor Paul LePage ordered removal of the monumental mural from the Department of Labor building, asserting it was too pro-labor. At the time, Taylor told the *New York Times*, "By default, it's honoring the working man and working woman." (The mural is now on display at the Maine State Museum in Augusta.)

But LePage may have been right about one thing. There is something heroic in how Taylor portrays people who have made Maine what it is. That elevation of common cultural experience pervades much of her work: a lobsterman knitting a trap head, a trail-building crew, a young man fiddling in the Acadian kitchen party tradition.

"I admire these people. Maybe that translates when I'm painting," Taylor says. "I'm a contemporary artist, but I might not have a contemporary bent. I have no interest in painting somebody looking at his cell phone," she notes.

Where do ideas come from? "As I move around my world, in a split second I know what's going to make a painting," she says. During a hike on Beech Mountain in Acadia, a trail crew sparked a thought, and she recruited some neighbors with shovels to enact a scene. Local residents often serve as models.

Recently, a special grant delivered some new students to Taylor: local middle schoolers. The challenge was to teach them how to work from a model. Taylor chose someone she herself had painted, Wayne Davis, a third-generation lobsterman who had attended the very same school. The class was a hit. But worry bubbled up when Taylor proposed that a "slew of kindergarteners" pose for the next session. "Nobody could believe they would sit still, but I knew they would!" After all, she says, the small ones would want to impress the bigger ones.

Clearly, with the humanity she brings as a neighbor and teacher, this Maine artist has talents that go beyond what meets her eye. •



Above: Painting en plein air in Bass Harbor. Photo courtesy Southwest Harbor Public Library  
Below: A plein air class with model. Photo courtesy Judy Taylor



Judy Taylor with a mural panel. Photo by David Valle



# May is BRAIN TUMOR AWARENESS MONTH

BY JULIE BROWN



Jessica Heath's son, Aiden, looking at her name on the Wall of Honor.

Opposite: The family at Race for Hope in 2017. From left are Julie Brown, and Blake, Aiden, Jessica, and Eric Heath.



Jessica Heath and Kelly Theberge on one of their visits with the Maine members of Congress in Washington D.C. during "Head to the Hill."

May is the month for celebrating moms on Mother's Day, and on Memorial Day we honor those who died in active military service. May is also Brain Tumor Awareness month, something I am particularly passionate about. My daughter, Jessica Heath, passed away from brain cancer in January of 2019 at the age of 35. Her first brain tumor was found in 2012. It was surgically removed, but then returned in November of 2017.

Jessica became an advocate for the National Brain Tumor Society (NBTS) in 2016. I joined her that year, along with Kelly Theberge, the Maine lead advocate. (Kelly's father died from a brain tumor, and this prompted her to begin a non-profit "Kelly's Cause for Brain Tumors.") We participated in "Head to the Hill," which included visits with policymakers in Washington, D.C., to further help people understand the need for additional research and funding. This event is an ongoing yearly gathering and commemoration that kicks off with the "Race for Hope," a 5k walking and running event supporting brain tumor/cancer patients, care partners, and their families.

In 2016, Jessica also shared her story during a local event in support of the NBTS, the Bob Burns Memorial 5k. It takes place each July in Augusta, supporting

"Kelly's Cause for a Cure." According to the National Brain Tumor Society's website, "approximately 700,000 Americans are living with a brain tumor."

Not all brain tumors are deadly or cancerous. Treatment options such as surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation have not changed much in the past 30 years. Though as we learn more about brain tumors through continued research, there is hope for better treatment in the future.

With the current pandemic, many 5k fundraisers have been canceled or gone virtual this year. I plan to participate in the "Race for Hope" right here in Maine by doing a local run observing social distancing in the process. For more information about this event and others or to make a donation, please go to the Facebook page, "Kelly's Cause for Brain Tumors," as well as the National Brain Tumor Society at [www.braintumor.org](http://www.braintumor.org).

Since May is Brain Tumor Awareness month, it is recognized by the Gray ribbon and the slogan "Go Gray in May." Like October's Breast Cancer Pink ribbon, it's my hope that the Gray ribbon will inspire more awareness about brain tumors, the need for additional research, and ultimately a cure.

Julie Brown is a local writer and author of "Building a Life." You can find her blog at [www.lifewithjuliebrown.com](http://www.lifewithjuliebrown.com).



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| ENTREPRENEURS |



# Donna Carrigan NEVER GAVE UP

BY LIZ GOTTHELF

When Donna Carrigan was a teenager growing up in the rural town of Plymouth, she didn't dare to dream big. "We were very poor. All we ever aspired to do was survive. We just lived through the day and hoped there was food on the table," said Donna, now 63 and living in South Bristol with a successful career in kitchen and bathroom remodeling. Family vacations were a luxury they couldn't afford, and Donna didn't see the ocean until she was an adult.

Donna's father, a World War II vet, built roads and worked at local mills to support his family. Due to a service-related ill-

ness, he would periodically be out of work for weeks and sometimes months at a time. It was a cycle that became familiar to Donna and her family. Despite the frequent visits to Togus Veterans Hospital for care, Donna's father did not receive, until many years later, the full disability status he deserved.

Donna got a job in the school superintendent's office right out of high school and married a few years later. After her second child was born, she and her husband separated, and as a single parent, she needed more hours than the school department could give her.

Through an employment agency, she got a job at Bangor television station WKBZ 2. "I floated around," she said, and worked in reception, sales, and the traffic department. In the course of these different jobs within the station, she gained experience—and she also met her husband, Don Carrigan, a well-known newscaster.

Donna then took a job in the sales and marketing department for Eastern Express Airlines, which initially intrigued her. As a teenager, she thought being a flight attendant was a glamorous profession. She eventually realized she didn't want to become a flight attendant, but she thrived in the travel and tourism industry, moving on to management positions at hotels.

After taking on a position at a hotel that wasn't a right fit, Donna found herself unemployed in 1989. Her husband Don was a frequent customer at a local lumberyard, while doing a home remodeling project. He suggested she apply for work at that local business. It was always busy, and it appeared that the business could benefit from an extra staff member.

"I had no idea if I'd be cleaning toilets, driving trucks, or working in the kitchen department," said Donna. "I just needed a job." She told her new employer that she wouldn't be there long because her passion was the tourism and lodging industry. She later ate her words.

The owners took her under their wing, and she found a new passion, which led her to become a National Kitchen and Bath Association certified master kitchen and bath designer.

She recalls nervously sitting at a table at a meeting with the National Kitchen and Bath Association with members from all around the country, thinking that she, who grew up a country girl from Plymouth, Maine, could never compete with the others. Donna sat at the table and listened to the others and had an eye-opening experience. She realized that there were people at the meeting from all backgrounds, and everyone had faced some sort of challenges in their life.

"It doesn't matter where you're from—people are people," she said.



Donna and Don Carrigan

In 2002, she founded Dovetail Design. While her business is still active, since 2015 Donna has also worked as a sales representative for Benchmark Sales Group, representing fine cabinetry by Plato Woodwork in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

Donna is now an accomplished businesswoman with a successful career and a fantastic husband who immediately welcomed her two boys into his life. They have now been married for nearly 34 years, and they are close with their children and grandchildren. It's a life she never would have imagined as a young girl growing up.

Looking back on her childhood, she recalled that her family didn't have a lot of money and struggled to get along. Despite the challenges, her parents did the best they could to support their children and always had their best interests at heart.

"Life was tough, but it didn't matter if we had just macaroni on the table, because we had love," said Donna.

It's taken a lot of determination for that little country girl to become the person she is today. This determination and awareness also gave her the courage, as an adult, to challenge authority and fight for what her father so rightfully deserved. She arranged a meeting with her parents and officials at Togus and didn't hold back. She was able to get her father the full amount of disability benefits that were long overdue, with retroactive payment.

Donna wants young women starting out in the world as adults today not to let life beat them down.

"If you're dealt a bad card, you can come up swimmingly. Believe in yourself and never give up," she said. "Know how to respect yourself and know that you have only one life to live." •



Cara Stadler in the kitchen of her Brunswick restaurant Tao Yuan.



# GREENHOUSE / DREAM HOUSE

*Cara Stadler and Kate Holcomb Source Ingredients Locally—and Aquaponically*

BY SUSAN OLCOTT

“Dreams? I have lots of dreams, but right now I just have to do what is financially viable.” That’s Cara Stadler, head chef at Tao Yuan restaurant in Brunswick, whose most recent dream is to open an aquaponic greenhouse where she can grow ingredients that she can’t source locally. The 3000-square foot facility, that will also include a café space, is right behind her restaurant on Pleasant Street. It’s all part of her bigger dream—building a network of sustainable restaurants.

Cara owns three restaurants, all under the umbrella of Eighty-Ate Hospitality. Tao Yuan is an Asian fusion restaurant. Portland’s BaoBao Dumpling House is a casual eatery. And the most recent addition, Lio, is a European bistro. Her suite

of restaurants reflects her travels and training around the world. “Harvard, Massachusetts, from 0 to 14, then high school starting in Berkeley, California, and ending in China, then Philadelphia, cooking school at Le Cordon Bleu in Paris, Singapore . . . and Maine—something like that,” she says rattling off the list of places.

The common thread among these restaurants is Cara’s commitment to sourcing ingredients locally. And the common locale in her past has been Maine. “I spent summers here as a kid and it’s a pretty special place.” Her family has owned a house in Phippsburg for four generations. “When I decided to open a restaurant, I had to choose a place I wanted to be for twenty years,” she says.



Chef/owner Cara Stadler (left) and greenhouse manager Kate Holcomb.

“And people here are growing great stuff to work with.” Cara spends four or five days a week at farmers markets in Brunswick and Portland during the peak season and is always looking for ways to partner more with local farmers. “And when I have a free moment, I love to go to the beach—Popham is my favorite,” she adds. “I also like to forage in the woods for wild mushrooms.”

Trying to source everything locally when you live in a place like Maine that has such a short growing season can be tough, however. The greenhouse will include a cold storage area that will allow Cara to buy locally and source all of her restaurants.

“To guarantee the business for a farm, that’s the sustainability model. It’s not just us. It’s the whole chain,” she says. There are also some things you just can’t get here. That’s where the greenhouse idea came in. “If I can grow things that you can’t get locally, I can put whatever I want on the menu,” she says. “I’d love to be able to grow wasabi,” for example.

There aren’t just vegetables in the greenhouse, though. There are fish. This is an aquaponic system where fish swim in tanks and their waste gets taken up by the plants to help them grow. Right now, there are twenty tilapia swimming in



“If I can grow things that you can’t get locally, I can put whatever I want on the menu.”

a small tank inside the prototype 10 x 20 greenhouse, fueling the growth of tender leaves of watercress and tatsoi. Kate Holcomb, manager of the greenhouse, says they hope that this number will grow in the future.

Kate is a lifelong friend of Cara’s—they have been friends since they were four. “Kate got into farming and I got into cooking,” says Cara. “When I had this idea, I convinced her to come up here.”

“We have really different personalities,” says Kate. “But we are great friends. Cara is ambitious. She has big plans and goes after them, whereas I’m a little bit more bounded by practicality. Although, anybody who’s going to take on a project like this one has to be a little bit of a dreamer because there isn’t really a model for it.”

Cara has built her business on partnerships. The first was with her mother, Cecile, who helped to finance Tao and who is a partner in Eighty-Ate. Both her mom and her dad live in Maine, as well. “It hasn’t always been easy working with my mom, but we’ve made a great team,” says Cara.

Now, she is forging partnerships with other chefs. Tao is the only restaurant where she is head chef. She has handed over the reins of the others to those she values and trusts.



Kate Holcomb (left) and Cara Stadler in the greenhouse during construction.

“As we grow, there’s an identity with what we care about as a company, and we look for partners who want to be a part of that.”

One piece of that identity is sustainability. In addition to sourcing locally, all of the restaurants compost and recycle, doing their best to reduce both disposable and food waste.

The greenhouse has some innovative technology in the works as well, like recycling gray water and a system to recapture excess heat produced by the kitchen to provide heat to the greenhouse. “Kitchens are hot,” says Cara. “What if you could recapture that heat rather than throwing it out the door?”

Cara and her team hope the greenhouse and café space will open this summer. “I would love to make this work and then share with others how to make it work,” she says. “That’s the dream.”

During the current health crisis, Cara has used her dynamic skills for a different purpose—to reshape her business. All three of her restaurants are offering takeout, and she has been staying in touch with her clientele online to let them know of upcoming offerings. •



Cara Stadler at the Brunswick Farmers Market.



# SHE-SHEDS: A Special Place for Women

BY CHRISTINE SIMMONDS



Inside the original she-shed.

## ENTREPRENEURS



Cheryl Ryan was watching television when a familiar phrase on a State Farm commercial made her pay attention: Cheryl's She-Shed.

Cheryl and her husband Terry run Shed City in Warren off Route One, and at that point Cheryl had been designing sheds for women for months. She even had a model in front of the business with a pink sign reading, of course, "Cheryl's She-Shed."

"It [the shed] sat up here for six or seven months, and then I saw the commercial on TV. I just burst into hysterics," she tells me. She told her husband to come in and see the commercial, "and we were just dying laughing!"

Cheryl had a great attitude about it and kept telling people, "She stole my idea!" She says she and her husband joked about it for weeks after.

Cheryl and her husband started the business in 1993 as a sawmill. Her husband built himself an office for that business, and customers kept asking if they could purchase the office. Her husband told them he would build them a version of it. "So, before we knew it, we were selling more sheds than we were selling boards," says Cheryl. "Now he doesn't have time to do the sawing anymore, so we have someone do the sawing. And then from there . . . people wanted bigger garages and such. And now it's turning more toward smaller buildings like the she-shed."

The initial she-shed was built as a model for display. It was outside the Shed City office, and Cheryl tells me it garnered quite a bit of attention. "People stopped and said, 'Oh, look, it's so cute!' It had little curtains in it. It was all decked out. Just a little she-shed! It had a bench in the back to sit down. It was all pickled white on the inside. The floors were done in pine. . . . We had it all decked out."

Cheryl describes pickled white as, "half paint and half water so that the grain and the knots come through."

The original is no longer outside, but Cheryl shows me pictures of it.

It is a 10 x 16-foot yellow shed with a front porch and birch tree pillars. The four-foot porch has a hanging hammock chair. Cheryl tells me she and her husband pick the birch trees from their property for the front pillars of the sheds. It is outstandingly quaint, and costs \$10,000 painted.

Cheryl tells me a she-shed can cost between \$6,000 and \$11,000, depending on what the customer wants, though she describes the low end of that price as "bare-bones."

"That covered porch is just sweet," Cheryl says of the original model. "You can put a little porch swing in there and just sit. The birch posts are just a nice touch, too, for a cabin-type feel."



Cheryl Ryan with her she-sheds.  
Photo by Christine Simmonds

Inside the original she-shed was a bench, some rocking chairs, pillows, and candles. The pickled white really does allow the wood grain and the knots to come through and delivers a rustic charm. I want to climb inside the photo and make myself at home. I can picture myself there, drinking tea and watching birds.

You can tell that she-sheds have become a passion of Cheryl's, based on how she lights up when she talks about them. She has a wall full of photos of the different designs, and she remembers each one.

Cheryl tells me, "a she-shed really is as broad and as wide as any woman wants to make it." It can be a place to relax and enjoy hobbies, or to socialize with friends and family.

"I would absolutely say the she-shed is the answer to the man cave," Cheryl says. It is a space that women can call their own.

She also describes the she-shed as "a grown-up playhouse," where women can let their imaginations run wild to design. "You don't have to put bathrooms in it. You don't have to put kitchens in it. It can be just a place to go and enjoy nature with the sun on your back."

The sheds Cheryl and her husband design can even be insulated for year-round use if the customer chooses, including insulated windows.

"I think most people use them seasonally," she says, and adds that in the winter they are really cozy with a propane fireplace.

"If someone wanted to turn their she-shed into a chalet, they could do that," she says.

One customer ordered a shed based on the display, which Cheryl says was a place for the customer to get together with her lady friends and drink wine.

Cheryl shows me another picture on her wall of a she-shed designed to be a knitting space. This one is a blue shed, smaller than the original. It also has a porch with birch posts. Large glass doors open onto the porch. Cheryl tells me the knitting shed has shelves on the back wall to store yarn, needles, and projects. This shed is a place to, "go and sit."

She shows me a little book, like a children's book, with pictures of one shed belonging to artist Irene Olivieri. This she-shed is designed to be her inspiration shed for her art. Irene's shed is insulated in the floors and the walls for year-round use. It is made of pine and pickled white on the inside, with a second layer of pine that went along the outside. From the outside it resembles a barn, painted red and even with sliding barn doors. Inside there are two large skylights, and large windows allow plenty of natural light and scenery.

Cheryl tells me about sheds she has made for women with composting toilets and kitchens and propane cook tanks. Some are places for children to play and enjoy. Some are more like cabins and have beds for guests.

One customer had her she-shed installed on a float and launched onto a lake. "She rows out and does her writing," Cheryl says. That one is small and very plain, not painted. Another customer had Cheryl and her husband design her she-shed to be a church. "This little chapel is for her," she says. "Just a place for her to go and have a little personal retreat."





One shed was designed for animals, and another to match the house.

Cheryl tells me about one woman's shed on a wagon, designed with a kitchen space and a living space. It's a space to rest and relax in the summer. Another woman uses hers as a music studio for inspiration, with a large window to view the scenery.

No matter what kind of retreat you are looking for—whether a place for friends or a place to be alone, a place to sleep or a place to work—it is clear that the she-shed can provide that space for you, and Cheryl can help you design that dream.

After you have purchased your she-shed from Shed City, be sure to pick up one of Erika Kotite's books for ideas on decorating and saving space. Her two books, *She Sheds: A Room Of Your Own*, and *She Sheds Style: Make Your Space Your Own*, are packed with shed-spiration. Find your own personal shed style from Erika's ideas. Find out more about the history of sheds. Learn how to organize your shed and make the best use of space. Visit [sheshedliving.com](http://sheshedliving.com).



Find inspiration to decorate your she-shed from one of Erika Kotite's books.



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# A Sunny Yoga Studio Goes Online for Awhile

*The Bonds of Community Prove Strong*

BY CAITLIN HATHAWAY

TULA opened almost three years ago to date. It was a gorgeous spring day, and we were so excited that after months of planning, dreaming, and renovating, we were finally opening our doors. Those doors were to a sunny studio in the Knightville neighborhood of South Portland. The plan was to offer a full schedule of cycle, barre, yoga, and aerial yoga classes—and to build a community, no less.



TULA co-owner Caitlin Hathaway (right) and members of the TULA community enjoy the sunroom. Photos by ADB, FeelGood Photography

Today that occasion feels like a lifetime ago, a completely distant memory. I just came from the empty studio where I was helping a student pick up a spin bike—we're leasing out equipment for our virtual spin classes that start tomorrow. Later this afternoon, I will teach a virtual yoga class from my living room.

I know that this strange, unsettling time of the coronavirus will eventually pass, and we will look back on it as having happened a lifetime ago, in the same way I look back on our opening day. Through all the recent changes, however, the feeling that sticks with me is what the true definition of community has taught me over the past three years.

My business partner, Lily Dougher Hagerman, and I started dreaming of TULA about two years before it opened. Longtime friends, we both grew up in large families and in

small towns. For both of us, connection with and commitment to community goes far beyond just recognizing your neighbor. We both craved a space to connect with people, a space where everyone was welcome to come in and stay awhile, a space that felt like coming home. So, we decided to build it.

Lily has spent the last decade teaching yoga in the South Portland community, and I, who come from the lobster industry, love spin and barre (a combination of yoga, ballet, and Pilates). We brought together these experiences, backgrounds, and interests because, as we realized also in our friendship, all the strands are beneficial and fun, in order to really develop a mutual mind-and-body balance.

Over the past three years, TULA has become a sanctuary, for us and for many. Day after day people come to the studio not just to practice, but to build deeper connections to themselves and one another.

At TULA everyday wellness is embodied, and the collective support of one another is palpable. We have strived to create a culture where everyone is welcome and where as soon as you walk through the door, you feel as though you have been here before.



TULA co-founder Caitlin Hathaway teaching a group of Barre students.



The plants and the sunshine through the windows in the afternoon really help! And the sauna has become the social gathering spot in South Portland. I have witnessed people get jobs and set up their children on dates. The laughter that you can hear on a Saturday morning is one thing that I currently am missing the most.

The amazing part of a community is all the different people who come together to make it whole and alive. At TULA, we recognize that each can have different needs, and those needs can change day to day. Our mission is to meet people where they are at and offer them an opportunity to find balance.

The word TULA means “counterbalance” in Sanskrit, referring to the concepts of scale, likeness, and equal measure. It signifies being in balance or being equal with. As planned, we offer classes in aerial yoga, restorative Iyengar-influenced yoga, vinyasa, barre, and spin classes—and combo classes—all of which allow students to walk into the studio and have the option to find something that will provide them a physical counterbalance.

We closed our doors in late March. We hated to do it, but with everything happening, we felt that doing our part in social distancing was the best thing that we could do to help everyone’s long-term, big-picture health. People were so grateful to be able to sneak in one last studio class, and when the last students left, it felt so empty.

What has shone clearly over the past few weeks is that community is so much more than just a physical space. While it is definitely more fun to be able to hug each other and take class in a room together, we made a relatively quick pivot to hold on to the most important thing: relationships.

The first week we were closed, we built an online library of pre-recorded classes. We wanted to offer students a way to continue their practice on their own schedule. With everything being so up in the air, this assembling of online classes felt like a quick solution to the most obvious problem.

While the library has been amazing, and we are working on continuing to grow it so that those who cannot attend live classes do have a place to find a familiar face to practice with, we also built our “virtual studio.” We have live classes on the schedule every day, and logging into Zoom 10 minutes before class starts is the highlight of my day. We can wave and see big smiles. Everyone checks in on each other. And we know that if someone misses a regular class, someone will reach out to them after class. It’s the connection to each other that is the definition of community. We look out for each other, we encourage each other, and we welcome new faces to it with open arms and big smiles.



TULA co-founder Lily Dougher Hagerman provides a student with extra support during aerial yoga.

While we are unable to be together physically right now, the TULA community is stronger than ever and reaching out, growing. From teachers to students to friends, we are all rooting for each other. We continue to step outside of our comfort zones in an effort to find balance amid this chaos. I have to give the biggest virtual hugs of appreciation to the teachers. Many willingly stepped into unfamiliar territory to take their teaching to the internet. It’s a scary thing to do! They are the ones who are making this all happen.

And to the students: my heart is beyond overwhelmed with people’s continued support—showing up in their kitchens and living rooms, purchasing of our “virtual studio passes” that directly support the teachers during this time. Everyone is slowing down and really recognizing that the amazing community of a class and a place exists strongly and can keep building, even or especially in troubled times. I look forward to the day when right now is a distant memory, but I know that I will never forget the amazing people who make my community whole. •

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# PLACEMAKING IS A PASSION for Heather Furth

BY SHEILA D. GRANT



She majored in biology at the University of Maine at Orono. He majored in English. Yet Heather and Abe Furth have become a powerhouse placemaking team, contributing to a vibrant downtown in both Orono and Bangor for the past 15 years. The entrepreneurial duo, who met and wed in college, have renovated buildings, opened restaurants, and created apartments. They are co-owners of the Orono Brewing Company. And somehow, Heather Furth also finds time for outdoor recreation.

“I love skiing at Sugarloaf. That’s always fun,” she said. The couple also has a camp at Pushaw Lake, about 15 minutes from Orono, where she likes to paddleboard and water ski.

Heather grew up in Bangor. Fresh out of college, she and Abe partnered with Mark Horton to open their first restaurant, Woodman’s Bar and Grill, in Orono, which will mark its 15th anniversary at the end of May.

“Honestly, we worked our way through school bartending and serving,” said Heather. “Once we were done with college, I thought about grad school, but it just didn’t feel right at the time. We were working in Orono and felt there was a real niche not being filled, so we built Woodman’s from scratch in 2005.”

In what has since become their business model, the partners purchased a building (that needed TLC) for a low price and renovated it into a vibrant, popular destination. That first venture succeeded because

of, “our youthfulness, drive, and ambition, and because we didn’t realize what we did not know,” she said, laughing.

Mark, a psychology major, worked as the chef at Woodman’s, while Abe tended bar and Heather worked as a server. “All three of us worked all the time when we first started,” she said. “We paid ourselves minimally and divided up the tips three ways. We gave a share to Mark so he would be able to survive. And even though the business wasn’t making much money, we were able to pay the business bills. That was one of the major reasons why we succeeded—we didn’t have to take much [money] from the business at all.”

Heather said the biggest learning curve came with managing employees, which none of them had ever done, and, “we were managing employees who were older than we were at that time.”

The partners also worked with the Maine Small Business Development Centers. “We had a wonderful business coach, Tom Gallant, who was really pivotal in our being able to start our business,” said Heather. “He’s retired now, but he continued to counsel us up until five years or so ago.”

## FROM START-UP TO MAJOR PLAYER

That success has led to more ventures, and more successes. After getting Woodman’s up and running, the Furths then bought and renovated a new space nearby, around 2008.

The first floor was devoted to a fast food concept inspired during summer travel. “We were in college and had been dating for about six months, and we went on a two-and-a-half-month road trip across the country on a motorcycle,” recalled Heather. “We fell in love with the West Coast-style burritos.” Verve, featuring that West Coast fast/casual vibe, opened in 2009, with a second location opening in Bangor in 2013. The couple renovated upper floors of the Bangor location to feature apartments, as well.

“I remember being so incredibly scared but also excited by the prospect of it,” Heather said. “I like placemaking. Woodman’s was an empty shell, and we created a place that felt like it had



Abe and Heather Furth with OBC business partners Asa Marsh-Sachs and Mark Horton.

been there for a really long time. Creating wonderful places for people to live in and restaurant concepts is always fun! And that’s really been our business model—buy a building that needs a lot of rehab, create apartments above, and inhabit the first-floor commercial space.” Verve was sold in 2018, but the Furths still own the buildings.

In 2014, the Orono Brewing Company was born in the basement of the Orono Verve location. Because the Furths and Horton lacked experience in brewing, Asa Marsh-Sachs was brought on as their brew master and fourth partner. Small tasting rooms were opened, first in Orono, and then downtown Bangor. That building, too, was renovated to include apartments in the upper stories.

In October 2018, the four partners opened a new OBC location at 61 Margin Street in Orono. The project was one-and-a-half years in the making, as a former rock-crushing facility was rehabbed into OBC space on the ground floor with apartments



Abe and Heather Furth on their first vacation after seven years of business building.



Abe and Heather Furth are open to adventure, whether it's opening new businesses, or rock-climbing.



A cross-country motorcycle trip during summer break from college inspired the Furths to open burrito restaurants in Orono and Bangor.



Despite her busy schedule, Furth enjoys outdoor recreation.

on the upper stories. The former Orono location was then converted into production space.

The new, larger space allowed OBC to pack 95 percent of its products on-site and to work more broadly with vendors statewide, while also meeting local demand. The brewery also added a broader menu—the company's downtown Orono and Bangor locations served only beer and

pizza by the slice, brought in from local pizza shops. The atmosphere is casual, and overhead is kept low by the lack of wait staff. Customers order and pay at the bar.

The partners wanted to keep the same vibe as their smaller locations, while adding to the downtown experience for students and faculty from the nearby University of Maine. To that end, ping-pong tournaments, DJ'd music, and other activities

were added to the OBC offerings, as was an outdoor space during summer months.

To avoid competing with other businesses, OBC opens earlier and maintains a less nightclub-like atmosphere. The business also collaborates with other breweries on occasion. The company's popularity is growing. In February 2019, their Tubular beer was named one of the 34 hottest IPAs in the nation by food and drink review site, *Thrillist*.

They have recently bought another building in Bangor. "All of the properties we own are downtown, aside from our large OBC production facility in Orono," she said.

She is hoping the commercial spaces will be filled with, "anything that would be a complement to the area. Eateries are always lovely. Retail would be great. The space doesn't lend itself well to offices, I don't believe, but we are completely open to ideas. It is important that it be something that will not have a negative impact on the residents above, so not open late or rowdy or loud. I think everyone would love to see a downtown market. But we don't want to put too much of our influence on it."

Whatever occupies the space should serve the downtown residents who are the heart of the city center, Heather said.

Asked what advice she would give to other young entrepreneurs, Heather replied, "Use the resources that are available to you. None of us in our partnerships had any business training or experience, but through the Small Business Development Center, we were able to educate ourselves. I feel like self-educating as much as possible is important. Never stop learning. Trust your business instincts. Be willing to take a risk because if you don't, you will never know whether or not you would have succeeded."

Like every other small business owner in Maine and across the nation, the Furths are feeling the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. "We're closed down at all of our places that are open to the public," said Heather on March 23. The brewery is still in production, with beverages sent out to stores and available by delivery, "but relative to normal sales, that's a miniscule amount. Very few of our 60 employees are still working at this point. We are hoping to call them all back once it's safe." •

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR |

Several weeks ago, I grabbed a copy of MWM on my way out of the grocery store and enjoyed reading a number of its articles when I got home. It is even still kicking around my kitchen as a reminder that there are a few parts I'd like to go back to read more carefully. I recently learned through Facebook that there was a huge internet backlash against your magazine for publishing an interview with Christiane Northrup, and I read that CBD has pulled out as an advertiser with you.

I just wanted to say thank you for what appears to be a steadfast commitment to supporting free speech on your part, for standing your ground in the face of bullies, hatred, and intolerance against people who have "different" or alternative viewpoints. I read that you have a policy to not "dive deep" into political views, and clearly your interview with Dr. Northrup was not a very "deep" piece, in any sense of the word (a fact which, especially in these times, made it easy, enjoyable reading). At the same time, *had* your interview touched on any of her views about vaccines, body autonomy, and public health, those should not be considered political issues anyway. We listen to medical and health professionals all the time with the understanding that they each bring their own experiences, ideas, and knowledge to whatever the issue is at hand. Caring for your health in a holistic way and looking with a critical eye at parts of Western medicine that our society takes for granted are *not* political issues.

I wish that your interview with Dr. Northrup was still available to read on your website, but I wanted to thank you for your commitment to free speech, and for celebrating Maine women. It seems that some of your readers (and tons of people online who would probably never have picked up your magazine in the first place) do not share the same values.

Please continue to profile a diverse array of women in our state and stay strong in the face of self-righteous internet bullies and local businesses who apparently cannot see the forest for the trees. You're doing great.

Peace,  
Flora

MWM did not discuss conspiracy theories or her beliefs or vaccines in the article. It was just a personal profile.

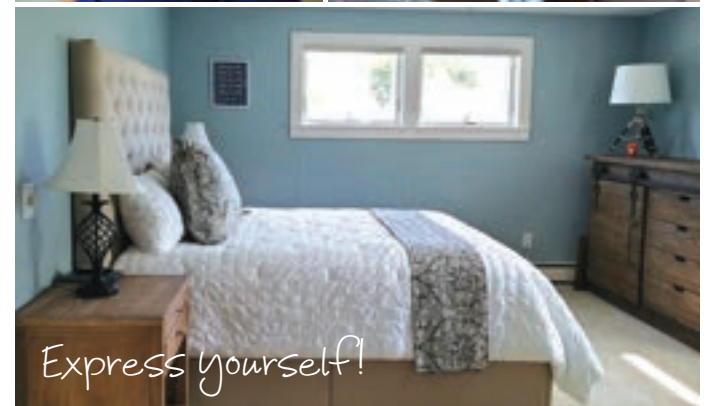
Do people think that anyone reading the article would take the time to google her views on these specific issues that weren't even mentioned in the article and then change their own personal beliefs and views to hers just because they saw her featured in this magazine? Because that's one really giant stretch. Have you yourself ever been able to change someone's political or personal views over the internet? Or have any of us ever been able to change your views and beliefs on these issues by listening to ours?

The fact of the matter still stands that the group members attacked the livelihoods of people who have never expressed or endorsed Northrup's views or beliefs. The content had zero to do with any of these things.

Nicole

### CORRECTION

In the April issue of *Maine Women Magazine*, an incorrect photo inadvertently appeared in the article, "Women's Progress." The intended photo of inventor Margaret Knight is reprinted here. We regret the error.



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# MELTDOWN MAGIC

BY SHELAGH TALBOT

**H**ave you ever witnessed your child have a major meltdown—either in a store or at home? As you know, it can be pretty awful, especially in a public place—there you are, dragging a shopping cart around and trying to get everything you need as fast as possible and your child, being denied the latest baby doll or rocket set is screaming and crying and thrashing about on the floor, acting for all the world that you have just beaten them to within an inch of their life.

Except for the shrieking, the silence is deafening. It's like everyone in the store stops what they are doing to witness this travesty. You can see the recriminating glances from other shoppers—she must be a TERRIBLE mother, how could she let her child act like that—doesn't she know ANYTHING about discipline? You know the drill. And, at this point, all you can do is gather up your howling child and scurry out of the store as soon as possible. Then begins the endless conversations about proper behavior in public places and so forth.

The thing is, I have seen this happen over and over again with other parents and usually the tired and frustrated mother or father (for that matter) roughly yanks their kid out of the store amid the “Tsk! Tsk!” and clearly disapproving glances of store personnel and other shoppers. Is there ANY solution to this calamitous conundrum?

I'm here to say YES, there is! I was able to figure out a couple of great ones at home because my daughter used to have regular meltdowns there too—always wanting to get her way about buying something, visiting someone, having a sleepover etc.



All part of being a little kid for sure. I discovered two things that can diffuse the melt down almost immediately and . . . the best part? Usually the two of you end up giggling and laughing at the silliness of it all.

One tried and true method is to fill a small glass or bottle with warm water and then pour it slowly over the head of your screeching child. Wait—what? Yep—warm water—stops them in their tracks and the small puddle on the floor is nothing compared to the blessed silence of surprise! And, if that doesn't work—I revert to the bathtub trick—the empty bathtub, that is. Scoop up your irate child and gently deposit them in an empty bathtub—the expression on their face is priceless. “You are putting me in HERE? With no water? What the?????” The rage is forgotten and almost immediately the two of you are laughing.

This kind of diversion is the best way to break up a really tricky situation. Yelling back is useless—it only leads to more yelling and nothing gets solved except that both of you feel miserable—and it doesn't solve a thing. And, when we next went to the store, I discovered that just showing my child a half-filled bottle of water—doesn't need to be warm—mollified her. “I promise to be good Mommy,” she'd say as she saw the offending bottle.

Thirty years later, my daughter still remembers the water bottle and the bathtub trick vividly—and . . . she has tried them on her own little ones. “Gosh mom,” she has said. “These methods really do work—I never thought I'd say this, but I'm sure glad you used them on me!” Needless to say, she brings a bottle of water with her when she shops with her little ones and there has yet to be a major kid meltdown in public with those grandkids of mine. •

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*“I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it,”  
French philosopher Voltaire wrote in the 1700s.*

## THE INTRO and the WHY

Why tell this story at all?

Why not just issue an apology and let the next “big thing” knock this off the front pages of social media? That’s what happens. One controversy winds down, replaced by someone else’s heartache.

What does this have to do with women and why am I, a man, writing it?

To answer the first questions, this is about intimidation, intolerance, and women bullying women. As to the other question? I was there first hand, guilty of fanning the fire by engaging in the defense of our female publisher from commenters engaged in cyber bullying.

\*\*\*\*\*

## AN APOLOGY and a QUESTION—What does freedom of speech mean to you?

*By Reade Brower, owner of Courier Publications, publishers for Maine Women Magazine.*

In the previous *Maine Women Magazine* (MWM), an interview with Dr. Christiane Northrup, written in February and printed in early March (before COVID-19 had shut down our state), raised some eyebrows. Shortly after the magazines began circulating, Governor Mills began to shut down our state. Northrup’s critics, vociferous with their views, began posting on MWM’s social media page, and calling advertisers, urging them to pull their support of MWM.

They were upset about Northrup’s views on vaccines and COVID-19. Neither of these views were discussed in the interview, but they were claiming she is dangerous. In a subsequent MWM response, Dr. Northrup clarified that she believes COVID-19 is real, but questions some of the media hype surrounding it. She also clarified that she believes mandatory vaccinations are government overreach. These clarifications did nothing for the small but vocal group of disruptors with a mission of seek, disrupt, destroy.

One of MWM’s prominent advertisers decided to pull out, doing it publicly on social media after speaking with MWM Publisher Mary Barstow and not getting the answers she wanted—namely a denouncement of our cover choice and for MWM a demand to go back to our distributors to pick up all printed copies.

The challenge with the apology was it needed to be heartfelt and honest, and to satisfy this advertiser, MWM would have had to condemn the views of Northrup—which would have been a change in our

policy that we don’t endorse or condemn any of the women written about in the pages of MWM.

The anti-MWM movement ratcheted up . . . the sharks were circling, writing and calling advertisers on the phone, shaming MWM for supporting Northrup’s personal views, which we did not even mention, let alone endorse.

Neither would we put out a statement throwing Northrup under the bus. MWM created a measured approach and tried to balance freedom of speech with the fact the interview happened before COVID-19 and dealt exclusively with Northrup’s career and her ideas about life, rather than her personal views, which her opponents were now calling out as “dangerous.”

MWM believes that it is more dangerous when voices are limited or readership can’t be trusted to make their own determinations.

In the end, for MWM it came down to freedom of speech.

The idea behind MWM is to celebrate and highlight women from Maine with interesting stories, careers, or hobbies they believe readers will enjoy. If readers do not like the person chosen, perhaps not reading the story is a better choice than organizing boycotts and public shaming.

MWM has developed a disclaimer which will run in future issues reading: *“We believe in freedom of speech. We do not endorse or condemn any woman featured in our magazine based on their belief system or political viewpoints.”*

## THE STORY BEGINS and THE \_ \_ \_ \_ HITS THE FAN.

The story begins with the choice of Dr. Christiane Northrup, who was chosen as one of several interviews because she is a successful woman in Maine. MWM was not aware how vocal her critics were: mostly those who opposed her stance of “YES on ONE” last election.

That’s a fair discussion, but what happened next was anything but fair.

A call from a prominent advertiser demanding an apology, damning the interview, and insisting we go back to our distributors to pick up our April issue was not something MWM could comply with.

The company cancelled their annual advertising contract because of it.

What happened next is where the story begins.

The advertiser put it on their social media page, and it exploded, just like it had done when MWM first posted the interview on our MWM Facebook page.

It should be noted that MWM’s original post was taken off Facebook because of vile and hateful comments that began to mount against Northrup and MWM. There were comments about Nazis, and the final straw was a comment suggesting that “the publisher should be hanged.” This same group of hornets would now go to the advertiser’s site and do what they do—disrupt.

Soon, the advertiser’s post was shared over 160 times, without any response by MWM. It was happening too fast. As the hours passed by, things escalated. The Northrup detractors smelled blood and were empowered. They began sending emails with the advertiser’s damning post copied in the body of the email. They followed up with phone calls, giving advertisers and sponsors the choice to denounce MWM or face repercussions.

As the owner of Courier Publications, publishers of MWM, I was brought into the loop.

## THE ORIGINAL POST, RIDING ON A HIGH HORSE CALLED JUDGEMENT . . . MY RESPONSE, and EMPOWERING THE BULLIES.

Since the story starts with the public posting and my subsequent response, I thought sharing those appropriate. Most of the commenters hadn’t even read the Northrup interview. Many were applauding the advertiser for “believing in science” or condemning MWM for running the interview.

Without MWM’s response, people were judging us simply by the advertiser’s post. Unintentional perhaps, but taking this from a private conversation between customer and client to social media brought this thing to a new level.

Empowering the bullies was also a consequence of this public sharing. Some would take that post and send it to MWM advertisers. Disrupting the MWM business was their apparent goal.

MWM may have lit a match, but the public posting on April 10th was the gasoline that would turn this into a bonfire.

MWM trusts their readers and advertisers can make up their own minds, but not without two sides of the story.

### ORIGINAL POST on their Facebook page: April 10th, 2:42pm, 2020

*To our Coffee By Design customers and Maine Women Magazine readers, we have made the decision at this time to end our support of Maine Women Magazine. While normally a business’s advertising plans are not worthy of sharing publicly, in this instance we felt we needed to explain our decision.*

*The current issue of Maine Women Magazine features a cover story on Dr. Christiane Northrup. Coffee By Design is a strong supporter of the right to free speech, and we have ourselves been chastised for sharing unpopular sentiments over the years. However, the decision to promote Dr. Northrup in a fluff piece that does not address her broadly-known anti-vaccine stance, compounded by her now public statements that COVID-19 is a hoax, has put us in an extremely uncomfortable position. We know that the decision to interview her, and the interview and printing of the issue happened before COVID-19 was of national concern, but we are now in the midst of a pandemic, and there has been no attempt by the publication to address the profile’s poor timing, or to publicly state that they do not support, or condone, Dr. Northrup’s beliefs. We spoke with the editor and publisher of Maine Women Magazine today and did not hear a solution to this situation that made us feel we could continue to support the publication. Please know that we will remain an advocate for Maine women, and are also advocates for public health, free speech and a future unmarred by misinformation.*

*Stay safe,  
Mary Allen & Alan*

### FOLLOW-UP POST: My response post 5 days later on the MWM Facebook page April 15th, 3:23pm, 2020:

*Dear Maine Women Magazine readers and customers of Coffee Design RE: the earlier Northrup post by Mary Allen;*

*I appreciate the opportunity to address you and perhaps clear up some misconceptions. My name is Reade Brower and “Maine Women Magazine - MWM” was started by “Masthead Maine” and later transferred to our Rockland-based newspaper group; I am the owner of both. I am speaking to you directly because the buck stops here. I respect Mary Allen’s decision to pull her ads and we have canceled her remaining contract per her request. The interview with Dr. Northrup that has caused so much disruption was written and printed before the COVID-19 pandemic. If you read the piece, it is a personal profile about her - there is no mention of her political views. MWM is a human interest magazine and does not*

go into deep dives into political views, as a general rule. Northrup was chosen because she is a prominent woman from Maine, having appeared on Oprah 15 times, a slew of other national shows, and her books have been translated into 30 languages, selling over 5 million copies. MWM does not endorse her political views, nor did we write about them, nor were we aware of them - her personal political views were not prominent on her website or on a casual google search. MWM did not expect the avalanche of hate, shaming and bullying that would come from this, so our reaction has been slow and measured. In Mary Allen and Alan's letter to you, the owners wrote "her now public statements that COVID-19 is a hoax" was their main decision to pull out of MWM. Never has Northrup said it was a hoax; she believes government overreach is an issue. We asked for clarification from Northrup the other day, she wrote us; "They are incorrect. I believe that the Corona virus is real. But in my opinion the way it is being spun in the media is inaccurate." She also wrote she is not against vaccines per se: "And I strongly believe that the CDC, WHO, and the FDA are overly influenced by Big Pharma and that they have an agenda that is not as transparent as it should be. And mandating vaccines for everyone is a dreadful over reach." As I mentioned earlier, we do not endorse her political views any more than we would any other woman we write about; that's not what we do. Our mission is to introduce readers to interesting women in Maine. Period. The amount of bullying and shaming we received from this article frankly floored us. It was so vile on our Facebook page that Facebook took down the post from our page entirely; I have asked Facebook for a screen shot. One of the posts read to the effect our Publisher should be hanged for featuring Northrup in our magazine. We have heard from some readers/fans that many in the "hate Northrup" group are vicious, threatening to contact all of our advertisers telling them to cancel their ads with us, and organizing boycotts. Without going into further detail, let it suffice to say there are others who want MWM to fail. I've been through this several times in the past. As I did then, I will do again - stand up to the bullies and not be influenced by the shaming and intimidation. Intolerance in any form is not acceptable. Thank you Mary Allen for the opportunity to give you and your followers another side of the story. With over 900 likes, 500 comments and 160 plus shares Mary Allen's post has gone viral and I hope those same people will comment and share again now that they have this new information to consider. P.S. I can tell from the passion of the customer comments that Coffee by Design is a Maine business that thrives on nurturing and integrity, I believe in that too. I also believe in science, but that is not the issue at hand. From the many supportive comments MWM received this weekend, the real issue here is one of freedom of speech. When we limit that, we gain nothing. When we encourage or accept limiting free speech, we are doomed. I believe that those beliefs are deep in the heart of the Maine spirit and it is the essence of what keeps America great.

Live in Peace :LIP: Reade

SEE THE ORIGINAL POST AT THE LINK BELOW.

<https://www.facebook.com/.../photos/a.13833.../10158190098584866>

**WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:**

The first hour, the MWM post was warmly received by Facebook followers. I write the publisher and ask if she is "feeling the love." She writes back that she is slowly feeling better and more hopeful. An hour later, the haters arrived. This time, the post would stay up, even though comments quickly became caustic and disrespectful.

I made the huge mistake to engage. I know better, but emotions got in the way. The negative was putting more gas on the fire; the plus was a curiosity leading to learning. There were about five commenters, all relentless, going on how irresponsible MWM was and that they should be ashamed; at least no threats to the publisher this time. What was interesting is that when confronting a couple of them, asking if they were the ones who put on the original comments, they immediately attacked me and accused me of threatening them.

"No, I wasn't," I thought. I simply asked if they were behind the comments that got the first post taken down. I inquired if they thought those kind of comments were okay, and whether sending out letters to MWM advertisers, threatening boycotts was appropriate.

When my wife came to my defense, I knew it was time to disengage, but it was too late. The next day they would go to MWM distributors and demand the removal of our magazines. Three of them would cancel subscriptions from other publishing businesses where I have owner interest.

Engaging them and trying to have a civilized discussion was not the route to closure.

At the time of my response post, I asked the advertiser of the original post to allow me to post my response on their page, figuring that was a pathway to putting this behind us. With 1,000+ likes, 650+ comments and now 170 shares, MWM needed their side of the story out.

After taking the MWM response post above, and tagging the advertiser, I asked it be posted to the advertiser's page, with similar prominence and timing as her original post.

She would not allow the post and instead said it could be posted as a comment, something that would not, in my estimation, get the story out. One comment out of 650 died a quick death, as I knew it would, with no one responding to it. At this point, the post with my comment was a week old and had run its course.

I didn't hide my disappointment, but I respect they have a right to look after their business, which had not gone unscathed from this. Their decision to go public, rather than keep it private between magazine and customer created a tsunami they probably did not anticipate.

I would have to find another way to get the message out. In the meantime, a sponsor pulled out, after being approached by several of our critics, citing the Northrup cover as their reason. After all that had happened this was not just about Dr. Christiane Northrup anymore. It was about freedom of speech, public shaming, and bullying.

**FROM THE BEGINNING.**

I am not the face of any of the publications under my ownership umbrella. Nor do I want to be the face of this discussion, but sometimes people need to step up and say "Enough!"

People have the right to hate, protest, encourage boycotts, disrupt—but that doesn't make it righteous. And, when it gets disrespectful and rude and when it tramples the rights of others? It is wrong.

MWM being publicly bashed by advertisers and bullies needed a response. We all have those who love us and who we love. If we do not stand up for them, who will? Public shaming can do a lot to decimate a person's psyche. In this case, the publisher was ready to pack her bags, because, in her words, she had "disappointed and let me down."

Not true, but feelings can be more powerful than reality.

Whether someone feels as if this was a mistake, or just part of the MWM mission to bring interesting women to our readers, nobody deserves to be shamed or made to feel worthless.

Living through bullying and harassment is horrible. It will make a person skittish, destroying self-worth and self-respect.

It doesn't take many to disrupt, especially because they do it loudly. It is not illegal to send out letters or make phone calls to MWM advertisers demanding they stop their association if they know what is good for them. The vocal few make a lot of clatter and don't go away until finished. It only dies when you let the fire extinguish on its own. But the problem is, this approach emboldens them to go after the next person or business they disagree with.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Do you believe in freedom of speech—we do!  
Do you believe in civility—we do!**

For those that align with us, we welcome you aboard. For those who don't, we wish you success and ask you respectfully to give us space so we can do US . . . and you can do YOU.

To end on a positive note, not everyone is a hater. After the MWM response post, many readers came to the publisher's defense. Over that weekend, after relentless bashing all week, readers stepped up with more than \$1,000 in new subscriptions and a new half-page ad from someone learning about us through the controversy.

People are good, people are kind, and life is a two-way street.

You become complicit when you stand down, figuring others will stop it. This is about freedom of speech and that does not include bullying. That and civility will be part of MWM policy going forward. Feel free to comment, feel free to disagree, but do it in a respectful manner or MWM will respectfully ask you to not comment anymore on their posts and will block you.

I have become passionate about this, while trying to keep an open mind.

Most of the passionate posters did not read MWM; they just hated Northrup and therefore wanted us gone because we would not condemn her.

**IN CLOSING.**

We wrestled with the choice of bringing this to MWM readers, or letting it organically end. It came down to seeking accountability, for ourselves and our critics.


Joe Gauld, founder of Hyde School in Bath, while speaking about character education, once told my family to "bet on the truth and when in doubt, bet on more truth."

He also said, "The truth will set you free, but first it will make you miserable."

I ask for your considerations and respectful discourse going forward. This is my truth; I honor that others are entitled to theirs.

Let me fade away and leave MWM to the women of Maine, that is why it was born, and that is why I supported it not going away.





"An eagle came at eye level and flew in front of us down the river. So, it was like, 'All right, this is where I'm supposed to be.'"

# People of the Beautiful River

*A Conversation with  
Clarissa Sabattis*

*Tribal Chief  
Houlton Band of  
Maliseet Indians*

STORY BY DILLON BUSTIN  
PHOTO BY JASON PAIGE SMITH

Clarissa Sabattis is a devoted caretaker, both in her personal life and her professional career. She was trained in nursing at Northern Maine Community College and University of Maine at Orono, and for several years she coordinated clinical care at Madigan Health Care Facility in Houlton. She still maintains an affiliation with Madigan Estates, but since 2017 her full-time job has been the elected Tribal Chief for the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians.

As she said during a recent interview with me in the tribe's council room, "I don't know if it was my role as a nurse that got me to the point where people were asking me to be here. If they hadn't, I would not even have considered this role as Chief, but here I am."

**I appreciate not just my father's advice but elders in general.**

The Maliseet are a nation that spans two countries—Canada and the United States. Their historic homeland extends northward from the Bay of Fundy, along a river known in English as the St. John River but named in Algonquian the Wolastoq. Their name for themselves is Wolastoqiyik, which may be translated as People of the Beautiful River.

There are several Maliseet settlements in New Brunswick and Quebec, but only one in Maine, along a tributary of the St. John. The Meduxnekeag River flows through Houlton and northwards through the lands owned by the Houlton Band, until it turns east across the international border to join the St. John at Woodstock, New Brunswick.

The town of Houlton was founded on the Meduxnekeag River in 1807 by Joseph Houlton. The settlement was situated next to a large Maliseet winter village to facilitate the fur trade. As the town grew and developed some Maliseet continued to live in Houlton, holding down jobs in the mills and working for the town's water utility. Later that population, who would eventually come to be known as the Houlton Band, specialized in making ax handles for the timber industry and ash baskets for the potato crop, as well as working as wilderness canoe guides.

During the early 20th century, the legal standing of the Houlton Band was problematic because members were not incorporated. This dilemma began to change in the late 1960s with the formation of the Association of Aroostook Indians. Effective lobbying work in Augusta by all Native Americans groups in the state culminated in 1980 with the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act. That same year the Houlton Band was finally recognized by the federal government as an "official" tribe.

Today, as Chief, Clarissa Sabattis leads a staff that implements all aspects of tribal administration including health care, natural resources, social services, elder programs, youth programs, education, employment rehabilitation and housing. It's a complicated job involving multiple relationships with federal, state, and local governments, as well as intertribal organizations.

She was already serving on the Tribal Council when she decided to stand for election as Chief. She certainly knew what she was getting into, because during her girlhood and adolescence her father, the Honorable Clair Sabattis, served. His term extended for 12 years beginning in 1985. "I remember the day he was elected but I didn't quite grasp the enormity of what he was about to take on. At that time, we had no land base. The tribal offices were rented space in downtown Houlton. Our gatherings all had to take place in spaces that were not ours. Through his tenure we established land holdings. Some of the first parcels were for our tribal administration building and for housing for

our members, which was the start of our Maliseet Riverside Village. The growth of our infrastructure helped to increase our abilities and has been constantly growing and evolving since then."

"I was seven when he took on the role as Chief. I didn't quite understand, and I was bothered by the fact that whatever he was doing took him away from our family a lot. As I got a little bit older, I was more interested in what was happening."

For 20 years following her father's term, the tribal chief was the Honorable Brenda Commander. Among the challenging issues that this leader faced during her tenure was the fact that Maine had been slow to implement the Indian Child Welfare Act. This act was passed by Congress in 1978 to deal with the high rate of Native children being placed in non-Native foster homes. In 2015 the Maine-Wabanaki State Child Welfare Truth and Reconciliation Commission finally made recommendations to reform the adoption process and keep children within the

immediate community when termination of parental rights is an absolute necessity. This policy priority is known informally as kinship care.

Another challenge undertaken during Brenda Commander's term of office was beginning to revive the Meduxnekeag River. Like many shallow, free-flowing rivers in Maine the Meduxnekeag had been channelized and widened in the nineteenth century to facilitate log drives and barge traffic. As commercial agriculture and manufacturing were introduced to the Houlton area, the river became polluted from soil erosion, fertilizer run-off, and spills of industrial chemicals. This disruption was disastrous for fish and other wild-

life. In 2007 the Houlton Band embarked on a seven-year planning effort with numerous state and federal agencies, and in 2014 the work to slow the current, reinstall boulders and tree trunks, and reintroduce indigenous plant and animal species began.

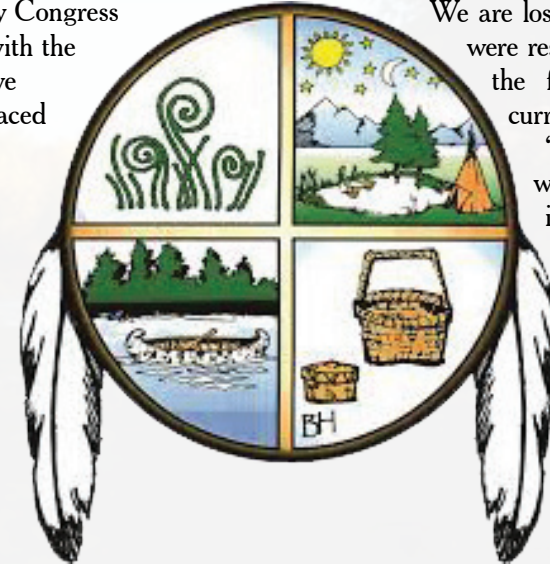
Asked if her father still gives her advice, Clarissa replied, "Sometimes. Sometimes it's asked for, sometimes it's not! I appreciate not just his advice but elders in general. I was young when things were taking place. I don't have that historical knowledge from the 1980s. He can give me that. Or, when I'm making decisions, he can give me insight as to why they didn't do things in the past, or if they tried to and it didn't work. That was one of the things that prompted me to finally bite the bullet and run.

We are losing our elders who were responsible for laying the foundation of our current infrastructure."

"I have a teacher who lives in Tobique in New Brunswick named Imelda Perley, and she has been amazing. She comes and does an annual fast in the late summer. I've taken some of the things that I've been learning from her to incor-

porate into our everyday life here. When we have individuals who pass in the community, we offer a sacred fire so people can come. Sometimes we are able to have traditional knowledge keepers here to do a pipe ceremony, talking circle, and even sweat lodge."

"Before I submitted papers to run for this office, I had conversations with all my family—my partner and children, my sisters, my parents. My mother had a stroke not a year before and we almost lost her. She lost the ability to talk, but she was able to let me know that she wanted me to do this. So, I know it means some sacrifice on everybody's part. With my sisters, when it comes to taking care of the parents, we





saying that I'm a carrier of spiritual medicine for my people."

"Later Imelda told me that Charles Solomon was a medicine man. I had met him when I was younger and he was the first teacher I had in school, but I hadn't seen him since I was maybe 10 years old. She said, 'He was my mentor. You didn't have a dream about a snake, but that dream was way better.'"

"So that's where that name came from, and I try to embrace those practices and keep them non-political. It's a fine line, and I think that the ceremonies have grounded me and helped me be a more patient and empathetic person."

Clarissa's patience is confirmed when she casually mentioned that the tribe is working on restoring the annual spring salmon run to the Meduxnekeag, in partnership with sister Nations in New Brunswick. This means not farm-raised fish but free-swimming Atlantic Salmon. The restoration seems like a reasonable next step, given all the ecological improvements to the river accomplished by her predecessors. But the last wild spawning run happened about 1822, before the first dam was built on the St. John River.

The state of Maine artificially stocked the river for sportsmen between 1926 and 1980 using the trap-and-truck method of netting fish below the lowest dam and transporting them upriver by highway. That program ended 40 years ago when the Houlton Band took control of their land. To do it right entails removing the old dams on the St. John River. Beyond the engineering tasks, the project involves bureaucratic cooperation among dozens of national, state, and provincial departments and funding agencies, as well as other tribes on both sides of the boundary.

Seemingly, the salmon can find the St. John River, and they remember to take a left turn at the Meduxnekeag, but they don't yet continue upstream.

"It's so frustrating!", she exclaimed. "As I was speaking with our Natural Resources Department, I made a joke that I'm going to go to the border and talk the fish over. Just on the other side of the border, they're finding salmon in the Meduxnekeag, so that's a couple miles. I'm going to talk them this way!"

No doubt she will succeed. The fish belong there, just as the Houlton Band belongs there. Then, after all the clearing and healing, the Wolastoqiyik will truly again be People of the Beautiful River. •



The tribal offices of the Houlton Band of the Maliseet Indians.

are pitching in. We take turns on the weekends and at different times. We have caregivers through the week. We want them to be able to stay at home."

The Maliseet, like all Algonquian peoples, have a social concept of a m'dewolin, variously translated as healer, shaman, medicine man, or carrier. Toward the end of our conversation, Clarissa told me a story about when she had been given her Maliseet name, Pisuni Cihpolakon:

"My mother was still at Eastern Maine Medical Center and not in great shape. My sisters didn't want me to leave. They felt if I left then something might happen. I assured them I was not an ICU nurse and the people who were there were taking good care of her. I did leave for a weekend because I had invited Imelda Perley to come and do a naming ceremony. As much as I'd like to say I didn't question my decision, it did feel like I left the family behind at the hospital."

"I had an amazing experience while I was questioning whether I should have stayed in Bangor with my mother. On the first day Imelda and I went to the river to have a pipe ceremony, and we sat down. An eagle came at eye level and flew in front of us down the river.

"So, it was like, 'All right, this is where I'm supposed to be.'"

"That evening Imelda kept saying 'You know, I hope somebody dreams about a snake.' To myself I'm thinking, 'She wants somebody to do that because we don't have a carrier.' Snake represents medicine for our people, so that would guide her. I kept thinking, 'She's trying to plant that in our heads so when we go to sleep tonight that's what we dream about.'"

"Well, I had one dream that I remembered, and it was so small I thought it was really insignificant other than the fact it did make me emotional because my mother was talking to me. My mother's always been known for her hospitality. In my dream I got to their house. She opened the door and said, 'Oh you're here. We have a visitor.' She told me his name and it was Charles Solomon. And that was the end of my dream."

"So, the next day we got together to do a talking circle, the only time we can talk during the whole ceremony. Imelda asked us to share what our dreams were, and I told her. She got excited and she said, 'I'll explain to you after I give you your name why that is significant.' So, she gave me the name, and it was Pisuni Cihpolakon, meaning Medicine Eagle Woman in English. It's

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# Time to Think at the Captain Nickels Inn

Elisa Doucette,  
Writer-in-Residence,  
on Tackling Your Writing Projects

BY RILEY GRACE



The Captain Nickels Inn in Searsport. *Jumping Rocks Photography*



Writer-in-Residence Elisa Doucette. *Melissa Mullen Photography*

This off-season in Searsport, Elisa Doucette is in an unusual circumstance. She is the first Winter Writer-in-Residence at the scenic and historic Captain Nickels Inn, and her residency is coinciding almost exactly with the challenging COVID-19 epidemic. Luckily, she is a positive, hopeful person, in a beautiful, supportive place. Reflecting on these months of national uncertainty from her vantage at the Inn, she feels the country is “not quite in zombie end-times yet.”

A successful writer, world traveler, digital nomad, Gorham High School graduate, and former University of Maine student, Elisa started in her residency position at the Captain Nickels this February. Not long after she settled there, the coronavirus changed much of what we took to be normal life in the United States. The global pandemic made staying at home (wherever home might be for a “location-independent” person like Elisa) the right thing to do. This spring, the Captain Nickels Inn has become Elisa’s home away from home and her port in a storm.

Dawn Gintz and her daughter Cassidy are the innkeepers and co-owners at the Captain Nickels. Expecting a quiet off-season, they have found this early springtime to be quite different, and not just because of COVID-19. Elisa has joined their routine at the Inn and become a cherished, esteemed part of it. Dawn says that with Elisa in

the expanded circle, dinner has become a time when they discuss projects and share much unexpected laughter, even in this serious time. They talk about the writing work Elisa has been focused on and marketing plans for the inn. They celebrate the powerful things that happen when women in Maine band together to put something great into the world.

Living in the Captain’s Suite on the top floor of the historic Inn, Elisa is writing articles, stories, and blog postings, as well as a proposal for a book-length nonfiction project. In addition to her own writing work, she is helping Dawn and Cassidy with media projects and plans for the Captain Nickels Inn’s summer season.

Elisa is intended to be the first of many Winter Writers-in-Residence at the Inn. Having a creative person living and working in the Inn has been a vision that Dawn and Cassidy have had for this grand property since they purchased it in May of 2019. “I always hoped to one day see artists painting on easels in the solarium and writers typing away in the tavern,” Dawn said. “This property is the perfect creative escape. We were thrilled to name Elisa as our first Writer-in-Residence, and to learn more about how we could cultivate that experience for future guests and residencies.”

Doucette’s residency was set to culminate in an exclusive three-night writers’



Innkeepers Dawn and Cassidy Gintz. *Jumping Rocks Photography*

retreat, featuring daily yoga practice and one-on-one coaching sessions on writing. But with the recent concerns about travel and social distancing, the event has been postponed—potentially to a time in late Autumn 2020.

Throughout her career, Elisa has traveled a lot and made her homes and offices in many places. She most recently had creative space at the Knack Factory in Portland. Previously, she has worked in numerous far-flung locations, including Seminyak in Bali, Prague in the Czech Republic, Oaxaca in Mexico, and the island of Lesbos in Greece. Additionally, she has spent a portion of her time recent-

ly traveling in Scotland. For that work, she is based in Aberdeen, where she consults on digital marketing with people in city government and in business, helping to promote the region.

Overarching or intertwined with these travels and roles, she is the founder, owner, and managing editor of the editing and writing coaching agency, Craft Your Content (CYC).

In one of her recent blog postings on the CYC site, Elisa considers how people, herself included, can best tackle writing projects in uncertain times of relative isolation. She wrote this posting as she found herself in her own unusual circumstances at Captain Nickels and wanted to encourage others. She winnowed down her suggestions as follows:

- Don’t be put off by stories of Shakespeare writing *King Lear* and Isaac Newton coming up with calculus and discovering gravity during times of plague. Those stories are simplistic.
- Take time to think.
- Give yourself a break, especially if you have family obligations.
- Talk with the people you are isolating with and tell them how important this creative work is to you.
- Figure out a plan that will give you the time and space to do your thinking and creating. (“Yes, this means you might have to put the toilet seat down and sit cross-legged on the floor at your new porcelain writing desk to get some peace and quiet to work.”)



The common parlor. *Jumping Rocks Photography*



View from the Havana deck. *Jumping Rocks Photography*

- Find the ways to make the right conditions happen for yourself, enlisting the help of others and, in turn, considering them with respect: “Remember there are likely other people in your quarantined quarters. Find out what they want to do with their time and space,” and help them make it happen.
- When you are feeling down and tired, give yourself a big break—to play board games, listen to music, cook, dance around, read, watch a fitness channel, or “binge-watch old episodes of *The Great British Bake-Off* to be transported to a time when you were calmed and soothed by the dulcet tones of Mary Berry’s gentle laughter.”
- Be aware: we are not just learning new routines of working remotely from home and dealing with different amounts and types of time. “We are figuring out how to live and, quite literal-

ly, survive in a time of chaos and uncertainty. Of fear and worry. Of sadness and strife.”

And, yet—here is where Elisa’s optimism and positive nature springs up, irrepressible—she sees that much good can come from this time of slowing down and reflection.

People are, she believes, “figuring out the things that matter most to them, when things they use to distract themselves are largely removed from their reach.” It is time, she says, when “we need to recognize that it will not be as easy or fun as we are being led to believe” to create substantial work: “It is rare that the things worth doing are.”

Finally, she encourages people who are living through these unsettled times—herself included, one imagines—to tackle their writing and creative projects with good spirit: “Give yourself a break, or give yourself ten breaks. Whatever you need to do to make magic happen, go make it happen.”

*Note: Elisa Doucette’s full article “Writing and Creating in a Time of Uncertainty” (March 20, 2020) can be found on [CraftYourContent.com/articles](http://CraftYourContent.com/articles).*

*The Captain Nickels Inn is a historic Maine Coast bed and breakfast that offers luxurious accommodations in a historic setting. The Inn, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was built in 1874 by Captain Nickels as a home for his wife, Elizabeth and their five (eventually eight) children. The breathtaking Captain’s home sits on 3 meandering acres directly on the island-studded Penobscot Bay halfway between the beautiful towns of Camden and Bar Harbor in the quaint town of Searsport. You can learn more at [captainnickelsinn.com](http://captainnickelsinn.com).*



# Public health remains a top concern for Dr. Dora Ann Mills

BY SHEILA D. GRANT

Dr. Dora Ann Mills hasn’t been Maine’s Center for Disease Control Director since 2011, but that hasn’t kept her from the front lines of the COVID-19 battle. Dr. Mills served as Maine’s State Health Officer and Director of the Maine CDC from 1996 to 2011. She then spent more than seven years as the VP for Clinical Affairs and Director of the Center for Health Innovation at the University of New England, also serving as UNE’s Interim VP for Research. Since September 2018, Dr. Mills has been the Senior Vice President of Community Health for MaineHealth, northern New England’s largest healthcare provider.

Mills said that she loves her job, which she describes as overseeing health efforts for the entire population in the MaineHealth service area. “Our vision is better health for everyone living in our communities,” she said during a February 26 interview.

To that end, Dr. Mills, who was CDC director during the SARS outbreak, began COVID-19 education efforts both online and through traditional media outlets in January when just a few cases of the virus were being confirmed in west-coast communities. She posted YouTube interviews with details about the virus, shared a recipe for homemade hand sanitizer, and on March 15, launched her “Not-So-Brief COVID-19 Update” blog and podcasts (read by her daughter, Julia). Mills also appeared at the podium with Maine CDC Director, Dr. Nirav Shah, as some of the first confirmed cases in our state were announced. She was there, in part, because a laboratory affiliated with MaineHealth was one of the only labs outside of the CDC able to confirm cases when the virus first hit Maine.

These days, Mills is constantly in virtual COVID-19-related meetings and preparatory sessions with healthcare providers, doing interviews as time allows,

and dispersing information and encouragement wherever possible.

“It’s been a roller coaster, and I’m sure this will only get worse, but I’m proud to work to support MaineHealth’s patients, our care team members, and our communities,” Dr. Mills said on March 30. “I was born at Maine Medical Center and practiced medicine at Franklin Memorial Hospital. I have always had a strong partnership with MaineHealth and our hospitals, whether I was working at Maine CDC or UNE. So, it’s an honor to be part of the executive team of this great health system, and especially in the middle of the biggest threat to public health since the 1918 pandemic.”

“The lessons from 1918 as well as from our neighboring New England states in 2020 should serve as a reminder that social distancing and respiratory hygiene are as critical throughout Maine as they are in New York City,” Dr. Mills cautioned. “And fortunately, Maine’s health systems are much more advanced and interconnected than in 1918. MaineHealth and other health systems (Northern Light Healthcare, MaineGeneral, Central Maine Health Care), our federally qualified health centers, the Maine Hospital Association, Maine DHHS, and others are all working hard to assure adequate health care is available to all Mainers. But I cannot emphasize how critical the social distancing is during the pandemic surge we are now experiencing. There are numerous social distancing mandates from all levels of government, including shelter-in-place orders. But they are only as effective as we the people are at implementing them.”

To read Dr. Mills’ “Not-So Brief COVID-19 Updates” in their entirety, follow her on Facebook. Podcasts of the posts can be found at <https://www.podbean.com/media/share/pb-ch5zi-d66fd3>.

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# A SOUP FOR ALL SEASONS

WRITTEN & PHOTOGRAPHED BY CANDACE KARU

## RIBOLLITA >>>>

I write this as I am self-isolating in my home on the West End of Portland. Living through these unprecedented times has caused me to change my perspective on things I thought were immutable. One of the few things I know for sure is that life after Covid-19 will look profoundly different than our pre-pandemic lives.

During this enforced pause, I find that food has become a source of comfort and familiarity. Though I have fewer resources – a trip to the grocery store or ordering food online has become its own source of adventure – I have paid much closer attention to ingredients, especially those I have on hand. Pantry and refrigerator staples have figured heavily into menu planning now that a quick trip to the market is no longer an option.

Ribollita, which in Italian means “re-boiled,” is a Tuscan staple, created as a way to use leftover minestrone soup and stale bread. I’ve always treated ribollita as a quick way to use vegetables on hand, especially those a little past their prime in a delicious seasonal soup. I used a half a bag of shredded carrots in this version. They’d been hanging around for a while and were just begging to be tossed in. It also features white beans. I always have a variety of canned beans in

### INGREDIENTS

- 5 tablespoons of olive oil, plus more for bread and serving
- 1 small red onion, chopped
- 1 carrot, chopped
- 1 celery stalk, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, minced, plus one clove for bread
- 2 cans of white beans (Navy or cannellini), drained and rinsed
- 1-15 ounce can diced tomatoes
- 5 cups vegetable or chicken stock
- small cabbage, cut in 1” ribbons
- 1 pound kale, about 1 bunch, spines removed, chopped
- ½ teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1 sprig fresh rosemary
- 1 sprig fresh thyme
- 4 slices day-old thick-sliced rustic bread (or any bread you have on hand)



my pantry. They’ve become the lead protein in some of my favorite dishes. Like many of you, I’m eating more plant-based meals and this one is at the top of my list.

The recipe below is more a jumping off point than hard and fast instructions. You can use any broth whether homemade or boxed, chicken or vegetable. If none of those are available, use water and toss in a bouillon cube. Use seasonal vegetables to leverage what’s fresh at the store or what’s coming from your garden or your CSA – green beans, potatoes, zucchini, escarole, chard, fresh tomatoes instead of canned, squash – it’s all fair game.

This is a meal that is even better the next day. When I have time, I make it one day and serve it the next. Buon appetito!

### INSTRUCTIONS

- Preheat oven to 400°.
- Heat olive oil in a stockpot over medium heat. Add onions, carrots, celery and sauté until soft, about 5-7 minutes. Add garlic and cook for 1-2 minutes longer. Next, add kale and cabbage and cook until they have softened, still stirring frequently, about 8 minutes. Add red pepper flakes.
- Next add tomatoes, stock, beans, rosemary and thyme. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 30-45 minutes, until vegetables and beans are tender. Remove and discard rosemary and thyme stems.
- While ribollita is simmering, brush bread with olive oil and arrange slices, oil side up, on a baking sheet. Cook on the top rack of the oven until golden brown, about 10-12 minutes. Remove and cut a large garlic clove in half. Rub the toasted bread with the cut side of the garlic clove and set aside.
- To serve, place a slice of toasted bread in each bowl and ladle very hot soup over the bread. Add a dollop of gremolata and a drizzle of olive oil.

## >>>> GREMOLATA

Gremolata is a quick and delicious condiment that adds depth, brightness, and flavor to many dishes. It’s a lovely topping for grilled fish, chicken or meat and adds zest to soups like ribollita. It’s best to make gremolata the old-fashioned way, hand chopping the parsley and mincing the garlic. A food processor will cause the parsley to clump and get unpleasantly damp and will cause the garlic to release sulfur-based compounds that make it taste bitter and overpowering.

### INGREDIENTS

- Zest from 1 medium lemon
- ¼ flat leaf Italian parsley, finely chopped
- 2 medium garlic cloves, peeled and finely minced
- Kosher salt to taste

Combine lemon zest, minced garlic and parsley in a small bowl. Gremolata will keep in the refrigerator for up to 3 or 4 days in an airtight container. •



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# Running Towards the Fire

*Katie Hennessey is Waterville's first full-time female firefighter*

BY W. STINSON



**K**atie Hennessey, like so many first responders, has a selfless mindset.

As Waterville's first female full-time firefighter, she's in a unique position. She works in a field that's almost entirely male—only 4 percent of firefighters nationwide are women!

When I spoke with her, I was curious about how much that played into her day-to-day work. What unique challenges exist for female firefighters?

"The physical strength portion is daunting. I work out and try to improve my physical health as much as possible," she says. Still, in some situations, that's not the main concern. Instead of worrying about strength, Katie can use her head for problem solving. She tells me that for some, "there's a tendency to use brute force, and it's not always the right answer. There's leverage, and there are easier ways than brute force."

Aside from the physical challenges, Katie tells me that fear over not being accepted might keep some women from wanting to join the fire service. "As a female by herself, it's hard to walk into the fire department and be like 'I want to join.' It takes courage to get over that barrier."

Still, those fears are likely to be ungrounded. "It's an illusory barrier. It's really not there. Almost every fire department that I've walked into has been very accepting."

And Katie has been to plenty of fire departments. In addition to her time first as a volunteer, then a full-time firefighter, she works as a sales representative for Northeast Emergency Apparatus, an organization that helps supply fire departments with life-saving tools and equipment. In that job, she has to travel all over, visiting different departments to keep their equipment up-to-date, and even to help train the folks that will need to use it.

Katie says that there's "a traditional mentality" to firefighting, which might be one reason why so many people think there's a barrier to women joining the field. But when you look into it, women have been involved in the fire service since the early 19th century, and they're becoming increasingly recognized every year. "As . . . media is done on women in the fire service, I can see more and more women and girls start to join it!"

If Katie is on one side of the gender gap in one job, she's on the opposite in another. She also works in a traditionally female-dominated field as an ER nurse. Still, she says the imbalance between genders in nursing is

starting to fade away, "and the fire service is getting there."

So, what's it like for her as a firefighter? Well, for starters, it's been a bit of a road to get to where she is today. Katie says she was always working to help others. After getting a degree in psychology, she started to work in healthcare and mental health fields. About ten years later, she realized that it was time for a change. "I wanted to do something more challenging, both mentally and physically." So, she became a volunteer firefighter. She had to go through a certification program with the Maine Fire Service Institute, learning all about the theory and science behind firefighting, as well as the techniques. Five or six years later, she finally went full-time in October 2019. And now, "my shift is like my second family," she says.

That camaraderie seems to be an underlying trend for all of her firefighting experiences. She had to self-quarantine for 14 days towards the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, since she traveled from another state. Speaking during one of the final days of the quarantine, she says "almost every person in my service has checked in, and there's nothing wrong with me!"

We spoke briefly about her day-to-day work in the service—receiving a report from the off-going shift, getting briefed on the day's work, spending the afternoon training, and more. When on call, there's often an element of danger present. When asked about this factor, Katie replies, "I approach it with an air of practicality. You know there's always a risk." That's where the service-oriented mindset comes in. "If you focus too much on the danger to yourself, you're gonna talk yourself out of it."

And how does she feel about putting her life on the line for others? "Some may be more emotional, but I look at it practically. There may be a day I don't come home. It's very sad, but it's why we train."

That training is strenuous, including both the time spent in certification classes, and on-the-job practice and drilling. I asked for any specific stories of note from her time in training. After a moment of

thought, she decided that learning to drive the trucks was significant for her.

"I'm in charge of the tower truck, with the ladder and the bucket." She says that's the largest of the fleet, and one of the most complicated. "Took a lot of practice to learn to drive a 53-foot truck!" That's around the same size as some tractor trailer trucks, only without a pivot point, making turns more difficult.

She admits that it was nerve-wrack-

ing at first, but "it eventually turns into fun, I promise!" And she's proud of the skill. "It's pretty awesome that I'm driving the biggest truck when I'm the only female."

Katie has learned skills and helped save lives in her work as a firefighter and ER nurse. And for any girls or women who might be interested in joining the fire service, she had one thing to say.

"Go for it! Don't sell yourself short. Don't think that you can't do it." •

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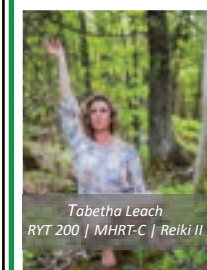


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# TIME FOR SEEDS

## Planning a Backyard Garden with a Nod to Maine

*Local seed producers work all winter to prepare for greener days.*

STORY BY SARAH HOLMAN // PHOTOS BY BRENDAN BULLOCK

While not a single green thing was growing outside, barns in Clinton, Maine, were buzzing with activity. Winter is peak season for seed producer Fedco Seeds, which started shipping seeds across the country and Canada in January.

The Fedco seed catalog hits mailboxes in late November and has become “legendary winter reading,” says Nikos Kadanya, the co-op’s seed purchaser. Although many orders are placed online, consumers still enjoy flipping through the paper catalog. It’s full of tips, illustrations, and information about the company’s offering of seeds, bulbs, trees, and potatoes and onions. “It reminds people that spring really is on the way,” Nikos says.

Once all the tree orders have shipped out of the warehouse for the season, Fedco holds an annual tree sale, like a surplus sale, at their warehouse in Clinton. “I think of it as a mini spring Common Ground Fair,” says Betsy Garrold, who manages the facilities and customer service at Fedco. Prices drop at some point on the second day of the sale, usually to a buy-one-get-one offer. Vendors from around the area come to sell perennials and seedlings along with Fedco’s fruit and ornamental trees, shrubs, and vines. Shoppers can also pick up farm and garden seeds, seed potatoes, organic fertilizers, pest control, and other supplies for the orchard, farm, and garden. “A home gardener could come that weekend and get everything they need,” Betsy says. The 2020 sale is scheduled for May 8 and 9.

Johnny’s Selected Seeds, which operates out of locations in Winslow, Albion,



and Fairfield, also ships seeds through the snow, across the US, and to over 50 countries around the world. Even at that scale, Johnny’s is an excellent resource for small-scale home gardeners, thanks in part to their extensive research and quality-assurance policies.

At their 40-acre testing and breeding farm in Winslow, staff members take copious notes on hundreds of seed varieties and test every tool the company sells. This level of attention to detail has been a priority since Rob Johnston, Jr., founded the company in 1973.

“We don’t sell varieties or tools that we haven’t experienced firsthand here at the farm,” Rob says on Johnny’s website. This knowledge gives gardeners—new and seasoned—a sense of confidence when they start turning over soil in the spring.

With Maine’s long freeze and frost season and particularly demanding growing climate, Fedco observes hundreds of varieties before choosing what to include in their cold-hardy catalog selection. The company also pays royalties in recognition of native breeders through their Indigenous Royalty Program. Royalties for seed varieties that either hold a local Wabanaki story or have a tribal designation in the name go to the Nibezun Project.

Located along the Penobscot River on sacred land, Nibezun is an 85-acre property dedicated to preserving the culture, language, and traditions of the Wabanaki Confederacy. Designations in Fedco’s catalog identify which varieties support the program.

Many Mainers have contributed to the preservation of native species, Nikos says. The Long Pie Pumpkin was saved from extinction by LeRoy Souther of Livermore Falls, who had been saving his own seeds for decades before passing the special pumpkin along. Similarly, Boothby’s Blonde Cucumber was maintained by the Boothby family in Livermore for five generations.

Among today’s backyard gardeners, Nikos says tomatoes, herbs, and beans are favorites. They can all be grown in containers (for beans, pick the pole variety, not bush) and are relatively low maintenance. Nikos has also seen an increase in people choosing plants for beneficial insects. “There’s been a lot of excitement around bees and helping the pollinators,” she says. Planting flowers is the easiest way to support the local bees, as long of those flowers haven’t been treated with



neonicotinoid, the insecticide most commonly associated with destroying bee populations. (None of the products sold by Fedco or Johnny’s are treated with neonicotinoid, and several “big-box” garden retailers pledged to phase out such treated products by 2019.)

To support gardeners who want to fill their beds with healthy blooms, Johnny’s offers easy-care flower and herb variety sets for every garden intention, including cutting flowers, pollinators, color palettes, and culinary interests.

Both Fedco Seeds and Johnny’s Selected Seeds offer extensive resources on their websites and both have excellent customer service departments to troubleshoot questions. With these fantastic local resources, gardeners can celebrate spring—and Maine—by planting a bounty of color and flavor to enjoy during the warm months.

Ah, summer. It’s practically here. •

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# Have a seat

## The Women Woodworkers behind Maine Adirondack Chairs

BY CHRISTINE SIMMONDS

At the end of a long, muddy driveway in Vassalboro is a simple, unpainted wooden shed with a sign above the door reading “Maine Adirondack Chairs.” Inside the shed is the workshop where friends Melissa May and Petra Mesaric create beautiful, handcrafted furniture from Maine cedar.

The business started in 2008 when owner Rob Lemire retired from teaching and started to make the Adirondack chairs in his backyard. Rob is a big guy with white hair and an easy attitude. It is clear that he cares about both his business and his employees.

In 2013, he reached out to Melissa with a proposition. They had worked together at Fedco Trees, and Rob recognized something special in Melissa. He told her, “The chair business is going so well that I need somebody to work for me, and I want it to be you!”

Rob tells me he knew he needed someone who was “creative, intelligent, could make good decisions, was trust-worthy, was good at organizing themselves, was a good learner . . . and she was the whole package.”

Melissa tried to protest. She told Rob she knew nothing about woodworking. Rob didn’t listen. “That’s the easy part!” he told her. So, Melissa came to work for him building wooden furniture, and the business took off.

After a year of working with Melissa, business was increasing

faster than Rob and Melissa could keep up with. Rob realized they needed to hire another person, and Melissa told him, “You can hire my twin!” That is how Petra was introduced to the company. Melissa and Petra had worked on farms together and discovered that they worked well as a pair. In fact, Melissa tells me, “One of the people we used to work for would joke that she and I were the equivalent of four strong men.”

The two women work together so well that Rob decided they didn’t need his help. He now runs the business aspect of the company and takes over making the furniture in the winter when Melissa and Petra work other jobs. He says he taught Melissa and Petra what they needed to know when they started, and together they have learned new skills and developed their own systems. When they’re in the shop, he says, “I stay out of the way!”

“I find that it’s very easy to work with Melissa and Petra,” Rob tells me, “and I don’t have egos to work against.”

As the two women create and assemble a chair for me, it is obvious that what Rob says is true. These two have a special friendship that has morphed into a solid working relationship. They joke around and laugh with each other while they chop, sand, and drill. They work so fast that I can barely capture the movements with my camera, and each step of the process is practiced and precise.

They are both small in stature and build. They have long hair and dress conservatively. Melissa is blonde, Petra a brunette. They are not shy, but they are quiet until they start working, and then most of the talk is to each other.

Because it is winter when I meet with them, the two have not worked together for a few months. But when they begin, it is as if they were never apart. Melissa and Petra walk me through their process and demonstrate each step. Melissa demonstrates the chop saw and the band saw. Petra shows me how she works the table saw. When Petra is finished and it is quiet enough to talk again, Melissa tells me, “Sometimes we switch it up, but for the most part we find we are both efficient at certain things and we enjoy certain things more.”

“When it comes to really creative things . . . I hand that right over to Melissa,” Petra says.

“We have our specialties. And our talents. We’re very complementary, the two of us,” Melissa tells me.

Petra then uses the router. They are both very fast and keep asking if they need to slow down for my photos. Melissa and Petra take turns finishing their chair for me. They work so quickly I am in danger of missing the action with my camera. When I comment on how fast they are going, Melissa tells me nonchalantly, “If we didn’t have eyes, we could still do this.”

It appears they do not need mouths, either. Petra says, “There are times we don’t even need to talk.”



Melissa May uses a chop saw. Photo by Christine Simmonds

Melissa agrees. “We joke that we’re telepathic. We have to be because we can’t hear anything anyway. When we both get going on these machines, it’s so loud in here, you can’t hear a thing.”

Rob tells me that last year they built over 400 chairs—and that doesn’t include the rocking chairs, footstools, picnic tables, and small tables they made.

Their main product is the Adirondack chair. They tell me they build a few variations of that, such as the modified chair for smaller or older people, the extra-large chair called the “big easy,” and the Brutus, which Rob says can “hold anybody.”

Rob, Melissa, and Petra all come up with the designs together. For the rocking chair, Rob describes spending

a few days creating products, altering them, and starting over until they got it “just right.”

Rob didn’t set out to create a company of women woodworkers—it just happened. He tells me, “It was all by coincidence in the way that these two can come together to actually manage everything inside here.”

Melissa admits that one hardship they come across as women woodworkers is finding the right tools. Rob bought small screw gun sets for them that are 12 volts as opposed to larger hand drills that some people use. These are lighter and easier for Melissa and Petra to use.

“Most tools are made for men!” Melissa admits. “We do sometimes find that we have a specific preference for certain tools as women.” The tables they use in the shops are ones Rob built for them as well. They are lower and have wheels for easy mobility.

When asked about being a woman in such a male-driven industry, Melissa says, “I’m not thinking ‘Oh I’m a female, I shouldn’t be doing this.’ But,” she admits, “people come into the shop and they expect there to be a guy and they’re kind of surprised. Sometimes they’re weird about it, and other times they’re like ‘Oh that’s even cooler!’”

Petra agrees with that sentiment. “I don’t think of it as a woman thing at all,” she says. “It’s a great job and I like it.”



Petra Mesaric and Melissa May. Photo by Christine Simmonds



Petra Mesaric assembles a chair. Photo by Christine Simmonds

# FINDING YOUR INNER MOOSE

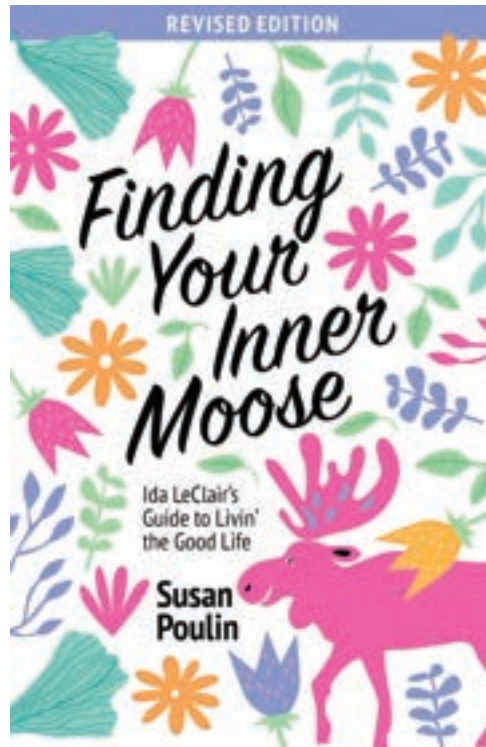
Ida LeClair's Guide to Livin' the Good Life

REVISED EDITION

by Susan Poulin



BY D. LUNT



Published by Maine's  
Islandport Press.

Available at booksellers  
across the state as well as  
online at islandportpress.com.

**\$16.95, 256 pages**

Revised publication date: June 2  
Original version: still available

Actress and author Susan Poulin is Maine, through and through. She loves her native state, loves everything about it, in fact, from the way the trees look by a lake to the rocky coastline to those flat stretches of rural road that seem to run forever into the nothingness of the Maine woods. And there is also no question that she is proud of her Franco-American roots as well. She has become a student and a performing ambassador of not only her personal heritage, but of Maine's overall Franco-American culture.

Luckily for the rest of us, she is also a dynamic creative force. Since the mid-1990s, Susan has masterfully blended the "Wicked" and "Deah" of Maine and the "Mon p'tit chou" of her Franco-American roots with her overall passion for the Pine Tree State to create Ida LeClair, a beloved stage character. Next year Ida will celebrate her 25th anniversary of broadening and injecting new life into the Maine humor genre, as she strides along with an infectious love of life. She also undeniably serves as Susan's chocolate-loving, makeup-wearing, line-dancing, advice-dispensing, shopaholic alter ego. It is all a match made in Mahoosuc Mills heaven. Pass the Spam, please.

While Ida began as a stage presence, she has found her way onto the printed page. In 2012, Poulin, writing in the voice of Ida, published *Finding Your Inner Moose* and followed that in 2016 with *The Sweet Life*. The popular *Finding Your Inner Moose* is being updated, refreshed, and re-released this spring in honor of Ida's 25th anniversary.

The book, set in the fictional, but-oh-so-familiar Maine town of Mahoosuc Mills, is written as a self-help guide intended to help readers get in touch with their inner moose. Ida, who bills herself as a certified Maine life guide, offers heartfelt and hilarious advice on such topics as work, relationships, stress, physical fitness, shopping, and more. Mahoosuc Mills is not just the setting, but also the people and places of the town who play important roles in Ida's world, bringing both color and real-world authenticity to a book of humor.

And most of it springs at least in some way from Poulin's experiences.

Susan Rita Poulin was born in the small town of Jackman, Maine.

Her father owned an auto parts store along the main road through town, and the Poulins lived in an apartment on the second floor. Her maternal grandmother, Dora, owned and operated Blue's, a popular local store and gas station located just across the street. In its day, Blue's was a popular stop for woodsmen and lumberjacks who crossed the border to work in the woods. Meanwhile, Susan's paternal grandfather, George, was a lumberjack himself. Some winters, he and Susan's grandmother, Georgianna, would spend the snowy months in a small cabin deep in the woods.

When Susan was in elementary school, she and her family left Jackman for the mill town of Westbrook, a town where her mother would teach elementary school for many years. After graduating from Westbrook High School, Susan studied theater at the University of Southern Maine. That background led to the creation of the Downeast Theater Collective, a three-actor team that performed at the old Odd Fellows Hall in Portland. Money was scarce, and the acting group bartered for their theater space by agreeing to shovel coal into the furnace.

In 1995, after a break, she eloped with fellow performer and artist Gordon Carlisle. In the long cross-country car rides of their honeymoon, the newlyweds developed the idea for what would become the stage show, *In My Head, I'm Thin*. The duo formed Poolyle Productions and took the full-blown show on the road. Suddenly, performing was a business.

And then, just as suddenly, Susan's life was changed again, this time by the arrival on the scene of the endearing character, Ida LeClair. In 1996, Susan was competing in a Yankee Storytelling contest when she realized nearly all the other entrants were men who told stories with a similar voice and outlook on life. At the time, many of the stories being told were based on woodsmen or fishermen or followed the "wise-local-outsmarts-tourist" theme. They were often derivative of the stories popularized by Bob Bryan and Marshall Dodge in their landmark "Bert and I" records. With their seminal album *Bert and I . . . And Other Stories from Down East*, released in 1958, Dodge and Bryan essentially established the dry Yankee humor template that would dominate the genre for years. But the template didn't match Susan's experiences.

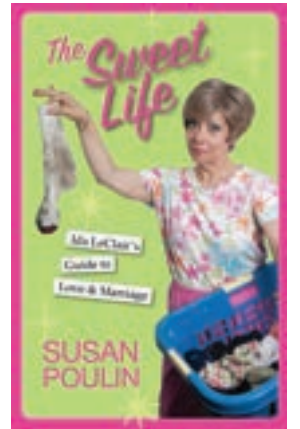
Perhaps inevitably, just a short time later, as Susan sat staring at a blank computer screen, a voice popped into her head: "Hi, I'm Ida, and I'm a Home Shopping Networkaholic." Ida was born. Susan became a pioneer in refreshing and expanding the boundaries of Maine humor, introducing a powerful female character in modern-day, yet traditional, surroundings. Drawing upon her roots, Susan developed Ida as a woman with a good heart, strong sense of herself, big sense of humor, and "joie de vivre" often missing from regional humor. However, she didn't just create Ida. She also began to develop the small town of Mashoosuc Mills, a place located somewhere in Franklin County (but so wonderfully universal that it could be found almost anywhere).

In 1997, Susan debuted her first Ida show, *Ida: Woman Who Runs with the Moose*, and she has never looked back. She continues to write and perform both in Maine and across the nation. Her book is *Finding Your Inner Moose: Ida LeClair's Guide to Livin' the Good Life*. And in it, Susan Poulin shares with us her impressive knowledge of these timely, timeless topics. •



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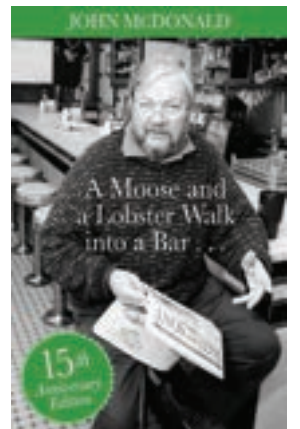


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# A WALK IN THE WOODS

*The Healing Power of Nature*

BY KRIS LOVLEY



Photo by Jason Paige Smith

In July of 2012, I was on a whitewater rafting trip when I met Jimmy Garland for the first time. He and I quickly became adventure buddies and best friends. We spent most of our free time whitewater rafting, camping, hiking, and hunting. Jimmy taught me how to properly use a recurve bow and arrow, shoot a rifle and pistol, steer a raft on the river, and drive a snowmobile. He gave me the love and appreciation for the outdoors that he carried with him. His three children spent a lot of time out on adventures with us, as well. For a happy several years, I spent most of my days off with Jimmy and the kids, becoming like a part of the family.

When Jimmy was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer on December 8, 2017, it was devastating news for his children, his fiancée, Shelly, and all who knew and treasured him, including me. We all spent as much time with him as we could, as he went into a decline that, very sadly, ended with his death.

In coming to terms with this loss, I talked often with another friend, Christina “Chris” Parrish, the founder of the Purple Iris Foundation, a Maine-based cancer support organization. I had told her a lot about all the adventures that Jimmy and I went on and about how much he had taught me and others over the years. He always took care of everyone. I kept thinking, “Now that he’s gone, who’s going to make sure everyone is safe?” My best friend, Jimmy, who always led every trip and knew practically everything about every adventure, was gone.

After Jimmy’s passing, I went out hiking every chance I got. Chris and I would meet, and I’d tell her how much better I felt after a good hike—how I could stand to be around people without having an emotional breakdown. I could tell these strong reactions intrigued her.

After telling her how Jimmy and I took the kids on snowshoeing adventures every year during

February vacation, she immediately asked, “If you were to take the kids, where would you go, and what would you need to do it?”

From this question, a plan was set in motion, and in February 2019, I took a friend of the Foundation, Jimmy’s three children (Abby, Josh, and Mike), and their mother (Gail) to Maine Huts and Trails. It was a beautiful day for a walk in the woods, as Jimmy would say. We arrived at our destination and spent the evening telling stories of things we loved to do and of grand sights we had seen. During our hike back the next day, it snowed the entire way, and not one word of grief came from the kids or women in the group. Gail said this hike was exactly what they needed and expressed her deepest gratitude, multiple times.

This is where the adventure relief program (Maine Cancer Outdoor Adventures) started to grow wings. Chris began talking to me about getting my recreational Maine Guide license and designing a program that brings people affected by cancer out into the woods so they could experience Mother Nature’s healing powers. Since then, I’ve taken classes and acquired certifications, working on getting a license as a Maine guide.

This past year I have been working more and more with the Purple Iris Foundation, especially in the realm that I know best, the outdoors. For example, we held a fundraiser in Jimmy’s name, “Jimmy’s Wilderness Trek,” with the funds raised going straight into the adventure relief program. We also set up many adventures where we extend invitations to multiple families affected by cancer, getting a huge positive response. While I’m in the process of getting licensed, Maine Alpine Guiding has offered their guide services for the summer of 2020. We’ve also built a relationship with U.S. Rafting, and they have created a rafting fundraiser to benefit the adventure program.

This year, Maine Cancer Outdoor Adventures offers snowshoeing, skydiving, rock climbing, whitewater rafting, camping, and hiking trips, and can provide necessary supplies and

equipment. Our goal is to reach as many adults (affected by all types of cancer) as we can and bring them into nature in a way they would have never thought possible.

Here are some of the activities that we are planning. (A note on scheduling: Please check the website of the Purple Iris Foundation—[www.purpleirisfoundation.com](http://www.purpleirisfoundation.com)—for scheduling information. Updates, as necessary, will be posted there, as well as information about sign-up, more about the organization, and ways to help.)

- Rock Climbing and Maine Alpine Guiding—presently scheduled for June 26–28, 2020. This excursion offers one day with rock climbing on ocean ledges in Acadia National Park, one day with light hiking and fellowship, and two nights camping in the park.

- Sky Diving—a joint venture with Maine Veterans Project and Windy Warrior Adrenaline Therapy Program—presently scheduled for August 2020.

- White Water Rafting—with U.S. Rafting. This event is a fundraiser, \$125 per person (this price includes equipment). It is presently scheduled for July 18–19, 2020. It offers one day rafting on the mighty Kenduskeag River, with lunch provided, and one night at a rustic campground.

The goal is to include adults from every step through cancer, although we know that while they are in treatment they cannot participate in the more extreme adventures. The extreme adventures are set up for caregivers, family members who have lost loved ones, and adults who have beaten cancer. Some of the programs have a camping aspect, for people affected by cancer who may feel in emotional pain and who may feel the need to take a couple days to breath.

And for myself, I’ve found that losing someone you love is a deep wound that only Mother Nature can heal. I know in my own personal life, when it came to Jimmy being sick, I spent as much time in the woods as I could. And more so after his passing. This winter has shown me how much I truly need the outdoors to keep myself in a sane state of mind. If that makes sense. •



Barefoot hiking on Acadia Mountain in 2019 with hiking partner/dog, Charlotte Faye.



The first rafting trip after Jimmy’s death, in The Forks on the Kennebec River.



Snowshoeing with Jimmy’s kids in Millinocket during an annual February vacation trip. Photo by Abby Garland



A monthly sunset paddle at Hirundo Wildlife Preserve.

# SEYMOUR SENSE

WRITTEN & PHOTOGRAPHED  
BY AMANDA WHITEGIVER



Emily Seymour's desire to dig deeper Maine roots has led her on a winding path. Beginning with her childhood dreams of being a farmer or fashion designer, her desire for a creative outlet led her to spend over eight years working for caterers, event planners, and floral designers in the wedding industry. Together with her partner, Seymour was searching for work that would not only serve as a creative, meaningful outlet, but also provide year-round employment (all too often a struggle in our tourist-driven economy).

Although they were in the midst of having their home built by local architect Owen Cartwright, an ideal shop location proved irresistible. In this way, the store Curator went from dream to reality. Celebrating the fourth anniversary this month, Curator was originally opened as a men's consignment shop. It wisely fills a niche in the market and provides the Midcoast region's out-of-state transplants a handy place to give their suits, cashmeres, and other corporate-life cast-offs a second life.

Despite the fact that Emily and her partner were in the throes of planning their wedding, last year they expanded the shop to include women's consignment. In less than six months they transformed their lower

level to a sumptuous retro retail space, and a friend's heavily spray-painted barn into a bright and airy wedding venue.

Although she sometimes models for her friend Cig Harvey's artwork, Emily jokes that she still wonders what to do with her hands while being photographed. As we chatted about clothes and working retail, mutual philosophies became apparent. One firmly held belief: there is nothing wrong with a body, or body type. When something doesn't fit, the clothing is in the wrong every time. Less than a century ago, clothing was still custom tailored, but in these mass-produced clothing times, consider what styles fit your shape well and consider whether something can be improved with the help of a good tailor. For her petite frame, Seymour looks to women's styles from the '50s, when tops were more cropped, or vintage boys' shirts.

Her passion for clothes, thoughtful design, and sense of humor make both her home and shop a welcome feast for the senses. I think the magic, however, is in the passion. Emily puts it simply; "I just love clothes, and I feel very lucky to be able to share that with my friends and customers."

## Describe your style in one sentence.

I usually dress like a classic man from Robert Redford-era Hollywood: good jeans, a tee or sweater, a leather jacket, and boots or loafers.

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

My style is Maine in the sense that I dress very practically. I like the ability to be able to go anywhere in what I'm wearing. I grew up here, and it's interesting for me to see the way Maine style has leeches out to the mainstream. So, I'm not wearing LL Bean boots and a Buffalo plaid jacket, but I'm also not too far from that look.

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

My mom says I started wanting to dress myself when I was 3. I have a memory of loving these yellow leggings with big purple irises that my mom didn't like, but I insisted on wearing them.

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

When I was 9 my parents took my brother and me to Paris. I packed cargo pants, a GAP sweatshirt, and two bucket hats. I got to the city and saw how good everyone looked, so when I got home, I started to care about what I wore. Now the outfit I brought to Paris is actually quite on trend, so maybe I should have stuck with it.

## What was your last memorable outfit?

My partner Ben and I got married in July, so my wedding looks were my most memorable outfits of the year. I wore a 1950s dress designed by the same man who did Elaine's dress in *The Graduate*, which I didn't find out until after I bought it. It was one of my references for my wedding look, so that was affirming. After dinner I changed into a bodysuit and cream silk skirt that Ben's aunt made for me. I wore red crocodile mules the whole night, and never took them off, they were so comfortable.



## Favorite brick-and-mortar place to buy clothing in Maine?

Our store, Curator! Between thrifting for the store and working with consignors and dealers, most of my clothes come to me. Otherwise I find great things at Serendipity in Camden, Village Wear in Belfast, Daughters in Rockland, Flea for All in Portland, and Folk in Kittery.

## Do you thrift? If so, where?

I thrift for a living! I feel like a mushroom forager in that my spots are sacred and secret. We go as far north as Ellsworth and as far south as Portland on a regular basis. We also go thrifting whenever we're on vacation.

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

A 1970s white leather Fendi cross-body purse came into the shop two years ago. I paid the consignor full price, but it was such a gem to just walk through our door.

## Most you ever spent on something to wear?

I usually cap out at around \$300 for what I'm willing to spend on a single item. I have a couple of leather jackets that cost that much, as well as the boots I wear every day from September to June.

## Who is your style icon of all time?

Paul Newman, Jennifer Aniston in the early 90s, women in the 1940s who wore menswear.

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

My friends, particularly Madeleine Morlet and Anna Flynn.

## Mountains or coast?

Coast, always and forever.

## What would you refuse to wear?

Anything I don't feel comfortable in, physically or emotionally.

## Do you own Bean boots? If yes, how many pairs? If no, what do you wear in the snow?

I don't own Bean boots at the moment. For snow, I wear these North Face boots that are made out of puffy coat material (they're not cool), or a pair of Ukrainian army boots made out of black sheepskin.

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

Movies and TV are very inspiring for me. I just re-re-watched *Thelma and Louise*, and I love how their clothes are such a driving force in the narrative of them gaining freedom. Those jeans they wear at the end of the film! Perfect. I also love getting ideas from seeing people out and about.

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

Jeans and a 1950s cashmere crewneck.

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

These horrible black sweatpants and a rotating cast of sweatshirts. It's not cute. •

# Window Boxes

*An Annual Rite of Spring*

BY R. COOK

Now that April showers have given way to May flowers, Mainers from Kittery to Fort Kent will practice an annual rite of spring: creating stunning window boxes with their favorite plant and flowers.

For those who have never created a window box and for those who are looking for new ideas, Jennifer Cummings, owner of Full Circle Landscaping in Falmouth, has a wealth of experience and information to share.

“The main thing is to pick the right plant for the right place. Don’t place an annual that likes sun into the shade because it just won’t flower as well,” Jennifer advises. “You can experiment as long as you pay attention to this ‘sun, shade rule.’”

For 37 years, Jennifer has worked with homeowners and clients throughout the greater Portland region, from Scarborough to Freeport. “Most people want window boxes to add color to their home,

but a lot of it is about experimenting,” and considering what colors you want to go with, Jennifer said.

When she meets with a client who wants a new window box, Jennifer said the first thing she asks is what colors they like. The first plant or flower sets the stage for the rest of the window box. She advises that when people go to their local nursery or greenhouse, they should look for a plant that jumps out at them. Then look for other plants and flowers that complement it.

“Just play with them and see how they come together,” Jennifer said.

Window box plants can also be interchangeable. This flexibility means that if you end up going with something that doesn’t work as well as you had anticipated, Jennifer said you can switch it out for another plant or flower. Toward the end of the summer season, certain flowers that go by can be replaced with a chrysanthemum or kale.

More is better when it comes to the number of plants and flowers that go into a window box. Jennifer recommends filling the box with as many plants as you wish. This profusion may require some pruning as the plants grow, especially if you have a petunia or a potato vine.

She stressed that window box lovers should always seek out the best plants and expertise at their local greenhouse or nursery. But there are often good deals and great plants to be had at area Big Box stores like Home Depot, Lowe’s, and Wal-Mart. Jennifer said that if people time it right and get fresh plants right off the truck, they can score some good deals.

Still, greenhouses and nurseries typically have the best selection of perennials and annuals. One of the big differences between local greenhouses and nurseries and other retailers is that whenever they have plants that are not doing as well, they will put them in their hospital section to nurse them back to health. Their staff are also knowledgeable and can often help people create great window boxes, Jennifer said.

May is the perfect time to start creating window boxes because this is when

nurseries and greenhouses start getting their best flowers. Pansies and violas will usually be around in April, and they can tolerate some cold weather.

“We often tell people not to plant their annuals until after the first full moon in May, which usually happens right around the third week of May, close to Memorial Day Weekend,” Jennifer said. If you plant pansies in your window box in May, Jennifer said they can be replaced with other flowers in June that do better with the hotter summer weather. Summer annuals that are available at the beginning of June will generally last through fall.

Jennifer said window boxes are comprised of “spillers, fillers and thrillers.” Spillers are plants like ivy that drape over the window box. Fillers are thick and bushy plants that add color. They can be plants like alyssum, pansies, or impatiens that fill in all the gaps. Thrillers can be plants like geraniums and ferns that are colorful and spectacular. As Jennifer put it, “They are the ones that scream ‘look at me.’”

More experienced gardeners, Jennifer pointed out, may often be able to find great plants in the nearby woods and transplant them into their window boxes. “There could be a fern in the woods that is just starting to grow, and at the end of the summer, you can replant it in the woods for the fall,” she said.

And for families, window boxes can be a lot of fun for their children. Kids can contribute hand-painted rocks or a sculpture they did at school and help with the planting. Window boxes can also be used to grow plants like lettuce and many herbs, she added. “If you plant fennel in your window box, you will often have Monarch butterflies.”

Window boxes can often be real works of art. They can take any shape or form as long as they have the right soil and ample drainage, with a light rock bed on the bottom. Window boxes also don’t have to be placed underneath windows, Jennifer said. They can be placed in any number of locations, such as on top of deck railings or on a bench or in the yard.



- Choose flowers that are suited to the location you are planting. If a plant likes shade, it likes shade, period.

- Start with one flower or foliage plant that strikes you favorably, in a strong way. Then build around it.

- Fill the boxes so they are quite full.

- Fertilize with Happy Frog or similar organic fertilizer. Avoid the inorganics.

- Deadhead when necessary but go with flowers that don’t need it.

- Try something new! Go into the house plant section of your nursery and see what strikes your fancy.

- If you put in something like Daffodils, which have a short life, consider keeping them in their original pot so you can pop them out and put in something else when they fade.

- Experiment. Try small evergreens that you can plant in your garden in the fall. Or perennials! A wonderful perennial with an interesting leaf will give your boxes interest all summer and can grow in your outside gardens for years to come.



Jennifer Cummings, owner of Full Circle Landscaping in Falmouth. Photos by Michael Wilson

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# Tapping for Anyone, Any time, Anywhere

BY KAREN ST. CLAIR, EFTI PRACTITIONER



Wouldn't it be wonderful to have something we could do on our own to help ease the stress of what we're all going through right now? Luckily, we do; it's EFT Tapping. This is your moment to learn how to lower your cortisol (the stress hormone), calm your nervous system, and take the pressure off of your immune system. We need to be doing everything in our power to help our immune systems stay healthy.

When stress or anxiety push our bodies into the Fight, Flight, or Freeze response, our body's natural response is to instantly send cortisol and adrenaline.

This is where EFT Tapping comes to the rescue. Simply tap gently on the Tapping Points and repeat out loud what emotion you need to calm.

Example: "All this anxiety." Tapping signals the amygdala (your brain's alarm system) that you're safe and not in danger.

We have the gift of EFT Tapping to help ourselves in stressful situations. Our mind and body are connected, functioning in concert, and cannot be separated.

EFT Tapping is for Anyone, Anytime, Anywhere. I invite you to use EFT Tapping in your everyday life whenever and wherever you may be.

Please visit my website for a free EFT Tapping script to use as a guide or contact me to learn more about how EFT Tapping can help you as it has helped millions of people all over the world. •

Window Boxes continued from page 73.

Jennifer recalled how she created a row of LL Bean boot planters for a client that were attached to either side of their windowsills. She drilled holes in the bottoms of the boots that had been worn by the parents and kids and that had once occupied a mud room. They looked fantastic. "They were funny and cheerful, and they made everybody smile," Jennifer said.

After you settle on the size and type of window box you want, Jennifer cautioned it is important to go with the right soil. She recommends going with soil that is 80 percent Pro mix and 20 percent compost. This type of soil will retain water and gives roots nutrients along with the right mix of fertilizer and compost. Sometimes people will try to use soil out of their gardens, and it's much too dense. The roots end up dying, she said. "You also don't know what weed seeds are in your garden," Jennifer said.

It can cost anywhere from \$30 to \$40 to purchase a basic, three-foot long, plastic window box, the appropriate soil, and the plants, Jennifer said.

But the great thing about window boxes is that almost anyone can do them. They can be as big or as small as you want, to conform with any space. "They are really versatile," she stressed. Window boxes in general are wide open in terms of what plants you pick and how you choose to set them up, Jennifer said, summing up.

They are also great mood enhancers that generate plenty of happiness, Jennifer said, and couldn't we all use some of that right now? •



## QUESTIONABLE ADVICE

BY L.C. VAN SAVAGE

**To keep things short: my roommate wants to get a cat, and I want to get a dog. How can I convince her that dogs are better?**  
— Claire

On balance, neither is better. But to help you think ahead to actual pet ownership, get a large slobbery dog and a very hairy cat and put them into a small house with you for two weeks with all windows shut. At the end of that time, go outside without them and breathe ten slow breaths of some good clear, clean, cool fresh air. Exhale. Return to the small house. Breathe in five long breaths of the air in that small house. Exhale.

Get a fish.

**I gave my mother a nice espresso machine for her birthday, but in the two months since then, I've never once seen her use it. I'm not hurt by this, but I just think it'd be nice if I could return it and get her something she actually wants. But she won't admit that she's never going to use it!**  
— Samantha

Back away from this one, Sam. How long has she been your mother? Eat the expense. Let her have bragging rights. Imagine Mom being able to tell her every-Thursday Mahjong group that her wealthy and successful daughter Sam bought her that very expensive coffee gadget thingy over there on the kitchen counter. Next year buy her a nice silk scarf and then ignore her "Oh Sammy, you should NOT have DONE this!" shouts.

**My boyfriend moved away for a job, and it's such a good opportunity that I can't blame him. He wants to make it work long-distance, but I'm just not sure I can do it. Do you think we should stay together?**  
— Stacy

Trusting your instincts is always the way to go. But if you're still unconvinced: A plane ticket, a car rental, and a long leisurely dinner followed by the requisite après-dinner delights are seriously cost-prohibitive and eventually influences the thinking of a lasting long-distance romance. Find someone local to love. They are generally more cost-effective.

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