

MAINE WOMEN MAGAZINE

OCTOBER 2021

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A VISIT WITH
**Susan
Collins**

The Woman Beyond Politics

Queenpins...

GITA PULLAPILLY IN THE MOVIE INDUSTRY

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Story*

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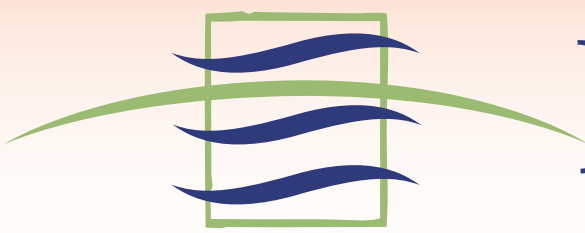
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Cover photo by Jason Paige Smith



Meeting U.S. Senator Susan Collins was a joy. Her family has been planted in Caribou since the 1840s, so she really knows Maine.

When we met, I was moved by her sincerity and caring. In these times of such political partisanship, it was interesting to learn how close the women in the senate are.

Senator Collins was so concerned with the crisis of the day, which was the impending airlift from Afghanistan, after having worked for many years to secure women's rights there. It was a day of great sadness for her.

She has made four trips to Afghanistan. She and Senator Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire have been dedicated to helping the women of Afghanistan.

We must not discriminate against each other as women. We are smart. We must celebrate our differences, not fight against each other.

When I asked Senator Collins if she has friendly relationships with the other women in the senate, she quickly shared that they meet up once a month for dinner to get to know each other on a personal basis. They think differently politically, but they honor and celebrate each other as women.

Hillary Clinton threw Senator Collins an engagement party. It was so comforting to learn that. We should all take the examples of Hillary and Senator Collins and celebrate our own differences. Our country allows us to do so.

Senator Collins shared with me a lovely quote from her mom that surely influenced her life. Her mom said, "Our voice is important, but we must not just talk. We have to work for our beliefs and create changes as we see opportunities."

As fall brings in the cooler air, it awakens my realization of how nature resembles our abilities.

The beauty of green leaves on the trees will turn into bouquets of color.

We will then see them float down into nature, only to be reborn again with new buds.

Oh, isn't it grand that we can always start anew?

Let's all start new today to celebrate each other's differences.

Love and blessings,

Mary Barstow

Editor/Publisher

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.

MAINE WOMEN MAGAZINE

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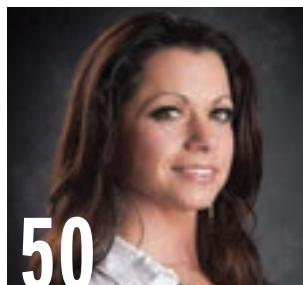
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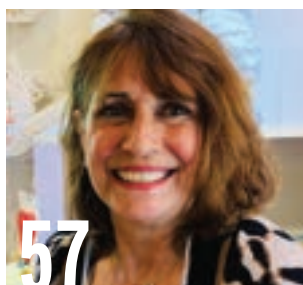
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By L.C. Van Savage

| LETTERS TO THE EDITOR |

Dear Mary,

Thank you for publishing the article on US Peace Corps in your August 2021 magazine! I live in Portland. I retired here after returning from Sub Saharan, Africa in 2016. I was 68 years old when I was nominated to US Peace Corps. I was sent to Eswatini, Africa. I

was a retired HIV/AIDS Hospice RN. During my service I cared for orphaned and vulnerable children with AIDS. I completed my Volunteer Service at age of 70. My dream was to be a Peace Corps Volunteer while a sophomore in high school in 1961. Dreams do come true!

Thank you, Munsey Alston RPCV

Dear Mary,

I thoroughly enjoyed reading your piece and Q & A with Erin French. She seems wonderful. We haven't had the good fortune to dine at The Lost Kitchen yet, but hope to one of these days!

—[no name given]

| CONTRIBUTORS |

Robert Cook is an award-winning journalist who has covered everything from Presidential campaigns to compelling human interest stories for more than 25 years.



Emily Dunuwila

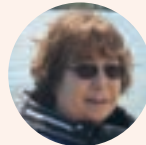
is a massage therapist and owner of Empower Massage Therapy in Scarborough. In addition to her private practice, she teaches workshops and creates video resources on self-massage and body awareness. Emily is a graduate of Vassar College and New Hampshire Institute for Therapeutic Arts. You can find her on Facebook or Instagram @empowermassagemaine or visit her website at empowermt.com.



Lynn Fantom lives in an old house in Somesville. During a 40-year advertising career in Boston, Chicago, and New York, she became known for creating diverse cultures at the companies she led. After retiring, she graduated from Columbia Journalism School at age 65 and now writes about women, the outdoors, fish farming, and sometimes women in fish farming. She spends winters in NYC.



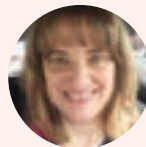
Pam Ferris-Olson, Ph.D., worked as a freelance writer/photographer/editor/educator prior to relocating to Maine in 2016. The breadth of her experience with natural resources, storytelling and women, and a passion for the ocean inspired her to found Women Mind the Water. She is a visual artist who enjoys kayaking.



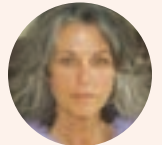
Anne Gabbianelli of Winterport has enjoyed a career as a broadcast journalist and college professor. Adding to her passions, she loves to tell people stories through her writing. She appreciates oral history gained as a hospice volunteer and the many heartfelt memories shared by her patients.



Liz Gotthelf lives in Old Orchard Beach with her husband. She enjoys hula hooping, volunteering at a local horse barn, and finding Fiestaware at thrift stores.



Krista Nadeau is a professed lifelong learner wrapping up a degree in Communications and New Media. She lives in Gorham with her husband and two sons.



Shelagh Gordon Talbot hails from Vermont. She worked in the film and television industry, including on the award-winning kid's show *Jabberwocky*. Looking for a less hectic life, she moved to the Moosehead Lake region and became a journalist. She is a freelancer who also writes music, plays guitar, and sings.



Lynette L. Walther is the GardenComm Gold Medal winner for writing, a five-time recipient of the GardenComm Silver Medal of Achievement, and recipient of the National Garden Bureau's Exemplary Journalism Award. Her gardens are in Camden.



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POSTCARD FROM HOLLY

BY HOLLY MARTIN

Holly Martin, 29, is sailing around the world in her 27-foot-long Grinde sailboat, which she christened the SV Gecko. She left Maine in the fall of 2019, from Round Pond Harbor on the Pemaquid Peninsula. Holly sent this "postcard" by satellite from the South Pacific, to the readers of Maine Women Magazine.

"I'M AFRAID YOU'LL HAVE TO FLY TO TAHITI"

The nurse gave me a sympathetic look over her glasses. I was in the clinic of a remote atoll trying to figure out a chronic ear infection. Unfortunately, my next step was to go see a specialist in Tahiti – an hour away by plane. The next morning, I walked to the local airport, a cozy one-room house next to a strip of runway. There was no security. Walking straight from the ticket counter to a set of glass doors, I found myself on the runway facing a tiny plane.

An hour later I was in Tahiti. Rain streamed down the windows, and a large bucket of umbrellas waited at the foot of the airplane steps. The clinic was a forty-minute walk, so I tied a trash bag around my backpack, and threw a rain jacket over the whole ensemble. Despite the drizzle, I enjoyed

the journey. Compared to the remote villages I'd been exploring lately, Tahiti was bustling and colorful. I found the hospital easily and squished my way into reception. The room was tiled and dead silent. Four or five people sat waiting, but there wasn't a whisper of sound. My wet shoes squeaked on the



tile as I began to untie the trash bag from around my backpack. Each crinkle echoed in my ears. Draping the wet bag over my sodden jacket, I eased myself into a chair to await my appointment. “Olly?”

A nurse led me down a corridor and into another reception area. Several hospital beds were pushed up against one wall, the occupants staring dully at the ceiling. A round counter in the center contained a few nurses. I was shown into a small room and left alone. After a few minutes, the staff from the desk began taking turns peeking into my room. I stared back at them, amused by our mutual desire for distraction. Eventually, one of them indicated that I should follow a nurse who was wheeling one of the beds out of reception. He didn’t glance behind him, and I walked a few steps back, looking around to make sure I hadn’t misunderstood the French instructions.

Nobody called out to me, so I tailed him down a hallway, into an elevator, and through a mostly unlit corridor. At a junction, the nurse passed off the bed to a colleague and turned around. Did I follow the bed, or the nurse? Catching my confused expression, the nurse indicated that I follow the bed. He gave me a smile, then disappeared back into the unlit corridor. The occupant of the bed was a middle-aged man. His bare feet curled underneath his body, and his face was impassively blank. I wondered if we were going to the same specialist. The new nurse drew me deeper into the maze and eventually deposited me and the bed next to a closed door in the middle of a long dark hallway. She instructed me to wait until my name was called.

Eventually, I was admitted to the ear specialist, who examined me with a complicated machine and gave me a happy diagnosis. He then shooed me out of the room, telling me to go back to reception. I waved goodbye to the man in the bed, then walked back down the corridor and almost immediately got lost. After a few minutes of wandering aimlessly through hallways, I ran into a security guard, who led me to another nurse. The nurse glanced at my papers and then made a call on his phone: “I have the American.”

The nurse led me back the reception area with the round counter. He handed me off, saying proudly: “Here’s the American!” Finally processed, I walked back into the light of day. The whole hospital visit, which included seeing a doctor, a specialist, and purchasing medication, cost under \$200 without insurance. It was well worth the trip. •

KATIE BRANN, CFP®

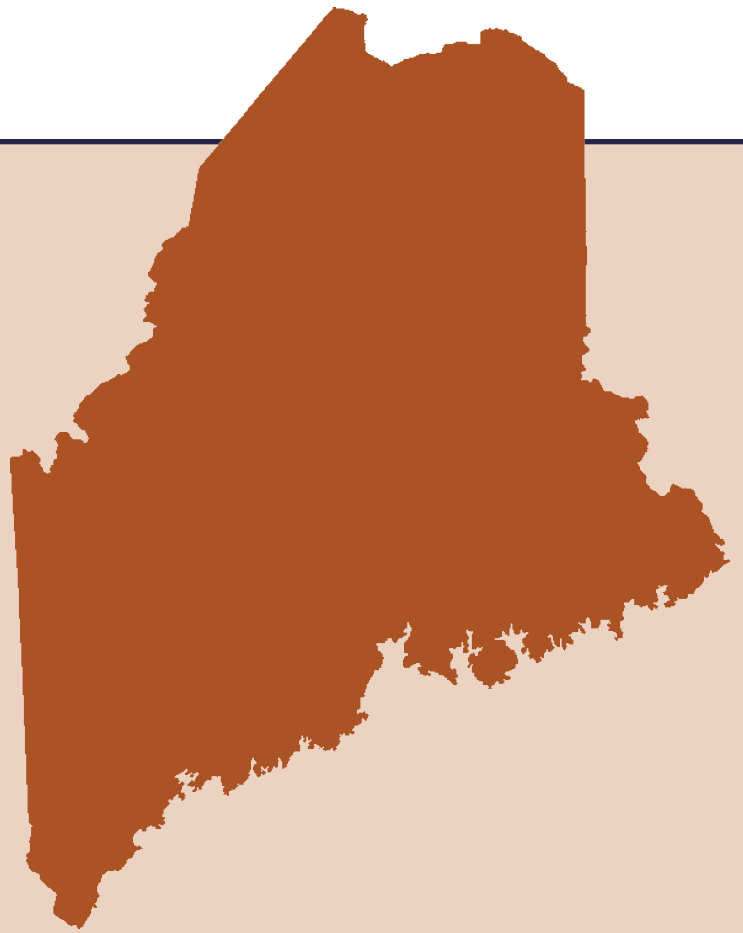


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Maine Leads the Nation in Women-Owned Businesses



The entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well in the Pine Tree State, and nowhere is this truer than with Maine's women-owned businesses. According to the *2019 State of Women-Owned Businesses Report*, commissioned by American Express, women are more likely than business owners in general to see a need in the market and to start a company to fill that need. And according to an earlier report commissioned by American Express, Maine had more than 40,000 women-owned businesses, a figure that had grown 33.3 percent over a fifteen-year timespan.

While numbers have likely shifted some during the pandemic, in 2019, the report used two types of rankings to evaluate the economic vibrancy of women-owned businesses by geography, and Maine's women-owned businesses made the top 10 – the only Northeastern state to do so.

The first metric, economic clout, ranked all 50 states and the District of Columbia, as well as top metropolitan areas by the combined growth rates of women-owned businesses for the number of firms, employment, and revenue. The second ranking was based on employment vitality, which is a combined measurement by geography of the employment growth rate of women-owned businesses over the past five years and the average number of employees per women-owned business in 2019 – a metric that took into account employment growth rates and average number of employees – which controlled for the size of states and metropolitan areas.

Maine's women-owned businesses placed eighth for economic clout and were first in the nation in State Employment Vitality Rankings. •





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REMEMBERING HER ROOTS

*Susan Collins reminisces about the County,
remains honored to serve Mainers*

BY MARY FRANCES BARSTOW

One of six children, Senator Susan Collins was born in Caribou, Maine, where her family operates a lumber business established by her great-great-great-grandfather, Samuel W. Collins, in 1844.

Her parents, Patricia and Donald F. Collins, each served as mayor of Caribou. Her father, a decorated veteran of World War II, also served in the Maine Legislature.

Recently, U.S. Senator Susan Collins graciously welcomed *MAINE WOMEN* into her home. She reminisced about growing up in Caribou, shared stories about her family, and discussed the importance of friendships on both sides of the aisle, as well as bipartisan efforts that helped Mainers financially during the pandemic.

She worked as a legislative assistant to U.S. Representative, and later U.S. Senator William Cohen, who went on to become Secretary of Defense under President Bill Clinton.

But the senator's life is more than politics. As Mary Barstow discovers, there are many sides to Susan Collins.

MARY BARSTOW: You grew up in Caribou, one of the coldest places in the country.

SENATOR COLLINS: Well, let's put it this way. It's made me immune to cold winters. But I feel very fortunate to have grown up in Caribou. Much of my family still lives there.

MARY: Really?

SENATOR COLLINS: My family was among the first white settlers in Caribou in the 1840s. We have a six-generation family-owned business. One of my nieces and one of my nephews have come into the business to work with their fathers now. And both of my parents were always very active in the community and at the state level. I had wonderful teachers and just a wonderful sense of community.

Photo by Jason Paige Smith

MARY: Did you really work in the potato fields?

SENATOR COLLINS: I did. I picked potatoes for two years.

MARY: That's hard work.

SENATOR COLLINS: It was the hardest physical labor I've ever done in my life, but that was part of the sense of community, and part of the reason it was so strong. We went back to school in mid-August for three weeks, then, we broke for three weeks for the potato harvest. And everybody of all ages ... most all the families of Caribou and the surrounding areas ... turned out to help the farmers get the potato crops in before the freeze made it impossible. Back then, there weren't migrant laborers who came and did the work.

MARY: This is an example of a real community.

SENATOR COLLINS: Yes, and at the harvest, it was largely the school children. We got 30 cents a barrel, and it was a nine-hour day in the fields. It tended to start off very cold in the morning, but then got quite warm by the afternoon. You brought your lunch with you and a gallon of water to drink.

It was really hard work, but it gave you a great sense of satisfaction, and taught me the value of hard work and the value of a dollar. And I remember the exciting trip we would take to Bangor with our potato-picking money. We would buy school supplies and school clothing after the harvest was over.

MARY: So, you went all through school in Caribou.

SENATOR COLLINS: Yes, I did.

MARY: What is it with Caribou? You're a distinguished U.S. Senator and someday soon we're going to have Jessica Meir from Caribou on the moon.

SENATOR COLLINS: I know, isn't that neat? And the new U.S. Attorney is a woman from Caribou.

MARY: It's amazing. What do you think about this tiny little place?

SENATOR COLLINS: I love it. I'm very proud of Aroostook County. And people are very caring, as they are throughout Maine. They work really hard, and the sense of community is so strong.

MARY: During your high school years you were on the student council?

SENATOR COLLINS: I was.

MARY: Did you know then that you wanted to go into politics?

SENATOR COLLINS: I had no idea. I remember my parents telling me one night at dinner that you had no right to complain if you stayed on the sidelines and weren't willing to get involved. And so, they were always very encouraging. I was president of the student council, but I had no idea that one day I'd be in the United States Senate.

MARY: Your parents, even your mom, were in politics.

SENATOR COLLINS: Very much so. They each were mayor of Caribou.

MARY: Which was unusual for a woman back then.

SENATOR COLLINS: Exactly. My mother is a very strong person, and she was a wonderful role model, as was my father. My father served in the state senate. My mother was the first woman to be the chair of the University of Maine's Board of Trustees.

MARY: You have a very strong mom. A great role model.

SENATOR COLLINS: She was a great role model.

MARY: What did they think when their little girl became a U.S. Senator?

SENATOR COLLINS: I hope, I think they were very proud. There was an intervening of them, I want to tell you about, and that was when I was a senior in high school. I was selected as one of two students to go to Washington as part of the U.S. Senate Youth Program.

MARY: How nice.

SENATOR COLLINS: This was sponsored by the William Randolph Hearst Foundation. I had never been on an airplane. I had never gone to Washington. I'd never met United States senators. And my senators were the best senators in the United States—Margaret Chase Smith and Ed Muskie.

MARY: What an experience!

SENATOR COLLINS: Margaret Chase Smith, for reasons I will never fully understand, very generously took nearly two hours of her time to talk with me in her office. And she was the only woman in the senate at the time.

MARY: What a gift.

SENATOR COLLINS: I remembered leaving her office and being so proud that she was my senator, and thinking that women really could do anything. Because remember, this was back in 1971, and despite the fact that I had the world's best role model in my own mother, there were still doubts about what you could do as a woman.

MARY: Oh, such judgment about it, too.

SENATOR COLLINS: Exactly.

MARY: Do you think you had to give up a lot as a woman to do what you've done?

SENATOR COLLINS: What I have noticed is, there are certain hurdles that women have to overcome that don't exist for men. And I remember when I ran for governor in 1994, and I had won against all of the odds in the eight-way republican primary. And then I remember in the general election talking



Senators John McCain and Susan Collins.

to this young banker, and he said to me that he agreed with me on all the issues, but he just couldn't imagine a woman running the state of Maine.

I was so shocked that he said that. I was not only shocked that he believed it, but also that he actually said it to me, and that he was not embarrassed to say it. And I think for executive positions, there is still often, a barrier.

MARY: Oh, absolutely. Did you say anything back to him?

SENATOR COLLINS: You know, I don't recall. I mainly recall being shocked, so I think I probably just said, "Well, I hope you'll reconsider," or something like that. I certainly didn't take him on.

MARY: Sometimes we have to realize that some people are beyond changing.

SENATOR COLLINS: Exactly. I moved on to the next person to try to persuade that person that I was worthy of his or her vote. And now there are more and more women in the senate. We're at, I think, 25. But when I was first elected, there were only nine women in the senate.

MARY: Wow.

SENATOR COLLINS: And I remember quickly realizing that if you were a man elected to the senate, it was assumed that you belonged there and that you were qualified. Whereas, we women had to prove that we belonged in the senate. Now, once you did that, you were accepted as a member of the club. But there was that extra hurdle for women.

MARY: Your record is so impressive. You've never missed a vote.

SENATOR COLLINS: Never.

MARY: That is incredible.

SENATOR COLLINS: Well, I've been fortunate to be blessed with good health, but it has taken a lot of effort, including going back on Sundays rather than Monday mornings in case there's a storm or a canceled flight.

MARY: It must be so difficult to have so many folks disagreeing constantly. How do you deal with that?

SENATOR COLLINS: Well, it is a challenge, and it's gotten much worse in recent years, as our country's become so polar-

ized and hyper-partisan. I work so hard for the people of Maine, and I'm honored to do so. And I realize what an honor it is to have their trust placed in me. And I don't mind meeting with folks who disagree with me. I'm having a couple meetings tomorrow morning with groups that disagree. That's absolutely fine.

What's happened in the last few years is, it's become so uncivil, to the point where I've had to have security systems installed in my home in Washington and my home in Bangor.

To give you an example, during the Kavanaugh debate, I arrived home late one night. It was raining. I couldn't find a parking place close to where I live. And there was a man waiting there with a camera for me. There was no one else on the streets, and he started harassing me and following me up to my house, and yelling at me.

And I finally turned to him, and I said, "You stop harassing me." And I got in as fast as I could and called the police. But that was unsettling because there was no one else around.

MARY: I can't imagine.

SENATOR COLLINS: I've had my car mysteriously burst into flames and be totaled.

MARY: So horribly frightening.

SENATOR COLLINS: I can show you a picture of that. It's unbelievable. I've had death threats, threats of sexual assault, and protestors at my homes. And worst of all, threats against my staff.

There are two people in prison because one said he wanted to put a bullet through my brain. It's just gotten out of control. It's fine to disagree on issues, but this has become really crazy.

MARY: I have always been so proud to live in America, where a person has a right to choose.

SENATOR COLLINS: Right.

MARY: This really shocks me.

SENATOR COLLINS: Yeah.

MARY: Do you ever think that you can't do this anymore? Do they get to you?

SENATOR COLLINS: At times I think it makes me stronger because I refuse to be intimidated. And I'm going to do what I think is right for the people of Maine and for the nation. And I think when you start getting intimidated—which doesn't mean that you don't listen. I always want to listen to people on both sides of an issue, including people who vehemently disagree with me.

But the threats get tiresome. At one point, I actually had to have a police escort.

MARY: Growing up you had five siblings?

SENATOR COLLINS: Yes.



Senators Joe Lieberman, John McCain, Susan Collins, and Lindsey Graham with military servicemembers.

MARY: Did anybody else go into politics?

SENATOR COLLINS: My brother, Sam, was head of the school board in Caribou. My brother Greg was head of the hospital board. So, they've continued the tradition of community service.

MARY: So nice.

SENATOR COLLINS: My brother Sam was also chairman of the University of Maine Board of Trustees for the entire system, for many years. His term kept getting extended, and he did a fabulous job. And that was a lot of work. And so, three generations of my family have been chair of the University of Maine Board of Trustees—my grandfather, my mother, and my brother Sam. And I'm very proud of that.

MARY: Oh, that's just wonderful. Now, my big question is... will you run for president?

SENATOR COLLINS: No, I don't think so. There are times, though, when I've listened to the presidential debates and I think, 'Gee, I could give a better answer than that.'

I'm very happy being senator from Maine.

MARY: Will you retire? You're still young.

SENATOR COLLINS: I really haven't thought at all about what I would do after I leave the Senate. The job that I have is so all consuming. Yesterday was supposed to be a rare day off. I spent the entire day working on Afghanistan. There was a briefing. I had a conversation with the head of the Intelligence Committee. I was working with my six state offices who have all gotten pleas from people who either were stationed over in Afghanistan [or] worked with interpreters who were having a hard time getting out.

There's a girls' school that I've worked with called SOLA (School of Leadership), where students' parents teach there. And they're targeted by the Taliban and ironically, just a couple of months ago, (Democratic) Senator Jeanne Shaheen from New Hampshire and I met with the head of the school to talk about what would happen if the Taliban took over.

And so, it turned out to be a day that I worked the entire day. But how could I not when there was such a crisis going on? And it's so horrible.

MARY: It's horrible that you have to worry about those young girls. They have such desires and such hopes.

SENATOR COLLINS: Exactly.

MARY: It's heartbreaking.

SENATOR COLLINS: It is heartbreaking. And the woman that Jeanne Shaheen and I talked to described dressing up as a boy to go to school when she was young during the first Taliban era. And thank goodness she didn't get caught. But imagine the bravery to do that, and that's why she's so passionate about establishing this wonderful school for girls. And

it's called The Leadership School. And she is teaching girls to be leaders, as well as educating them in other ways. And I'm just so worried about her and getting her students out ... and their teachers out ... because they will be targeted by the Taliban again, without a doubt.

MARY: These poor girls. Thank you for sharing that.

SENATOR COLLINS: I've flown into Afghanistan four times, Mary. My very first visit to Afghanistan was right after Hamid Karzai had been smuggled by the CIA back into the country. And we were meeting in a green Army tent. I remember it was patched on one side. I mean, this was very early on in the war.

And we each could ask him one question. He speaks excellent English. And my question was, "Are you going to reopen the schools so that girls and women can get an education?" And he promised me he would. And he did. And everyone else was asking him military-like questions.

But I really, I was the only woman on the trip, and I wanted to speak for those who had been voiceless for so long under Taliban rule. And I fear will be once again.

MARY: Thank you for caring about these girls. How did you get to be so brave, to go to these countries? Seriously.

SENATOR COLLINS: Well, when I went to Iraq and Afghanistan, John McCain was usually the leader of those trips, and there's no one who was more brave than John McCain. I do remember one time flying on a helicopter in Iraq with my very good friend, Jack Reed, from Rhode Island, who served in the Army. And I think he was a ranger. He went to West Point. He's now senator from Rhode Island.

And they left the doors open on the helicopter because it was so beastly hot. And I was convinced I was going to be sucked out. And I must say, I didn't say a word, but apparently my face showed my terror because he leaned over and patted me on the hand and said, "There, there, it's going to be all right," in a very comforting way. I hasten to say, it was not a condescending way. It was a comforting way. Because I truly was terrified. I was determined not to say anything, but apparently, I couldn't control the expression on my face.

MARY: You are very brave.

Now I have one last question I want to ask you. Is it true Hillary Clinton threw you an engagement party?

SENATOR COLLINS: She did, she threw me a shower when I got married.

MARY: I think it's so important that women hear this. You can have different political views, yet still be good friends.

SENATOR COLLINS: That's true, because the women at the senate traditionally, about every six weeks or so, get together for dinner. And I think it's very important. It builds bonds of trust.

MARY: Wonderful!

SENATOR COLLINS: It enables us to recognize that we're humans, and that we're not evil. We're not adversaries. We need more of that these days.

MARY: Absolutely.

SENATOR COLLINS: Another person who did a shower for me was Dianne Feinstein, the senator from California. Hillary did one, and not a shower, but a celebration. You know, a party, engagement party, I guess, would be the better term for it. And Sandra Day O'Connor came to it, which thrilled me. It was a very memorable experience.

MARY: That's wonderful. Now, you're sure you don't have plans to run for president? Are you sure?

SENATOR COLLINS: I'm quite sure.

MARY: But now, you have how many more years in the senate?

SENATOR COLLINS: Five and a half years. It's been an extraordinary experience. And the best part is, I feel I've made a difference for the people of Maine. And that matters so much to me. My roots are so deep, and I care so much for this state.

MARY: What are you most proud of?

SENATOR COLLINS: I'm most proud that in the midst of the pandemic, I came up with the concept for the Paycheck Protection Program.

MARY: Such an amazing idea!

SENATOR COLLINS: It saved hundreds of thousands of jobs in Maine and across the country. Well, we can get the exact statistics, but it brought more than three billion dollars in forgivable loans for small businesses who agreed to pay their

employees. And it saved so many jobs in Maine and kept so many small businesses afloat. Nationwide? Millions.

And that means so much to me because I was able to do it in a bi-partisan way. I went to another republican, Marco Rubio, two democrats, Ben Cardin and Jeanne Shaheen, and then together we fleshed out my proposal, which was born from my days as the regional administrator for New England for the Small Business Administration during the first President Bush's administration. So, I knew SBA and its programs, and I knew it didn't have something like this, but I could see how we could come up with a program. I feel this made such a difference.

MARY: It made all the difference, saving so many businesses and livelihoods of Americans.

SENATOR COLLINS: It really helped. And I'll tell you, nothing gladdens my heart more than when I meet a small business owner, and they tell me that without the PPP program, they would have closed their doors forever.

MARY: Absolutely.

SENATOR COLLINS: That is just a great feeling.

MARY: Thank you so much for that.

SENATOR COLLINS: That would probably be my number one proud moment. There are many others, but that would be number one.

MARY: The PPP bill saved so many jobs and businesses in Maine and around the country. Thank you for that.

SENATOR COLLINS: And thank you. It's so nice of you to come make the long drive from Camden. This is a really long drive.

MARY: This was such a pleasure, Senator Collins. Thank you! •

The PPP served as a lifeline to three out of four small businesses in Maine. Combined with 2020 data, there have been more than 47,000 forgivable loans totaling over \$3.2 billion approved for the state's small employers, supporting tens of thousands of small businesses and hundreds of thousands of Maine jobs.

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Lubec is Lovely at Any Time of Year

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SHEILA D. GRANT

The tiny town of Lubec, in the “Sunrise County,” holds many hidden gems in the easternmost region of Maine. The iconic red-and-white-striped lighthouse at Quoddy Head State Park can be found here, as can a former sardine factory transformed into a wonderful waterfront hotel and restaurant, and a Peruvian chocolatier whose confections (and hot chocolate, in season) render all others lackluster by comparison.

The downtown area is walkable, if you don't mind hills, and ultra-scenic, with water views from many vantage points, as well as colorful artisanal shops, historic buildings, public art, and more to feed the senses.

“Lubec now has more than one hundred and fifty miles of hiking trails, mostly coastal,” said Heather Henry Tenan, former president of the now-defunct Lubec Area Chamber of Commerce. “Acadia National Park only has one hundred and twenty-eight miles. We credit cobscookshores.org for this. The Butler Foundation invested more than \$12 million into the Lubec area last year in an effort to help our economy.”

Heather owns The Eastland Motel and said this has been their best year ever, economically. “People are flocking in droves to the area to hike these gorgeous new trails, which also include bicycle paths and kayak launching sites. And I believe there are seventeen new parks.”

Obviously, she said, a big draw to the region is that “Easternmost point in the United States” distinction, but there's so much more. “We have four lighthouses with a ten-mile range. Our whale watching tours never disappoint, either.

You will see minke, finback, humpback, right whales and we even have a stray orca that never leaves, and this year we had a beluga whale hanging around, too,” she said. “Lubec is also a stopover for many migratory birds. We have birders here non-stop, and Lubec is home to an amazing birding festival [the Down East Spring Birding Festival] that takes place every Memorial Day weekend.”

Ever hear the phrase, “Maine, the way life should be?” That popular little tagline was coined in Lubec. “A young marketing major was out in Johnson Bay having a beer or five with his buddy in a lobster boat,” Heather recalled. “He said, ‘this is the way life should be.’ He got back to his office in Portland to find the contract from the state of Maine on his desk. He was charged with coming up with a slogan for the state and in a nanosecond, he had it.”

WHERE TO STAY, WHAT TO DO, WHERE TO NIBBLE AND SIP

There are several lodging choices. The Eastland Motel is a popular eco-adventure destination, as one might guess from Heather's enthusiasm about whales and birds. The Water Street Tavern & Inn is known for its seafood and has great views, especially from the back deck (but hurry, as they typically close after Indigenous Peoples Day weekend). West Quoddy Station, just a half-mile walk from West Quoddy Head, is a former United States Coast Guard station that can accommodate up to 40 guests in seven unique units.



A fleet of Lubec lobster boats on a foggy day.



Another interesting and historic option is the Inn on the Wharf, which offers waterfront lodging and dining in a former sardine factory. Owned and operated by Victor and Judy Trafford, the lavishly converted inn offers suites and apartments with ocean views. Many of the public spaces, indoors and out, also face out onto the water and the working waterfront – boats deliver fresh seafood to the dock below, and it's stored in tanks that you can sometimes hear burbling beneath the inn. There's also a gift shop on site, where Judy sells her paintings along with other merchandise.

Victor said that COVID-19 has expanded the business's busy season, with rooms rented out by March this year rather than April. "In the restaurant we've been extremely busy, and at the inn, we're staying full. At the restaurant, this year and last have been good years, but we know that's not the case for everybody," he added somberly. The Fisherman's Wharf Restaurant typically stays open through the end of October, but, "if the business stays, I would keep it open for as long as is viable."

There are several other places worth visiting, and tasting, while you're in town. Love at First Light is a gift shop and ice cream shop open through mid-October. Gift items, as well as the owner's photography, may also be purchased online at loveatfirstlightlubec.com during the winter months when the shop is closed.

Monica Elliott was a fashion designer in the country of Peru, but now she's the owner of Monica's Chocolates, which offers up delicious handmade truffles, caramels, bonbons and other confections, as well as Peruvian clothing and jewelry. If you are lucky enough to be there when the hot chocolate is on the menu, do order it, but be forewarned – you may never taste a satisfying hot chocolate elsewhere again!

Narrow Escape is a full espresso bar and gift shop. During the summer months most of the merchandise is artisanal and more to tourist tastes, while during the colder months, they try to stock items Maine folks will appreciate. The shop also has a café with sandwiches and baked goods. Narrow Escape plans to remain open all winter, from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday.

The Lubec Brewing Company has given up on food service due to COVID-19 regulations, but the outside beer garden is open on weekends this fall, and fire pits will be added as the weather cools.

Lubec has attracted more than its fair share of artisans and crafters over the years. Jean Bookman's Creative Arts Studio is located on South Lubec Road, as is Shanna Wheelock's Crow Town Gallery and Cobscook Pottery. And Chuck Kniffen and Rhonda Welcome's Turtle Dance Co-op is located on Water Street.



Top: The McCurdy Smokehouse is a former industrial fish processing facility. It is believed to be the last intact early 20th century herring processing facility in Maine. Volunteer organization Lubec Landmarks offers tours on weekends until the weather turns too cold.

Bottom: Monica's Chocolates is a must-stop for visitors and locals alike.



Quoddy Head State Park offers plenty of quiet spots to sit and think...or just sit. *Inset Below: West Quoddy Head Lighthouse.*

“We make art from treasure and trash found on the beach, and we call our art ‘activism art’ a little bit, because we’re all about beach cleanup,” said Rhonda. There’s also a finback whale’s jaw, skull and some bones on display at the shop, but those are not for sale. “They were dug up on Mowry Beach right here in Lubec,” she said.

Whales are special to the couple, who authored “Putep’s Tale” in 2020. “Putep means whale in Passamaquoddy,” explained Rhonda. Maine Public Broadcasting has taped a video about the book, which will be aired at a date yet to be determined.

A visit to Lubec wouldn’t be complete without seeing the West Quoddy Head Lighthouse, but don’t stop exploring there. Quoddy Head State Park has miles of scenic hiking trails to explore. Some, like the Coastal Trail, are moderate and offer scenic ocean vistas. Others, like the Bog Trail, provide a chance to see habitat that isn’t found every day.

The West Quoddy Head Bog evolved through a slow process of plant growth and decay over the past eight thousand years. This Maine Critical Area/National Natural Landmark, which may only be explored via boardwalk, covers approximately seven acres and is the easternmost open peatland in the United States. The bog is about ninety percent moisture and ten percent organic matter. Human feet sink deeply here, and footprints may last up to two years, so the best way to protect this unique and fragile environment is to stay on the boardwalk.

“I think October is the best time to come to Lubec,” said Lubec Brewing Company owner Gale White. “The restaurants are still open. There are fewer people. The weather is perfect. The trees still have their color. And as the weather cools, looking at the Lubec Narrows, the water is this cobalt blue color that is breathtaking! It’s a great time to sit outside and drink a beer and watch the waves.” •





This colorful fish sculpture watches over the Narrows.

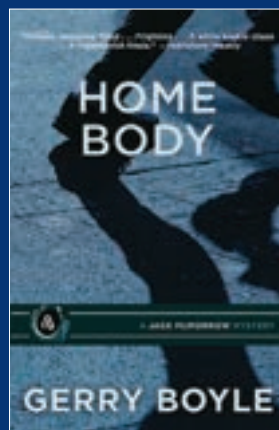


Rooms and public spaces at the Inn on the Wharf overlook Johnson Bay.



Scenic vistas are plentiful on the hiking trails at Quoddy Head State Park.

Crime Fiction



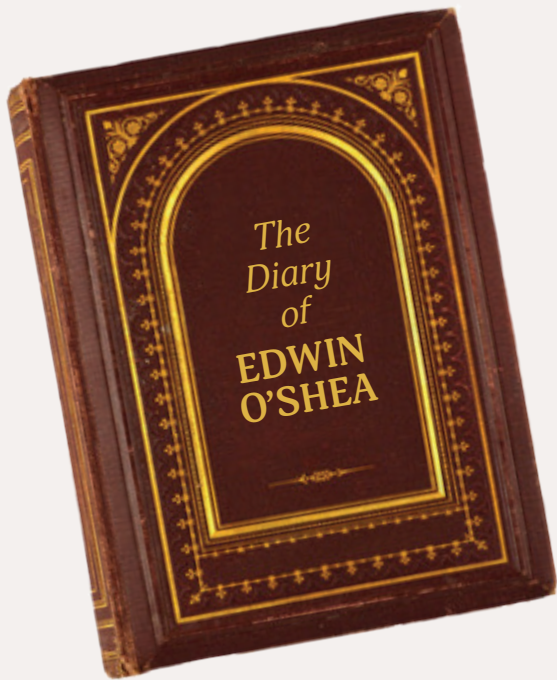
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EDWIN O'SHEA

*How one man's diary
captured this woman's heart*

BY MARY FRANCES BARSTOW

This is a story about Edwin O'Shea. The year was 1986. I was sitting at my lake house, waiting on the arrival of my sister, Allie, who was coming to visit from Connecticut for a few days.

She walked into the house, excited.

"Just as I was coming into the town, I passed a store in an old barn," she said. She loved old antiques and jewelry. "Let's go down there and see if we can find some treasures!"

"This is rural New England," I was thinking. "Give me a break. There are no treasures. If someone is letting it go, you can be sure nobody wants it."

But she insisted, so I got ready, and off we went.

As we drove to the old barn, my sister was thrilled, pointing the way. When we arrived, she started looking at lamps, tables, and chairs. I was drawn to a big dusty box, filled to the brim with old books. I love books, and as I went deeper into the box, I found beautiful, old-looking titles inside.

Suddenly, I couldn't believe what I was seeing. There seemed to be a whole set of leather-bound, gold-embossed books, each one with a name on the cover: "Edwin O'Shea." I carefully picked one up and opened it.

It was a diary. I realized that the whole set was this man's diaries, covering years of his life.

"What are these doing here? Who was Edwin O'Shea?" I wondered.

I started to dip into them, searching for clues as to who this person was. The diaries were mesmerizing, and so was the idea of a man keeping this many of them, not to mention how they'd somehow ended up *here* of all places, forgotten, in the bottom of an old box in an equally old barn. I looked for dates, places, identifying details and whatnot. It was clear that they were old—maybe between 50 and 75 years.

I sat on an old bench, reading, absolutely enthralled. My sister would come by from time to time and want me to follow her to see things she had found, or to look at this or that around the

store, but I told her, "No, that's okay, thanks. I am good right here, reading."

Finally, she said she was ready to go, admitting she was tired and needed a nap.

I went up to the counter and asked the owner about the price of the diaries. I braced for what he might say, given that the volumes were obviously unique and appeared to me to be valuable.

With a dismissive wave, he said, "They've been here forever. I don't want them. Nobody wants them. Take 'em!"

I thanked the man, and before he could change his mind, I put the diaries into my sister's car.

We went back to the lake house, where Allie went for a nap on the porch. I started a more systematic search through the diaries, which continued into the evening. The man wrote beautifully about his romances and his everyday life, always in an elegant style. The more I read, the more I was convinced that Edwin O'Shea's family should have this set of diaries.

I learned that he had lived in California and was an English professor at a college there. It remained a mystery to me how his diaries ended up in New England. My sister awoke, amazed that I was still absorbed in studying the old books. I explained that I was now on a mission to return these diaries to the family of Edwin O'Shea.

I said to her, "I'm going to make a couple of phone calls."

I called the town he referenced in California and reached someone—a woman who spelled her last name the same way as Edwin did. She remembered my Mr. O'Shea. He was a professor at the college where she worked as a domestic as a young girl. She remembered him because he had noticed and remarked upon the fact that they spelled their last names the same way, and because he was always so kind to her. She went on to say that Mr. O'Shea was elderly when she, as a young girl, knew him. But, she said, "I am an old lady now."

She also told me how Mr. O'Shea had retired to New England. That made it a bit clearer to me how his diaries happened to end up in the old barn.

She said that she thought he would be around 100 years old at that time.

I called information to see if there were any relatives in the area who might want the books. Oh! There was one listing in the area that spelled "O'Shea" the same way. I called immediately.

A man answered the phone, and I told him how I found the diaries and how I wanted to return them to the family. He asked me to repeat what I was saying three times. At the end of the third time, the man said to me in a low voice, "I am Edwin O'Shea."

"Not my Edwin O'Shea. Is this his son? I asked.

"No," he said. "Those are my diaries."

I immediately asked, "Where are you?"

He gave me the address. I was so excited. I told him I would be there in half an hour. In the background I could hear my sister saying, "Oh wow! You found the owner? He's alive?"

"Yes!" I said, and we set off together, her interest suddenly piqued at my mysterious journey. She wanted in on my mission.

As we drove to see Edwin, I could hardly believe it was true. We finally arrived at a home for the elderly called Winter Haven, an elegant Victorian-style home with only a few residents. I walked into the lobby and asked to see Edwin O'Shea, the diaries in my arms. The nurse looked at me and said, "Edwin has never had a visitor. Please hold on a minute."

Then, from out of the back room, came another nurse, staring at the books in my arms. She asked, "Are you here to see Edwin?"

I said, "Yes," and she asked me to hold on.

Out from the back room came four different women, all of them with strange looks on their faces, staring at the books. Finally, they took me and my sister up the stairway to see Edwin. He was sitting on the edge of the bed, tears streaming down his face. I was crying too, along with my sister.

I knew much of this man's life from reading his diaries. We embraced like long-lost relatives. Edwin told me how many years earlier, he'd had a stroke. He had no children, so his lawyer took all his belongings from his home and sold them, including a chest in which the diaries were hidden. Edwin told me that he had tried to get them back but to no avail. He was sad, he said, because in those books were all the memories that he had so enjoyed.

I visited Mr. O'Shea many times over the next few months. His wife was with him at Winter Haven, but was ill, unresponsive, and mostly asleep. She was 98, and Edwin was 99.

I went on a two-week vacation, and immediately went to see Edwin when I returned. I so enjoyed talking with him, knowing him, having found him, and connecting. When I walked in there was only one girl at the desk. She told me she was filling in for the holidays. She informed me that Edwin's wife died a week ago, and that he died the next day.

I was so sad, but also happy to have shared precious time and this experience with Edwin. I asked the young girl if she knew what happened to his diaries. She said she had no idea. I let it go and went home.

Seven years later, I was renovating my home, getting construction bids from different contractors. On a blistering hot day,

one of the contractors came to show me his plans for my home and to give me an estimate. I was curious as to why he was so fidgety and quick about things. I asked him if anyone was waiting for him, or if he had a dog that might need some water.

He told me that, in fact, yes, his girlfriend was sitting in the car, but she was too shy to come in the house with him.

"Okay," I said, "Just give me a minute."

I ran up the hill to where the cars were parked, saw the young woman sitting in the hot car and tapped on the half-opened window. When she opened it completely, I asked her if she could help me with something in the house. Without hesitation, she opened the door and walked with me down the hill to the house. When we got inside, I asked her, "Do you know how to make iced tea?"

Of course, I knew how to make iced tea, but this was my way of getting her out of the stifling car and getting to know her, putting her at ease. I asked her where she worked.

"I work about 20 minutes north of here, in a place called Winter Haven," she said.

I was shocked to hear the name of the home again.

"You really do?" I asked her. "How long have you worked there?"

"About 15 years," she told me.

Naturally, I asked her if she knew or had heard of Edwin O'Shea.

Suddenly, her eyes welled with emotion and surprise.

"Oh my!" she said. "You're the one who returned the diaries!"

I confirmed that was me. She burst into tears, telling me how, in the time before I first visited, Edwin would often tell the nurses, "You wait. One day someone is going to come in those doors and return my books."

"We were so amazed that day when you showed up with the diaries in your arms," she said. "We were shocked in disbelief. He always knew you were coming."

I suddenly realized why the nurses all stared at me when I arrived with the books that day and had looked at the diaries in such amazement. It all made sense. Then the woman said to me, "Isn't it wonderful, the message Edwin left for you?"

I was surprised. I had never received any message.

"Oh no!" she exclaimed "Edwin made it clear that if anything happened to him, we should get a message to you."

I told her how I had returned on a holiday weekend, learned the news of Edwin's passing, and hadn't been told of any message. I sat down, amazed that seven years later this young woman was in my home, 30 miles from Edwin's nursing home, with a message from Edwin.

Tears ran down my cheeks as she told me that Edwin chose to be buried with his diaries. He wanted his memories always with him. The woman told me how he wanted me to know that he had prayed, and he had known that God would send me with his books, and how grateful he was that I was open to receiving God's guidance. To this day, I still can't believe his message got to me in my home so many years later.

I am so very honored to have known Edwin O'Shea. •

CELESTE JUNE HENRIQUEZ

Exploring Life Through Art

BY KRISTA NADEAU



Snow coming



Big house



Wade



Photo by Kirk Little

When Celeste June Henriquez needed a way to express herself as a child, she turned to art. Now, after twenty years as a freelance illustrator, her new series *Guardians* explores her role as a caregiver to her daughter, Abigail, a person living with an intellectual disability.

After graduating with a BFA from Philadelphia College of Art, Celeste spent nearly twenty years as a national freelance illustrator for advertising, editorial, and children's books. While she still enjoys illustrating, she is currently a painter.

"I paint because I enjoy roaming in the subconscious where I follow narratives. Abstraction in my art practice helps me peel away or see the underbelly of a thought or story," says Celeste, who adds, "The process of beginning a painting can vary; sometimes it's a series of short battles of pushing and pulling the paint, using form, composition, color, and line until there's a satisfying resolution, or the experience is an effortless birth. But no matter which way it's created, it has to capture unexpected energy."

Guardians explores her role as a caregiver to Abigail. Born in 2002, Abigail joined brother Julien, born two years prior. Abigail was born with low muscle tone and an atrial septal defect, to which doctors attributed early on her not reaching typical developmental milestones. Abigail was a happy, smiling baby, but Celeste noticed that there was something missing in the reciprocal visual communication she had shared with Julien before he spoke. He had a communicative glimmer in his eyes that Abigail's eyes did not. Celeste describes it as a "dark veil" covering that glimmer, which raised deep concerns. Within a few years, Abigail was evaluated and diagnosed with autism. This was the beginning of an uncharted, unexpected journey full of challenges and blessings.

Celeste and Abigail's dad, Robert Peck, worked together to find and maintain schooling that supported Abigail's educational needs with ongoing speech and occupational therapy. However, when Abigail reached her early teens, the challenges grew more difficult, and now included anxiety and challenging behaviors. They needed to seek out more supports.

This led Celeste and Robert to have Abigail evaluated at Spring Harbor Hospital, in Westbrook, when she was 14. During the evaluation, Celeste recalls collaborating with other professionals who said, "We can help. You can have a better relationship with your daughter, and she doesn't have to live with you to do that." Celeste wondered whether that was truly an option.

Abigail remained at Spring Harbor for three months until a placement became available in a residential school program in New Hampshire through the nonprofit Easterseals. Abigail, still a minor, was placed there because there wasn't a local residential program that could meet her needs in Maine. While the choice to place Abigail in a residential program was daunting, Celeste knew this was Abigail's best chance to continue her development.

One might wonder how raising a child with special needs and painting could be similar. But as Celeste explained, in both, there can be preconceived ideas as to how your hopes could unfold, until it becomes clear that life can and will bring unexpected circumstances that require pivoting, moving quickly, pulling back, and staying open to what comes next.



Photos courtesy Celeste June Henriquez

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“When a painting marks a moment in time and honors the deep learning and struggles parents experience raising children with intellectual disabilities, I am emotionally touched, and if I can then share the image and talk with others about it, the process deepens even further,” says Celeste.

Full-time caregiving and advocating for a person’s needs can absorb every moment of one’s life. During this trying time, Celeste recalls a clear pull to create space for her art. Celeste wanted to take an art class to “loosen up,” so she registered for an abstract painting class at Maine College of Art. Celeste remembers feeling excited to be getting out by herself and doing something that would help her reconnect with her creativity. Painting with an abstract lens ended up being just the outlet she needed to express and address the myriad emotions that come with being a parent of a child who requires extensive care. It allowed Celeste to say out loud what she was feeling through a variety of images.

“I think of myself as a vessel filled with experiences I want to examine,” she says. “When I paint the process directs me on where to go.”

In 2020, Celeste was one of 25 Maine artists chosen to exhibit in the Portland Museum of Art’s show. “Untitled, 2020: Art from Maine in a _ _ _ _ Time,” was a dedication to the multitude of artist’s expressions from the pandemic and political events of 2020. Her two paintings, *Snow coming* and *Big house*, inspired by two sentences Abigail often says, focused on the isolation Celeste felt while managing from a distance the care for her daughter. The paintings describe through color, form, and texture their relationship, and Celeste’s inability to see her daughter during the first several months of the pandemic, a separation many families experienced with their loved ones.

Abstraction allows Celeste to peel away the surfaces and see the gut or the emotional rawness of what it takes to be a guardian, and in this case, to express the depth of the internal and external experiences it raises.

“I use an investigative eye to slow myself down,” she says. “Abstracting is like drawing a teapot with its contours and tones, and then realizing what I really want is to know what’s going on inside the teapot. This is when I break the drawing up and rearrange the shapes until I see how to capture the inner water boiling. Abstraction can still look like something familiar, but you see it in a different light.”

This process allows Celeste to go through a side door into her thoughts where form meets emotion, where tensions can show evolution to an acceptance and to beauty.

“Anytime a piece of art allows me to really acknowledge this journey, I know it has done its job,” explains Celeste, her voice cracking as she describes how one of her pieces, titled *Wade*, speaks to the calm place she and Abigail now enjoy at times and have worked hard to get to. “I feel like I have made something that is acknowledging what we have been through. I, Abigail, and our family have done so much growing because of this journey.”

Henriquez has exhibited at the Portland Art Museum, River Arts Gallery, Frank Brockman Gallery, Harlow Gallery, and Zero Station. Henriquez shows her work with SEVEN Artists Collective, which can be found at www.sevenartistscollective.com and on Instagram @collectiveseven. To learn more about Celeste June Henriquez or to see her paintings and art for sale visit: www.celestjunehenriquez.com. She can also be found on Instagram @celeste.studio.art and on Facebook at Celeste June Henriquez. •



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Maine Women Surf Celebrates “BEHIND THE WAVES”

BY PAM FERRIS-OLSON

When Pam Chevez moved to Maine from Mexico City five years ago, she had no visions of herself surfing here. Like most people, Pam imagined surfing as a warm-weather activity, done in the sunshine by people wearing swimsuits. That’s not the reality in Maine. Surfing here is more of a winter sport, dictated by weather and ocean patterns. Surfable waves come most during the winter months, and that long, frigid season of short days wasn’t a time Pam imagined she’d want to take to the water.

“It’s dark most of the day. It’s cold. Prepping, you have to get into a wetsuit, put on gloves, and wear a hoodie,” she said.

It took a year before Pam was ready to put on the wetsuit she described as being “way thicker than a regular wetsuit.” The motivation to surf can be difficult, too.

“If you don’t know a person to surf with, it can be hard,” she said. “Sometimes you need a little bit of a push. A friend makes it easier.”

Then Pam took a free surfing class and later found a friend, as well as a kindred spirit. Early in the friendship, Pam and Juliette Sutherland, both 32, discovered they shared creative talent and a passion for surfing. Together they founded Maine Women Surf and made *Behind the Waves*, a short film that documents the surfing experience through a woman’s lens.

Pam is a multidimensional designer with experience in branding and motion design. She earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design in Mexico City and worked for a variety of studios with clients like Nickelodeon, Sam’s Club, and the National Institute of Archeology in Mexico.



Pam Chevez and Juliette Sutherland forged a friendship over their mutual love of surfing. Photo by Juliette Sutherland

In addition to wanting to become a Maine Guide and making the outdoors more accessible for Hispanic immigrants, Pam would like to use her talents to make educational programs for surfers. She hopes to create a way for surfers to use their phones to access helpful surfing tips on surfable beaches in Maine.

Juliette tried surfing a few times while growing up in Massachusetts. But, living inland, she didn’t have the time to pursue the sport. When Juliette moved to Maine, she found a class for women and appreciated that it didn’t matter if she messed up.

Juliette is an independent photographer and filmmaker

with her own business producing commercial videos and documentaries. Recently, she added digital fine art photography to her resumé. Juliette also serves as the Maine State Chair for Women in Film and Video New England.

Pam and Juliette’s short film *Behind the Waves*, like their commitment to surfing, involved many long hours of working together in the cold. Making the film was not a linear process. They spent time experimenting and finding ways to balance their different approaches, making time to capture footage and finish the film in a timely manner. Juliette purchased a special watertight housing for her camera to allow her to take underwater shots.

Ironically, the work that brought the team of Chevez and Sutherland together was a challenge that grew out of the COVID-19 pandemic. Juliette credits Maine Street USA, a short documentary film festival that showcases Maine-based filmmakers, with inspiring the film. Juliette thought the 2021 festival would be an amazing excuse to combine their talents and showcase women surfing. However, Juliette and Pam



Two women catching a wave. *Photo by Juliette Sutherland*



admit that what ultimately helped get the film done was the submission deadline. Because the two have day jobs that take precedent, they needed a reason to commit to focusing on the film. Juliette laughs because without the submission deadline she expects that they'd still be adding new film footage and brainstorming new techniques and editing approaches to try.

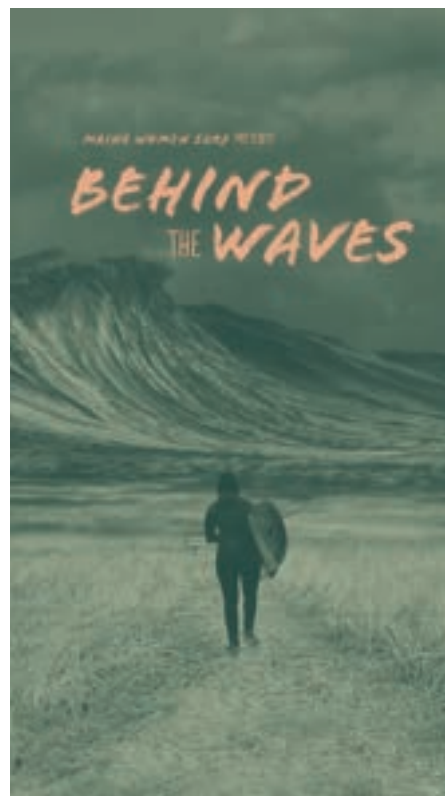
Juliette has made another film about surfing, this one titled *The Surfboard Builder*. The documentary spotlights the man who made her a 9-foot, 1-inch "nose rider" surfboard. The board is particularly close to Juliette's heart because her dad, himself a woodworker, created for it a compass rose inlay of his design.

To people who might not believe that they can be warm in a wetsuit even in winter, Juliette explains that they don't come in direct contact with the water as they wade in.

"The funny thing is with a wetsuit, the water isn't touching your skin. It slowly seeps in. The only time you actually feel the cold water is on your face," she said. "That all that's exposed."

That's the case for surfers who wear the full suit, including booties, gloves, and a head covering, all made of neoprene, a form of synthetic rubber. Juliette admits that after 45-60 minutes in the icy water she suddenly realizes that her core body temperature has dropped, and she finds that doing normal things becomes difficult. For her, the worst is that her fingers are cold, and she struggles to tie her surfboard on top of her car.

Pam plans to make educational animations and videos for Maine's growing community of women surfers. She and Juliette are dedicated to Maine Women Surf because they find the surf culture in Maine friendly, accept-



Clockwise from top: Pam enjoying a good surf day. Photo by Juliette Sutherland; poster promoting the new movie. Photo/Art by Pamela Chevez; Melissa, Kate, and Fran are part of the new community of women surfers. Photo by Pamela Chevez; and Juliette with her custom-made nine-foot, one-inch nose rider surfboard. Photo by Pamela Chevez



Pam, smiling large despite the cold winter waters.

Photo by Juliette Sutherland

ing, and inclusive. It's a sisterhood that, as Pam describes it, knows they've got "each other's back." Because of this supportive community, she feels safe surfing. Pam wants to introduce more minority women to the joy of surfing and Maine's outdoors.

Even though the community is non-competitive and welcoming because the sport is done in a cold, unpredictable environment, there is still a constant need for encouragement. An additional challenge is that surfable waves don't appear on a daily basis. However, when there's a great day, seven-foot-high waves may reward the patient surfer.

Given these variations and uncertainties, a person might be excused if they ask: Why do it? For Pam, it's because she finds the ocean healing.

"It's a space where you can be happy," she said.

Juliette also appreciates the feeling the sport offers.

"When you are riding on your surfboard, flying down the face of a wave, you are one with the ocean," she said. "The act of it is a connecting force."

For more information about Maine Women Surf, please visit their website at www.mainewomensurf.com. A video interview with Pam Chevez and Juliette Sutherland can be seen at womenmindthewater.com/artist-series/artist-series-pam-chevez-and-juliette-sutherland. •



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Above: Teresa working in the conservation lab at the Maine State Museum in 2021, cleaning objects that have just been removed from long-term display. *Photo courtesy the Maine State Museum*
Right: Teresa swabs the deck of a model ship and conserves a palm frond fan at the Mark Twain House and Museum in 2017. *Contributed photos*



Teresa Myers of the Maine State Museum

What's Involved in Being an Objects Conservator?

BY SHEILA D. GRANT

It was a work-study gig at the University of Maine at Orono (UMaine) that led Teresa Myers to her life's work. Teresa's passion for preserving artifacts now sees her splitting her time between farm and family in Sebec, and an apartment near the Maine State Museum in Augusta, where she is the Objects Conservator.

Teresa's family moved to Maine when she was 13. When it was time for college, "I started out in the education department at UMaine because there are several teachers in my family. It was random that I got a work-study position at the Hudson Museum, and that was how I found out about conservation."

A conservator, she explained, studies objects to understand how and why they were made, and how they've been dam-

aged or might currently be deteriorating.

"Then I design a treatment to prevent further damage, and maybe restore its appearance on some level. Decisions about the end goal of the treatment come out of conversations with the owner, which, these days, generally means curators at the museum."

Deciding to pursue a career in conservation meant taking new prerequisites to qualify for the graduate program she desired.

"I found it convenient to take these classes as part of my undergraduate experience, but I ended up with way more credits than I needed to graduate," said Teresa. It took six years to earn her Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology, with a minor in Studio Art, from UMaine in 1996, "because sudden-

ly, I needed two years of chemistry and a large number of art history and studio art courses in order to apply to grad school."

Art history provides the "why they were made" about various artifacts, said Teresa, while studio art, in some respects, relates to how items were made. "And the science part is understanding physically what is happening in the object now, as I'm studying it to understand how to take care of it."

To get into her graduate program, Teresa needed hands-on experience. As an undergrad, she did a two-week internship that was an introduction to the field of conservation. "I worked on cleaning up glass plate negatives," she recalled. "The conservator I was working with was primarily engaged in conserving a shipwreck, the *Snow Squall*, which is

now at the Maine Maritime Museum.”

Teresa worked on a number of projects with Ron Harvey of Tuckerbrook Conservation in Lincolnville. “He’s really been a mentor to me,” she said. She then spent a year in Boston, splitting her work week between a textile conservation lab and a private furniture conservation lab.

The following year, Teresa was accepted at Buffalo State College in New York, graduating in 2002 with a Master of Arts, and a Certificate of Advanced Studies in Art Conservation. The program entailed two years of academic study followed by a 12-month internship. Summer internships were encouraged, as well. Those internships saw Teresa working on a private collection being turned into a museum in Santiago, Dominican Republic; cleaning and stabilizing materials from the Agora excavation in Athens, Greece; and working in a conservation lab with a number of other conservators at the Museum of New Mexico Conservation Department in Santa Fe. “They were really generous with me and taught me a lot about being a Conservator in a state museum,” she said. After that 12-month internship, Teresa stayed on as a Contract Conservator for another year and eight months. “It was just a really great learning experience for me,” she said.

MAINE BOUND

Teresa met Patrick Myers at UMaine in 1993. Friends for years, the couple eventually dated, marrying in 1998. They returned to Maine in 2004 to live in Patrick’s childhood home. “We spent the summer renovating the house and did the work ourselves,” said Teresa. “It was nice just to have that time.”

Patrick is executive director of the Center Theatre in Dover-Foxcroft. For 11 years, Teresa ran her own conservation private practice part time. She also became an assessor with Heritage Preservation’s Conservation Assessment Program, which gave grants to small museums and historical societies wishing to bring a specialist in to assess and advise regarding their collections and facilities.

In 2005, Teresa received the Mellon Fellowship, spending 10 weeks at the



Clockwise from top: Working on an amphora in the lab in the Athenian Agora in 2000; Teresa and Patrick Myers on a tour of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic in 2001 before settling in Santiago for the summer of Teresa’s internship at Centro Cultural E. Leon Jimenes; Friends descended on the Myers farm for a barn raising in 2014; and Visiting Chaco Culture National Historical Park in 1998. *Contributed photos*

National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C. “I was excited to have the opportunity to work there. They have a thorough and collaborative process for working with museum objects that originated in Indigenous communities. I wanted to learn about that.”

In 2011, she volunteered for two weeks

with the Smithsonian Institute at the Cultural Recovery Center in Port Au Prince, Haiti, after much of the culturally significant art was damaged in a 2010 earthquake. “It was wonderful to take part in, and I learned a lot while I was down there,” said Teresa.

That fall, she joined Ron Harvey for a



A cannon at Fort Jefferson, Dry Tortugas National Park, set up for a conservation treatment with Tuckerbrook Conservation, and after treatment.
Contributed photos

month in Florida at Fort Jefferson in Dry Tortugas National Park, accessible only by boat or seaplane, restoring a Civil War-era cannon.

Teresa also did projects at the Maine State Museum. “I have always preferred being part of a team, rather than on my own. Private practice was definitely lonely. I started dreaming about going to work at the Maine State Museum—and five or six years later, that’s what happened,” she said, laughing.

A DREAM JOB REQUIRES COMPROMISES

Daughter Alice was born in 2006. “I was not super busy with my business. I was able to just spend a lot of time being her mom. I’m really grateful for that,” said Teresa. “I had a lab in the house so even if I was working, I was there, which made it a lot easier.”

Teresa began part time at the Maine State Museum in 2015. “That left a lot of time in the week for me to still be working on our farm,” she said. The farm had evolved over the years to include gardens, orchards, a cow, pigs, sheep, chickens, and bees. “I closed my private practice, so my career was all centered in Augusta at that point. Alice was nine. Patrick works right in town, so even though he works long hours, he was able to be here for her.”

A friend in Augusta offered Teresa a place to stay, allowing her to skip the 1.5-hour drive each way. “Basically, having this job has been possible because of the



Despite spending her work days with artifacts, Teresa enjoys visiting other museums on her days off, and gets excited about things such as this megalodon tooth at the Harrigan Learning Center and Museum in Milo. *Photo by Sheila D. Grant* support from family and friends,” she said.

In 2018, the job became full time. Teresa found a small apartment near the museum. “It was a quality-of-life choice,” she said. “But it’s also a compromise because I have less time with my family.” The logistics are daunting. “It would be far more complicated to try to work so far away from home if I didn’t have a partner [like Patrick],” Teresa added, with appreciation. “He’s been great at holding down the fort! Patrick has been that daily presence at home for Alice, and just having him here means that I can have time to not just be able to survive in this job but thrive.” The family also gave up most of their live-

stock, but still keeps chickens and bees.

Alice, now 15, is a sophomore at Foxcroft Academy. Teresa said, “Something I have said to myself for many years, since she came along, is just to be the kind of person that I would like to see her grow up to be.”

THERE’S A BIG JOB AHEAD

The Maine State Museum is currently closed for asbestos abatement and replacement of its failed HVAC system. It may not reopen until 2023 or later. Teresa and her coworkers are studying and treating as many objects in the state’s collections as possible during the evacuation process, during which objects will be removed from galleries before abatement begins.

The Maine State Museum continues doing outreach and education online. “Our education department has been very active doing online resources for teachers for the past year. We also have a new video series, *Behind the Scenes*, just to show what the staff is working on while we’re closed. They did the first one about me. They are working on a second one now,” she said.

Having to remove everything gives museum staff an opportunity to reimagine exhibits that have remained static for decades. “There are going to be a lot of new things to see when we reopen,” Teresa said.

For more information and to visit the Maine State Museum virtually, go to mainestatemuseum.org and click on “Learn.” •



Alice, now 15, was charmed by a baby goat at Beauchemin Preservation Farm in Waldoboro, which is owned by Patrick's uncle, who gave the family many goats and sheep, as well as a raft of ducks. Contributed photo



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*Sarah Nichols,
Leader of
Maine's Reform
to Strengthen
Recycling*

BY LYNN FANTOM



Sarah Nichols explores a garden in Ellsworth with her two sons, Malcolm (left), 4, and Ford (center), 7. Photo by Kelsey Gagnon

Mainers may start feeling a little less guilty when they open a large Amazon carton with a tiny purchase inside or buy ready-made food in a plastic container at Hannaford. That's because, in July, Governor Janet Mills signed into law new reform that makes companies that produce the packaging responsible for the cost of recycling it. This is the nation's first law of this kind.

The "architect" of this trailblazing legislation, according to bill co-sponsor Sen. Rick Bennett (R-Oxford), was Sarah Nichols.

"She not only drew up the plan but did a lot of the heavy lifting to get people on board," he says.

Sarah is the Sustainable Maine Director at the Natural Resources Council of Maine (NRCM) in Augusta and an expert in solid waste management. Hers was the "go-to" voice *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Politico*, and an array of other news outlets sought to explain Maine's first-mover legislation.

The law imposes an annual fee on producers of cardboard boxes, plastic containers, food wrappers, and shipping materials in order to fund waste management programs, a concept known as extended producer responsibility (EPR).

"First and foremost, it gets municipalities the funding they need to maintain and expand their recycling," says Sarah, emphasizing that this is a shift from relying on taxpayer dollars.

Maine's initiative comes as states nationwide have struggled to find solutions since China stopped buying most of America's plastic trash and other waste in 2018. Throughout Maine, the rising costs to recycle have caused plants to shut down and towns to curtail programs. In the meantime, consumers have continued to rinse and stack and sort their recyclables at home...with no place for them to go.

"This changes how we think about who's responsible for waste," says Sarah. "This is a really wonky subject. But people grasped it quickly because it just made sense."

Nichols, who lives in Cumberland Foreside with her two sons, shifts gears as she contemplates the dynamic of extended producer responsibility.

"When my boys became old enough, I started expecting they clean up their own messes," she says. "Lo and behold, there's less mess in the first place."

Packaging producers will make payments to a stewardship organization based on the weight of each type of packaging material used in products sold in Maine. The money goes into a fund for local governments to pay recycling costs. The stewardship organization, a nonprofit overseen by the state, will also consult with both municipalities and businesses.

"It's a great new resource for businesses who wanted to do the right thing and didn't realize they weren't," says Sarah. "For instance, black plastic is very difficult for recycling systems because optical sorters can't really see it."



Fees are structured to incentivize companies to create packaging that is easier to recycle and reuse. And that's a big deal because packaging makes up 30 to 40 percent of all municipal solid waste in Maine, according to legislators. There's growing momentum in this arena of environmental reform.

"We've led with a strong model," Sarah says.

In early August, Oregon Governor Kate Brown signed an EPR bill for packaging. Such legislation is under consideration in at least nine other states. The good news is that recycling rates have soared in countries that already have such laws — nearly all European Union members, Japan, South Korea, and five Canadian provinces.

Although this story may have a happy ending, the journey was tough. After China's ban, Sarah believed it was time to act on EPR, a strategy she had studied for some time. She convinced NRCM to make it a priority and wrote a bill that resolved the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) would develop an extended producer responsibility law for packaging. Sponsored by Rep. Michael Devin (D-Newcastle), that bill passed unanimously in May, 2019.

But the "heavy lifting" was just beginning. As the DEP worked on the policy, Sarah led outreach to lawmakers, municipalities, businesses, and the environmental community. With skeptics and those overtly hostile, she "engaged honestly," says Bennett.

"There is no guile about her, which is not all that common among professional advocates," he adds.

Then COVID abruptly shut down the legislature in March, 2020.

"All legislation was left in limbo," Sarah says.

Yet this is when her "passion and doggedness" really kicked in, says Bennett. During the lockdown, she took a fresh look at the legislation with Rep. Nicole Grohoski (D-Ellsworth), who became the lead sponsor of the refined bill.

"We did things that really improved the law, made it simpler," she says.

In July, the 130th Maine Legislature took up "An Act to Support and Improve Municipal Recycling Programs and Save Taxpayer Money" (LD1541). On the cool, overcast night that it was officially enacted, Sarah stayed at the State House until 4 a.m.

Top: Sarah Nichols, who has worked at Natural Resources Council of Maine since 2014, has successfully advocated for Maine's statewide single-use plastic bag law, the polystyrene foam food container ban, and new extended producer responsibility law for packaging. The latter two were the first in the US. *Photo by Lynn Fantom*

Bottom: Watercolor "Connector Trail" by Sarah K. Nichols. The Cumberland environmental advocate paints, hikes, skis, and even gets in a little mountain biking between work and picking up her kids.

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“A few years ago, this seemed like an impossible task, but Sarah pieced together the winning coalition to make it happen,” says Pete Didisheim, NRCM’s advocacy director and Nichols’ boss. “She doesn’t easily take ‘no’ for an answer.”

Such persistence isn’t a surprise to Sarah’s mother, Kimberly, who remembers her daughter as a straight-A math lover who finished her homework before she was even asked. But when Mrs. Nichols was hesitant to approve a sleepover for her daughter, young Sarah would create skits or poems or song-and-dance routines to make her case. No pleading or begging. She’d also write her mother letters with boxes for her to check off “yes” or “no.”

After high school in Bath, Sarah attended the University of New Hampshire, where she became interested in environmental and resource economics. The field appealed to both her head and her heart.

“Economics, to me, is just the study of how people make decisions. Using policy and price signals to change behavior is really interesting to me,” she says. “This field puts them to work for the environment, something that I care deeply about.”

Following graduation, Nichols moved to Lake Tahoe to indulge in a winter as a “ski bum.”

“But it was so fun I stayed for three years,” she says. She bartended and waited tables. Then, she went off to the University of California, Santa Barbara, to earn her master’s degree in economics and politics of the environment and water resources management.

But Maine drew her home. “People grow roots when they live here,” she says. “I just missed my people.”

Although the new EPR legislation is a “huge career high” for the 38-year-old, it’s other people she celebrates as she thinks about the victory — from her mother and neighbors who helped with child-care to the “champion legislators” to her colleagues.

“I’m part of a big team here at NRCM,” she says. She’s especially grateful her “great mentor,” Pete Didisheim, viewed her bartending talents not as “goofing off,” but as a sign she could talk to people.

Although environmental politics can try the spirit, Sarah appears optimistic about the future and shares an anecdote about her seven-year-old, a serious young artist. When he recently finished a tube of paint, he couldn’t understand why the store couldn’t simply refill it. Reusable paint tubes? Nichols has faith in the world her sons will help create.

But in the meantime, she says, “I can’t wait to see those EPR payments start coming into our towns!” •



Writers and directors Aron Gaudet and Gita Pullapilly, second and third from left, with *Queenpins* cast members, from left, Bebe Rexha, Kirby Howell-Baptiste, and Kristen Bell.

Finding Love, and Success in the Movie Industry, in Maine

BY ANNE GABBIANELLI

“Maine holds a special place in my heart because it is where Aron and I fell in love and also learned the challenges and opportunities of making movies together,” says Gita Pullapilly. This is where the love story began seventeen years ago for Gita, of Indian descent and from Indiana, and Aron Gaudet of Old Town, Maine.

The two met in Michigan while working their respective television jobs and knew there was something more exciting on the horizon, so they ventured into the world of filmmaking. It was in Maine where their serious creating began. Aron stumbled across the story of patriotic activity at Bangor International Airport when he was bringing Gita to meet his mom. Their teamwork was evident with the 2009 release of

the Emmy-nominated *The Way We Get By*, which caught the nation’s attention. The film featured three senior citizens including Aron’s mother, Joan, who greeted American troops returning from war.

“The people of Maine have opened their hearts and doors to us as filmmakers,” shares Gita, who recalls meeting Aron’s family and embarking on their first film.

Not only did the documentary have an impact on Maine, but it also won eighteen festival awards around the world, played theatrically in over sixty cities across the U.S. and aired on the critically acclaimed, independent television station PBS as a prime time special. In the same year, Gita was selected as one of *Independent Magazine’s* “Filmmakers to Watch.”

“Early on I knew that I had met someone in Gita that had equal ambition to do something more than what we were doing,” Aron says. “When I told her that I thought we should make movies together, she didn’t question it. She jumped in with both feet and started running. I remember feeling like I had found a real partner.”

The love for Maine and its people grew as the documentary was released in U.S. cinemas in July 2009, and the love of these two filmmakers evolved into a marriage. However, the relationship did not come easy, as Gita’s parents were set on having her “marry an Indian doctor,” Gita, who’s family is Indian, recalls.

“It was heartbreaking not to have their approval early on when we were dating, but I kept telling myself that I was making the right decision,” Gita says. “Now, my mom calls Aron her son. So clearly, he’s done right by the family.”

In between their emotions, producing a film, and talking marriage, it became clear the couple had no savings for a wedding and little time to plan. Enter Amber Small, a wedding planner from Bangor who was so moved by the film and the couple’s predicament, she rallied vendors in good ole Maine fashion, to give the couple the wedding they deserved. The celebration took place at the Retreat at French’s Point in Stockton Springs, Maine.

The bride’s brother, Anand Pullapilly, became a Universal Life minister for the event and officiated with the assistance of their father, Cyriac Pullapilly, a former priest of Syro-Malabar Catholic rite.

“I am Indian, and my husband is from Maine, and we wanted to share specific cultural themes at our wedding,” Gita says. “I thought that would be incredibly hard to pull off, but Amber and her team did it so tastefully and beautiful. Both of our families were blown away by the event.”



The Way We Get By (2009)



Beneath the Harvest Sky (2013)

“When I told her that I thought we should make movies together, she didn’t question it. She jumped in with both feet and started running. I remember feeling like I had found a real partner.”



Queenpins (2021)



Aron and Gita on set in the van. Photo by Kim Winther

As the acceptance and love grew among their families, so did the talents of these filmmakers. They went on to produce a narrative film *Beneath The Harvest Sky* shot in Aroostook County about two teenage best friends caught up in the illegal prescription drug trade between Canada and Maine. It is a story about friendship, family, and love.

“Without the Lajoie Family Farm in Van Buren, we wouldn’t have been able to make *Beneath the Harvest Sky*,” Gita says. “Maine is a special state because if you’re from Maine, you rally behind and support other Mainers.”

She, too, has become a “Mainer” courtesy of then Governor John Baldacci who gave Gita the honorary title.

Breaking into Hollywood has been a long road for the couple.

“As filmmakers, you are constantly going in and pitching stories to financiers trying to get them to give you millions of dollars. You get rejected a lot and you just have to get used to that,” says Aron.

“We were told to our face over and over that ‘You guys don’t have any value in the industry,’ and here we wrote a movie about two women who felt under-valued and figured out a loophole in the system to find success,” Gita adds.

The movie *Queenpins* has proven a breakthrough. It’s a dark comedy about the pink-collar crime of coupon fraud. Starring Kristen Bell, Vince Vaughn, Kirby Howell-Baptiste, and Paul Walter Hauser, the movie was released in September and now streams on Paramount Plus.

With ever-evolving success that has led to countless films, and now a comedy on the big screen, the couple reflects on how pure love and passion has been their foundation.

“To succeed in the film industry, it takes a lot of sweat equity,” says Aron. “You’re often working long hours without getting paid. Writing scripts on spec (for no pay) and hoping to get them set up and made into films. If you don’t believe in yourself and what you are doing, you won’t last long.”

“Hard work that we’re both passionate about is exactly right,” says Gita. “Every day – seven days a week – we’re always working or thinking about our films. Aron and I see what we do as a calling. We don’t have children, but we have our films. And we have seen the power of storytelling in films and know the right film can impact and influence someone profoundly.” •

ANNIE BEAUREGARD

Learning Her Way Through a Pandemic

BY LIZ GOTTHELF

No one goes into medical school expecting it to be easy, but students like Annie Beauregard who have had to complete their residency during the pandemic have faced unexpected challenges.

Annie, 26, lives in York with her boyfriend, Matt Airey, and his two children, ages 6 and 9. She grew up in Dover, New Hampshire, and came to Maine to attend University of New England, first as an undergraduate, and then as a medical student.

Annie said when she first started at UNE, she wasn't sure what she wanted to do with her life. She found herself drawn to the sciences and wanted a job where she could work with people and have a positive impact on society. While working in hospitals as an emergency medical technician and doing patient transport she connected with some doctors who took her under their wing and gave her more insight into the field of medicine.

A recipient of the Doctors for Maine's Future scholarship, Annie recently completed her third year of medical school with a rotation in Bangor at Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center. She is currently in rotation at Maine Medical Center in Portland and has upcoming rotations in New Hampshire and Massachusetts. With multiple family connections in Maine, Annie feels fortunate that she has had placements in New England. She hopes to one day land a position in internal medicine in Maine.

"My primary role is a learner, and I've definitely learned so much through this, in just seeing the system come together and the healthcare workers really answer the call, because it has been a huge burden on the system – there's just so many people who need care as a result of this pandemic," she said. "It's a busier environment. There's more responsibility on the doctors and the nurses. There is much more expected of them, given the circumstances."

As a student in rotation during a major health crisis, she had experiences that students in Bangor before her hadn't. The psychiatry portion of the rotation was done completely through telemedicine.

"The doctors who were in the hospital would bring me along on an iPad," she said.

She volunteered her time on several Saturdays at COVID-19 vaccine clinics, at which hundreds of people came to the Cross Insurance Center in Bangor. She also volunteered at pop-up clinics in Concord and Nashua, New Hampshire.

Annie did home visits to give vaccines to those who were housebound, as well, and it gave her more of an understanding of the day-to-day life of some of her patients.

"It was really rewarding to help people outside the hospital and outside the clinic," she said. "It was nice to feel that we could help in some way – in any way."

The pandemic took a toll on nurses and doctors, who spent extra time to follow protocols to protect themselves and patients, but it was worth it to limit the spread. Annie is passionate about vaccination, having spent time in the COVID ICU. She's seen how the virus can affect the lungs and make someone severely sick. One personal win was when she convinced her father, who was at first skeptical, to get a COVID vaccine.

During the pandemic, hospitals had restrictions on visitors.

"That was hard, seeing people in distress and not having their loved ones with them," said Annie. She recalls one time when a woman was delivering a baby, and her husband had to stay home because there was no one to watch their 4-year-old son, who wasn't allowed in the hospital.

"I was her support person," she said.





Annie Beauregard lives in York with her boyfriend, Matt Airey, and his two children, Taylor Airey, 9, and William Airey, 6.

Annie said she has had some great, sometimes unexpected, connections with her patients. Often it occurs with those with the poorest prognosis, and it's been rewarding to build relationships and be a familiar face to patients.

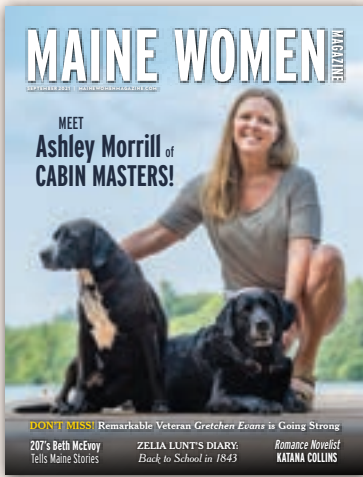
"That's been really meaningful for me and that's helped me decide that I want to be an internist and practice general medicine," she said. "You never know what's going to happen and you never know where you'll be able to make a difference for your patients."

Annie's days often begin at 3:30 or 4 a.m., when she wakes early to get some studying in for the board exam before heading out the door at 7 a.m. She gets home around 6 or 7 p.m., and Matt has dinner waiting for her on the table. She and Matt and the kids recap their days and spend some time together, and then she gets in some more studying before keeping to her strict 10 p.m. bedtime. A few times a week, Annie does indoor cycling to decompress, as well. She and Matt say they are also fortunate to live near the shore and often take short walks to the beach to reset and recharge.

"Her life is very different, and we're both okay with it for a short period of time," said Matt.

Annie said along with Matt, she has classmates from UNE that boost her spirits with daily calls.

"I have a really good support system," said Annie. •



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Heather Cote

Launching Her Own Business During a Pandemic

BY SHEILA D. GRANT

Late U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt is credited with saying, “a smooth sea never made a skilled sailor.”

Heather Cote, who overcame childhood bullying, anxiety, depression, and body dysmorphia to become a winning horsewoman, a Mrs. Maine contestant, a model, and to launch her own real estate appraisal business in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, would likely agree.

Heather is a Certified Residential Appraiser/Notary Public. During the pandemic, after realizing that working from home really *worked* for her, Heather parted with her employers and launched her own real estate appraisal company, HLC Property Appraisals, LLC, which she says has been very successful.

Success has not come easy, however. Heather says she was bullied in school to the point that she changed high schools during her junior year.

She credits her love of horses with helping a great deal. Her grandparents ran a horse farm, and her aunt would often give her rides even when Heather was just a toddler. The aunt eventually became an instructor/trainer, “and I helped her break and ride horses up until the age of 15.”

Heather shows American Quarter Horses, traveling back and forth to the southern states to do so. Her current show horse is with a trainer in North Carolina. In Maine, she has a retired show horse that she calls “my heart horse,” and a pony for her 3-year-old niece.

Competing in the 2014 and 2015 Mrs. Maine America Pageants boosted her confidence, and led to modeling offers. Heather did commercials for Oxford Casino. Her image was also used in their print marketing, in AAA’s magazine, and some national publications for fire prevention and safety. She signed with a Boston modeling agency and did freelance work on the side.

“This was a huge thing for me, as I have battled with self-confidence and self-worth for years,” she said.

LEARNING THE REAL ESTATE APPRAISAL ROPES, FLYING SOLO

She began appraising in 2005.

“I rode horses with a young lady and her stepfather was an appraiser. It seemed like a good fit so I took the courses needed

and got my trainee license. It took me about two years before I found the right company and supervisor and found myself really liking the job,” she recalled.

After accumulating the required number of hours, Heather sat for her state exam and became licensed as a Residential Appraiser in 2009.

“I always wanted to be certified. However, there was a college degree requirement that kept me back. In 2018, the nation removed the stipulation, and as long as I took the required courses, produced complex samples to the state board, and had been an appraiser for more than five years without disciplinary action, I could sit for the test. I was certified in December, 2019.”

At that time, Heather explained, complex samples were anything with a value of over \$1 million, due to her license level.

“Now, complex can be anything from high-end waterfront, unique properties that are not like anything in the area, or a run-down hole in the wall that really needs to be torn down, but the lender wants it valued as it is.”

Appraisal inspections entail looking at how homes are built, what condition they are in, measuring them, doing a sketch and taking photos. This is not the same as an inspection sometimes done to determine the condition of various construction elements of the home, such as the roof, basement, etc., she said.

“We look at homes like we are a potential buyer,” Heather explained. “I look for ‘comparable’ properties that have sold in the past year to six months in the area to compare them to, and I write a report.”

A comparable doesn’t mean every home in a neighborhood that has sold, she said.

“A true comparable is a home that is a closed sale of similar style, size, room count, amenities and location,” said Heather. “If you have a ranch, capes and colonials are not comparables – unless your ranch is very large in square footage and there are no other larger ranches found.” By examining the sales prices of truly similar homes in similar locations, an appraiser can place a more realistic value on a property, she said. “In the case of waterfront properties, the

differences in location can sometimes be hundreds of thousands of dollars. Something on Bonny Eagle Pond is nothing like Sebago Lake.”

Heather may only do a few inspections some days, while others, “I inspect six to eight, traveling a couple hundred miles. Some inspections are full interior/exterior, and others are just exterior, which requires me only to drive by the property and take a photo. I can get an average if eight to ten report out per week depending on how many inspections I schedule.”

The appraisal process is built on the ‘Principle of Substitution’, she said. “If I can buy a similar home as yours for X, then why would I pay Z? The easiest way to look at it is this: when you buy a car, you shop around at a couple different dealers to see who has the best price. If you find the car you want at one dealer and a very similar car at another dealer, but

one is priced a lot higher for some reason, which one are you going to buy? It’s that simple,” said Heather.

“Last year, when the pandemic hit and we were all forced to work from home, I realized how convenient it was and how much more work I was getting done,” she said. “I talked with two of my former coworkers who made the jump to going on their own successfully, and they told me I was crazy not to do it. So in May, I took the steps needed and started on my own June 1, 2020.

“This was both exciting and scary, as I had been with the same group of people at two different appraisal management companies who had molded me and provided me with the guidance to be a detailed, honest, and accurate appraiser. They were also dear friends who I would miss terribly.”

The decision is one of the best she has ever made.



Heather’s professional head shots were done by Eric Snyder, who has also done photography for the NFL, the New England Patriots, and CBS Sports, to name a few.
Photo by Eric Snyder

“I want to do my part, as an appraiser who takes great pride in producing an honest, creditable assignment, to help educate and bring to light the problems with the industry.”



Husband Chris Cote escorts Heather during the 2015 Mrs. Maine America Pageant. *Contributed photo*



Heather getting a ride at age 2 under the supervision of her aunt, Marcia Lyon. *Contributed photo*

“In six months of operation I doubled my annual income, found myself working more, yet stressing less. My clients are great to work with and I have developed some great relationships with lenders as well as real estate agents who appreciate an appraiser who is willing to explain certain aspects of the valuation process that they may not understand.

“I just never realized how much working for someone else was holding me back,” Heather said. “I have done all of this on my own – well, of course with the help of my husband, Chris Cote, who owns his own very successful plumbing and heating company, New Energy Solutions, LLC.”

In March, Heather reached back to pay it forward. “My former coworker was also looking to make the transition. However, like myself, he was nervous about leaving the stable environment we had been in for so long. I extended a hand and helped him make the move and he now works as a subcontractor for me in areas of his choice.”

In the future, Heather hopes to mold and shape trainee appraisers for the future of the industry in Maine. “There is such a need for them right now as many in the profession are aging out or moving on into other pre-retirement careers,” she said. “I also would like to become active in the Maine Board of Appraisers and have already become active in the New England chapter of the Appraisal Institute in their Programs Committee.

“There is a huge need for ‘quality’ appraisers right now. So many cut corners and produce misleading reports that it is really hurting the public’s trust in the appraisal profession,” Heather explained. “I want to do my part, as an appraiser who takes great pride in producing an honest, creditable assignment, to help educate and bring to light the problems with the industry.” •



Heather shows off a blue ribbon won in the Hunter Under Saddle Derby during the May 2017 New York Breeders Show. *Contributed photo*

JILL RYAN

Art Translated into a Clothing Design Business

BY EMILY DUNUWILA



Jill Ryan, left, smiles with a team member in Bali. Courtesy photos

“I’m a size large and I don’t know what to wear,” the woman said to Jill, doubtful that the shopping trip would result in any success. She had arrived at Jill Ryan’s South Freeport home at the coaxing of a friend, who believed in the transformative power of Jill’s clothing. Energized by the challenge of dressing a new client, Jill started to pull clothes off the rack.

“Try this on, and try this on,” Jill led the way as the woman stood in front of a long mirror, her friend standing nearby for moral support, weighing in with “Oh, I love that on you!” and “I love that on you, but you would never wear that!”

Little by little, the woman’s reluctance transformed into surprise, and

surprise into tears of joy.

“I feel so good in these clothes,” she told Jill, “I feel like a different person in them.”

For Jill, her clothing line, Just Jill Design, is all about these empowering moments of self-discovery. Despite the line’s name, the clothing is so much more than just Jill Ryan. From its inception through its continuing evolution, Just Jill was built on trust in community, trust in creative process, and trust in self.

It may come as a surprise that Jill Ryan spent her early adult years suppressing her self-expression. She resisted personal style, believing it was “bad” to care about how she looked.

“In my 20s, I was a closeted *Vogue* reader,” Jill recalls, “I really loved



Photos by Lynn Ouellette

clothes, but I thought you weren't supposed to care about that."

It wasn't until Jill was in her 50s that she began to embrace her creative self-expression. Her friends, Cynthia Selinger and Laurie Hadlock, were oil painters whom Jill admired but never thought she could paint like.

"You clearly have an eye. You can have a hand," Jill recalls Cynthia saying.

Her friend had noticed the artistry in Jill's everyday life, from her home to the way she dressed, though Jill had never considered herself an artist. Cynthia and Laurie began to meet weekly at Jill's home to mentor her in oil painting. Riddled with self-doubt, Jill would make a draft then crumple it up and throw it away. Slowly, Jill began to relax into it, embracing the playfulness of painting and developing an eye for color. With a little trust in her friends and patience for herself, she began to awaken her artistic confidence.

As Jill's creative juices began to flow, she was presented with a life-changing opportunity. Jill's sister, Marla, who owned a clothing company in Hawaii, invited Jill to design a few pieces for her existing line. Drawing from her proficiency in oil painting, she played with fabric color and silhouette. She

began with a pencil skirt, but soon let her self-expression and creativity take hold, and Just Jill Design was born.

Officially a clothing line within her sister's company, Just Jill Design would be conceptualized by Jill and produced in Bali. It took some work and patience to align her personal vision with the fabric companies with whom she collaborated.

"My first few dyers did not get my color," she remembers of her first trips to Bali. "So, I would send swatches of my oil paints and ask them to match it."

With shades of marigold, Amalfi blue, and charcoal gray, Just Jill clothing now stands out for its unique hues. The woman who once crumpled up and threw away her paintings was now trusting her keen eye for color and design.

With her creative compass continuing to guide her, Jill now thrives off collaboration with her sister and a pattern maker in Bali whom they deem the true artist. They travel to Bali every year for a month-long trip to work with their team on the latest ideas and options. These trips are just as much about relationship building as they are production, which is why they always hire the same driver, spend hours in the factory, and immerse themselves in production alongside their team.

"They are like family to us," Jill says of her Bali team. "There's a 12-hour time difference, but we find a way to connect."

This relationship was put to the test when COVID hit.

"We felt responsible for keeping them going," Jill says of the decision to continue production during the pandemic. Although the dyers were not working, Just Jill Designs kept the sewers and cutters in business by using up leftover fabric from past seasons.

"We limped along," she says of her COVID experience, a true feat for a business that operates across borders.

COVID threatened to disrupt the entire ecosystem of the company—from the Bali team members who produce the clothing, to the representatives who promote the brand, and the stores that sell it. While the big annual trade shows in Vegas and Atlanta were cancelled, Jill, Marla, and the brand representatives stayed connected to the small boutiques across the country, many of which, including Maine-based stores like Bohemian Rose in Bath, COREY & CO. in Portland, and Calypso in Boothbay Harbor have continued to carry Just Jill Design.

In a usual year, Jill receives back any leftover clothing that representatives and stores have not sold, and hosts



Left: Jill and Marla with team in Bali. Right: Jill choosing color swatches in Bali. Courtesy photos

a trunk show at her South Freeport home. Jill managed to continue a semblance of the trunk show tradition through small group showings and sending options to clients through the mail. COVID was a true resilience test for the clothing line, but the company stayed afloat thanks to cohesive teamwork, strong communication, and trust in buyers.

While creativity and collaboration keep Just Jill Design strong, the consumers give the line its magic. The clothes come alive on the canvas of each person's body and through the aura of each person's energy.

"When I'm selling the clothes or dressing people, part of me is looking at each person as an oil painting, and the other part is intuiting each person's energy," Jill says of her process.

Her personal clients range from an 11-year-old middle school student to Jill's own 99-year-old mother, a testament to her clothing's capacity for individual creativity. The inspiration goes both ways, as Jill often names new pieces after clients who have given her design ideas or suggested altered necklines, lengths, or fits. Consumer relationships are essential to the line's success.

Having found her artistic mediums later in life, Jill said her creativity has always moved like a river – ebbing and flowing but ever-present. As she has relaxed into this flow, she has found the playful curiosity and dedication that leads to artistic evolution. Many people have untapped creative talent that lies dormant if not suppressed.

Jill's story reminds us that innate talent can shine when supported by community, trust, and self-confidence.

Learn more about Just Jill Design on Instagram or Facebook, or visit Bohemian Rose in Bath, Corey & Co in Portland, and Calypso in Boothbay Harbor to purchase her clothes. •



Seamstresses in Bali. Courtesy photo

Homemade Charm at The Shops at Cape Neddick

By Robert Cook

On Route 1 in York is a barn that sat in a wooded section of town known as Toddsville back in the early 1800s. Today, it is the home of the Shops at Cape Neddick, which are made up of ten boutiques owned and operated by eight women entrepreneurs.

Jeanne Lombardi is the managing director and curator of the shops. She also owns some of the stores, including Coco's Baby, a store that sells hand-knitted baby clothes and accessories, which she named after her daughter, who is now 21-years-old and is attending college in Boston.

"We all work together. We all pay the rent, and we all share the expenses," Jeanne explained.

The Shops at Cape Neddick started with one store and gradually evolved into the ten stores that occupy the 200-year-old refurbished barn.

Some of the other shops are boutiques like A Vintage Affair, Coastal Blues, Coastal Cork, and Poppy Seed Studios.

The shops also sell driftwood wreaths, custom-made jewelry such as sea glass necklaces and earrings, felt birdhouses, hand-made wooden cutting boards, paintings, throws, and scarves.

"There is a total mix. You never know what you will find here," Jeanne said.

Jeanne describes the shopkeepers as a close-knit family who supports one another, and at the same time competes with each other for business.

Seven years ago, Jeanne said there were three women shopkeepers in a small retail space adjacent to the 5,000-square-foot barn. As more women merchants joined the cooperative, Jeanne said they simply needed more space. A barn builder in Eliot, Michael Tero, and Jennifer Marshall became partners with the Lombardis and the barn was transformed from a once aging



structure into a beautiful, illuminated space filled with plenty of natural light and impressive timber beams.

The original Cape Neddick Post Office is now The Ice Cream House. The Maine Quilt Place occupies what used to be the stables under the barn. Maureen Bane, a former shopkeeper at The Shops, has expanded her business, Signature Finishes, taking over the Carriage House next to the barn, featuring home decor, clothing, and specialty paints.

During the worst days of COVID-19 in 2020 the shopkeepers held their own by offering curbside service when they were allowed to reopen in the spring.

"We have a lot of good customers locally and regionally, and that helped us," Jeanne said. "We eked by like everybody else."

And now, "When people do discover us, they become repeat customers and they bring friends," Jeanne explained.

"We all like to make things beautiful, a place where you can escape and feel good and enjoy a little retail therapy," she said.

Jeanne's journey to create this successful retail business began when she and her husband, David, decided to relocate to York a few years after their daughter was born.

Jeanne recalled how they attended their nephew's high school graduation one spring and just fell in the love with the strong community spirit of York village. She said York reminded David of Marblehead, Massachusetts, where he grew up.

The decision to relocate and become a stay-at-home mom wasn't an easy one for Jeanne. At the time, in the early 1990s, she was the CEO of one of the largest recording studios on the East Coast, Soundtrack Recording in Boston.

Years later, Jeanne is glad that she decided to take a chance and move to Maine to build a new life. One of the things she had learned is that small businesses have to be good at changing on the fly.

"My favorite saying is 'I bob and weave,'" she said. "You have to be flexible and make adjustments and do it quickly."

Jeanne and her fellow women entrepreneurs also learn from one another.

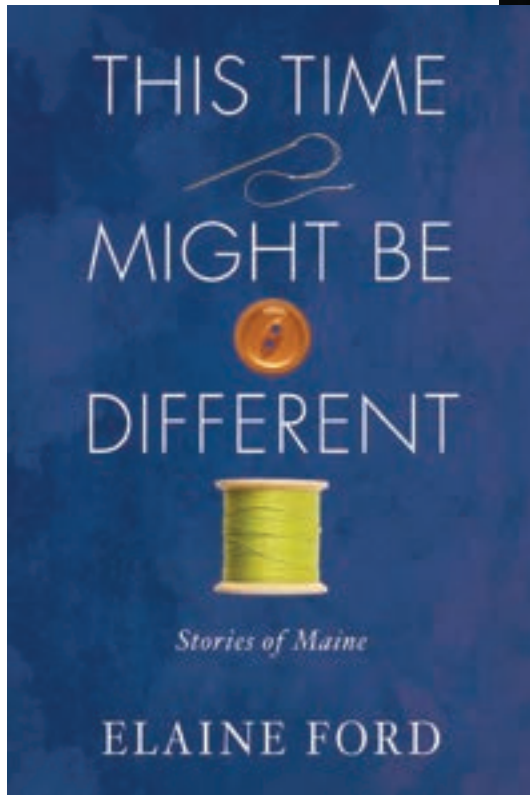
Jeanne understands that the best way she and others at The Shops at Cape Neddick can be successful is to provide the one intangible that on-line retailers can't provide – one-on-one, caring customer service. This formula has worked well for nearly a decade.

To learn more about the Shops at Cape Neddick, visit theshopsatcapeneddickmaine.com.

Boutique owners from The Shops of Cape Neddick.



Jeanne Lombardi



Elaine Ford

THIS TIME MIGHT BE DIFFERENT: ***Stories of Maine***

By Elaine Ford

\$16.95
softcover,
short stories

Published by
Maine's
Islandport Press.

As the seasons turn and autumn paints the landscape with rich colors and textures that fall away to reveal a clean slate, so too do people explore the depth of their thoughts and feelings before resolving to embrace a new year and fresh start. Fall is a time for contemplative fiction and memoir, a time to wear old fisherman's sweaters, and drink spicy black teas. A time to sit under a bright red maple tree and read amidst the simultaneous music and soothing silence of outdoor Maine in autumn. *This Time Might Be Different: Stories of Maine*, a short story collection by lauded, award-winning

author Elaine Ford, offers an opportunity for deep thought and breathtaking storytelling.

Published posthumously in 2018, *This Time Might Be Different* tells fifteen different stories about folks in Maine attempting to make difficult decisions.

"The stories contain hallmarks of her writing: lean, unpretentious, funny, evocative of place, and populated with people who live complicated lives and who wish to improve them, against hope," wrote Bob Keyes in his review of Ford's work for the *Maine Sunday Telegram*. There is no narrative format

more conducive to guided reflection and aha! moments than that of the short story—a format of which Ford, sometimes referred to as the Alice Munroe of Maine, was a master.

Whether you're looking for a classic short story twist or something more quietly impactful, *This Time Might Be Different* has something that should resonate. From the sweet "From Away" and the interaction-driven "Elwood's Last Job" (a short story that was adapted into a one-act play for the 2017 Maine Playwright's Festival) to the sorrowful "In the Marrow" and the strange and surprising "Dragon Palaces," Ford shows off her range as a writer with ease.

Elaine Ford was not a native Mainer, having grown up in a small New Jersey town and moved to Maine as an adult, but she deftly captured the stoic hope that often runs just under the surface for those of us who live in "Vacationland" full-time. In her stories, a young girl might have coffee with a stranger, a guy might decide to rob the local laundromat, a widow might get in a car and just keep driving. Ford's characters, just like real people, are faced with decisions large and small, and must make their choices and venture into a world of unknown outcomes. Against the backdrop of Maine, everything is amplified by the poignance of a place often defined by steadiness and quiet (and occasionally not-so-quiet) honesty.

"Starting a story by Elaine Ford is like falling into a trance," says former Maine Poet Laureate Wesley McNair, and so *This Time Might Be Different* serves as a perfect companion to the otherworldly beauty and energy of a New England fall. •

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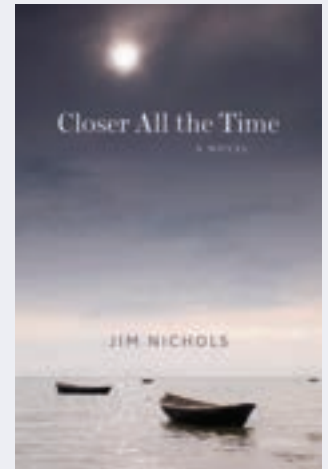


CLOSER ALL THE TIME

By Jim Nichols

\$16.95, softcover, fiction

Winner of the 2016 Maine Literary Award for Fiction, *Closer All the Time* follows the lives of several inhabitants of Baxter, Maine. Much like *This Time Might Be Different*, *Closer All the Time* embraces the tireless hope of its characters. Jim Nichols strings together the bittersweet stories of several different characters bound together by shared geography and the insular nature of small-town life. Whether it's with troubled war veteran Johnny Lunden, young Ted Soule, or curious Tomi Lambert, readers are bound to relate to Nichols's well-constructed POV characters.



CONTENTMENT COVE

By Miriam Colwell

\$15.95, softcover, fiction

Following three residents of a Down East Maine coastal village—Dot-Fran, Hilary, and Mina—*Contentment Cove* by Miriam Colwell is a tender, sometimes funny and sometimes melancholy novel set in the 1950s. The novel serves as an examination of the transition from the old Maine way of life into something different, much more defined by folks "from away." Dot-Fran is a native who runs the town's drug store. Hilary, middle-aged, is a worldly artist. And the wealthy Mina and her husband retired to the town after being enchanted with its charm during a one-night visit. Their disparate lives become entwined and eventually clash tragically.

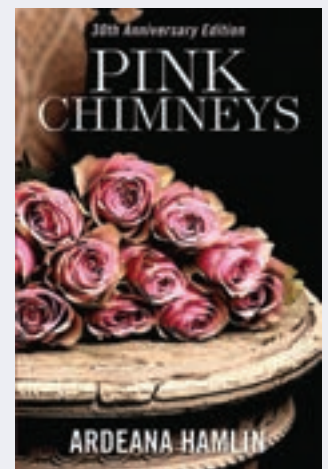


PINK CHIMNEYS

By Ardeana Hamlin

\$16.95, softcover, fiction

Set against the backdrop of nineteenth-century Bangor, when it was the lumber capital of the world, Ardeana Hamlin's novel tells the stories of three women brought together by the infamous brothel called *Pink Chimneys*. In order to survive, they must form unlikely alliances and discover the strength to overcome the odds in a culture that tries—and fails—to limit their potential. Originally published in 1987, this is the first Islandport Edition, a special 30th Anniversary edition that includes an author's note.





Left: The native mountain ash berries color up in the fall, giving this monarch butterfly a colorful perch. *Right:* Come spring the Winekist apple tree will burst into glorious bloom.

Turning Back Time

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
LYNETTE L. WALTHER



A look out my window tells me it is fall.

As the days shorten and the shadows lengthen, many of us wish we could hold on to these golden moments for a while longer. We've harvested most of the garden produce, putting by some to enjoy in the months to come — a brief respite as we prepare to put the yard and gardens to bed.

It is fall outside my window. I don't need to consult a calendar to know it is so. The ash trees out front have turned a brilliant yellow — almost overnight — announcing fall is here, bam! The handsome horse chestnut trees gave up their summer display weeks ago, those big green umbels of leaves abruptly turning brown and curling up. I suppose all that flashy springtime display of pink-tinged spikes of blooms and the production of those chestnuts to feed the squirrels and chipmunks over the winter were just too much to allow for fall leaf color.

The Norway maple outside my window soldiers on, often with unsightly black splotches of fungus on its still-green oversized leaves. These gluttonous trees will be the last to drop their leaves in the fall, and are the first to leaf out in the spring, fulfilling their apparent desire to dominate all living plants and trees. Prodigious amounts of seeds add more assurance of that. These evil trees — yes, I find them evil — grow so rapidly that their wood is brittle. They often snap in the fall storms, something the parent of the offending tree next to my tiny residence did several years ago for two years in a row. The first time it flung half of its bulk across a flower bed with an earth-shaking thud,

and the next year its crown came thundering down across and into our newly replaced roof and through the top of our vehicle. We had the rest of that monster cut down lest it sprout out and grow again.

Now its offspring threatens even more destruction towering overhead. Hopefully it will have the grace to merely recline itself on our neighbor's lawn and not through our roof, should it decide to topple this fall. Standing or not, this Norway maple, and others nearby, will drop prodigious amounts of leaves eventually. If there is one good thing to be said about those huge Norway maple leaves it is that they contain more nitrogen than do ordinary maple leaves, and perhaps because of this they tend to compost more readily than do other maple or hardwood leaves. This makes them decent additions to the compost pile. But that is where my praise of Norway maples begins and ends.

It is fall inside, too, as a buttery-cinnamony, fragrant apple crisp cools on the counter. My stunning red-flesh heirloom Winekist apples, combined with other varieties, give it a cheerful pink tint. This was my first real crop of these apples, three or four dozen of them at the most and small in size, probably due to the dry summer. But their tiny size was more than compensated for by their brilliant color. Remember those sugary-sweet spiced apples that came in glass jars and often made an appearance at holiday dinners? Winekist are the same, an almost unrealistic candy-apple red color inside.

In recent weeks I have been slicing these and other apples to dry. The joke around our house is that “we brake for apples.” Seriously, as we drove around and on a recent trip north to Canada's Cape Breton, if I spotted one, I'd yell “apple tree!” And we'd come to a screeching halt to sample some long-forgotten, and yes, often wormy, apples growing by the roadside. Makes one wonder if Johnny Appleseed had travelled that route, as well.

Actually, apple seeds are the ultimate “pig in a poke.” No two apple seeds are the same. Let that fact sink in a minute or two. That means that the seeds in that apple you are eating now are all different. It is for that reason that if you want to grow another just like the one in your hand, or Winekist like those I grow, you will need to take a bit of graft wood from that apple's tree (even the wood of a Winekist tree is pink, as are the springtime blossoms) in order to get the same apple.

Apple leaves will be going into the compost, as well. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, leaves and other yard debris account for more than 13 percent of the nation's solid waste—a whopping 33 million tons a year. Without enough oxygen to decompose, this organic matter releases the greenhouse gas methane, says Joe Lamp'l, author of *The Green Gardener's Guide*.



Top: A fall tradition for many is picking apples.

Center: The uses of apples are many: fresh, baked into a variety of treats, dried, or stored – apples are fall's greatest gift.

Bottom: An inexpensive dehydrator is employed to dry apples to enjoy in the months to come.



Fall leaves are put to work in the compost pile.

The National Wildlife Federation's website notes that: solid-waste landfills are the largest U.S. source of man-made methane—and that's aside from the carbon dioxide generated by gas-powered blowers and trucks used in leaf disposal. For gardeners, turning leaves into solid waste is wasteful. Burning fall leaves is even worse for the environment.

We clear the fallen leaves from lawns and grassy areas. If left in place over the winter the compacted leaves will eventually smother the grass beneath. So, we make use of those leaves for compost that can be used later to add nutrients to the soil. Organic farmers recognize that every leaf, every weed grown on any piece of land is part of the overall organic material there. By bagging up and hauling fall leaves away or burning them, we are actually removing organic material that our plot of land produced with the nutrients that exist there, the supplemental water, etc. Continually removing organic nutrients like fallen leaves is like constantly drawing money out of an account without replacing it. Eventually, it will go bankrupt.

Also remember that removing leaves eliminates vital wildlife habitat. Critters ranging from turtles and toads, to birds, mammals, and invertebrates rely on

leaf litter for food, shelter, and nesting material. Many moth and butterfly caterpillars overwinter in fallen leaves before emerging in spring. Butterflies and moths often spend the winter in chrysalides on the ground. So we do not clear areas under shrubs, and where there is no turf, to allow the leaves to work for our garden friends.

Here are some ways to make good use of all those fallen leaves:

1. Shred for mulch
2. Mow into lawn
3. Use to insulate tender shrubs/roses
4. Add to compost
5. Leave en situ for butterflies and other beneficial insects

Or build a brush shelter. Along with branches, sticks, and stems, leaves can be used to make brush piles that shelter native wildlife. Ladybugs and lacewings like to nest in the dry, sheltered crowns of native grasses, says Cheryl Long, a senior editor at *Organic Gardening*, while pollinating bees prefer hollow plant stems.

As F. Scott Fitzgerald said, "Life starts all over again when it gets crisp in the fall." So, let's make this the season to mark the start of a new direction for our gardens as we savor these golden days of fall. •

ABOUT MAINE

Events around Maine this month

BY SHEILA D. GRANT

October brings with it a bumper crop of not only pumpkins and scarecrows, but fun fall activities! With COVID-19 numbers once again on the rise, it's best to check ahead, but with any luck, more festivals, fairs, tours, and events will remain ours to enjoy. Here are a few excellent ways to enjoy Maine this month:

TWENTY-SECOND ANNUAL FREEPORT FALL FESTIVAL OCTOBER 1-3

Each year on the first weekend in October, Visit Freeport gathers more than 150 of the best New England artists, crafters and local food producers for a three-day festival on the L.L. Bean campus, Key Bank lawn, Freeport Village Station courtyard and at the corner of West and Main streets. Live music and free activities for kids are also part of the fun. Call (207) 865-1212 or visit www.visit-freeport.com for more information.

GOING ONCE, GOING TWICE - AUCTION! OCTOBER 1-28

This fast-moving country auction takes place every Sunday at 22 South Horseback Road in Burnham. Vie for about 1,000 items each week, including antique furniture, glassware, china, ephemera, gold, silver, costume jewelry, flatware, tools, toys, and used items. You never know what you might find at this event! Call (207) 948-2214 or visit www.houstonbrooks.com for details.

CHARLOTTE'S WEB CORN MAZE

OCTOBER 1-31

Test your orienteering and vocabulary skills in this year's award-winning corn maze at Treworgy Family Orchards in Levant. The maze, based on the beloved children's book, "Charlotte's Web," features a vocabulary game with three levels of difficulty for the whole family. Tickets include a special map with riddles to figure out as visitors arrive at various stations within the maze, and a chance to sign your name in the Hall of Fame at the center of the design. Once the maze is completed [about 30 to 60 minutes], tickets may be presented at the café for a free kiddie ice cream cone. Visit treworgyorchards.com for hours and other information.

HISTORIC CEMETERY TOURS

OCTOBER 1-31

What better month to take a cemetery tour? Red Cloak Tours offers these excursions in Camden, Bar Harbor, Newcastle, Bath and Wiscasset. Each Historic Cemetery Exploration focuses on the stories of those interred at the cemeteries, their lives and contributions to the area, as well as the symbolism of their tombstones. A general history of cemeteries, graveyards and funeral practices is also discussed. Call (207) 380-3806 or visit redcloaktours.com for more information.



Twelfth Annual Family Jamboree

TWELFTH ANNUAL FAMILY JAMBOREE

OCTOBER 2

This family fun day includes games, crafts, food, vendors and more, sponsored by the Wells Chamber of Commerce. Parking and admission are free. Call (207) 646-2451 or visit www.wellschamber.org for more information.

DOWNTOWN BANGOR SIDEWALK ART FESTIVAL

OCTOBER 2

Downtown Bangor welcomes a carefully curated, juried selection of artists for this sidewalk art fest, which also features demonstrations, live drawings and a Children's Area. Don't forget to explore the many art studios and new wheat paste murals throughout the city center. Visit downtownbangor.com for more information.

WESTERN MAINE PHOTO ADVENTURE

OCTOBER 4-11

This eight-day photo adventure takes participants through breathtaking fall foliage, graceful waterfalls and historic covered bridges in the Newry area. Most locations are easily accessible, so all fitness levels may enjoy this trip. All photography skill levels and camera types are also welcome. The photo guide leads the way and offers pointers on getting the best shots. Call (207) 594-1224 or visit coastalmainephototours.com for more information.

MAINE FOOD FESTIVAL & CRAFT EXPO

OCTOBER 9

The Topsham Fairgrounds is the place to be for a full day of gourmet food, juried vendors, live music, kid's activities and even a bacon eating contest! Tickets are \$10 advance/\$15 at the gate; free admission for 12 and under.

MAINE MARINERS HOME OPENER

OCTOBER 22

After missing out on the 2020-21 season, the Maine Mariners return to the ice, hosting the Worcester Railers in



Maine Mariners

the 2021-22 Home Opener at the Cross Insurance Arena, Portland. The game, presented by Skowhegan Savings Bank, begins at 7:15 p.m. Call 833-GO-MAINE for more information.

OGUNQUITFEST 2021

OCTOBER 22-24

This annual event, now in its eighteenth year, celebrates all the fun that fall has to offer, with a classic car show, craft fair, whoopie pie eating contest, horse-drawn carriage rides, and children's activities. Halloween-themed events such as pumpkin carving, ghostly tours, a haunted theater, a costume parade and trick-or-treating are also part of the fun. And don't forget to check out the popular High Heel Dash in Perkins Cove! Call (207) 646-2939 or visit chamber.ogunquit.org for more information.

HARVEST CHOCOLATE FESTIVAL

OCTOBER 23

Join Aroostook Relay in a brand new fall edition of this County favorite event. Teams will be set up with all kinds of desserts, chocolate treats and more at the Aroostook Centre Mall in Presque Isle. Games and Halloween activities, too, and guests who arrive in costume earn a free item ticket. Visit Harvest Chocolate Festival on Facebook for details. •

BANGOR HOUSE VANILLA SPICE DONUTS

BY JIM BAILEY, THE YANKEE CHEF



Photos courtesy Jim Bailey

These are so named because my grandfather, and then my dad, made these fantastic donuts at the old Bangor House here in Maine. This is the exact recipe, with the exception of the milk. I use a great substitute but if you want to stay true to the Buttermilk Spice Donuts served at this iconic restaurant/hotel of old, simply add a teaspoon of vinegar or lemon juice to whole fat milk or cream and let it sit to curdle in a warm spot. When the curds are nice and plump, toss it in. These are the highest and tastiest cake donuts you will ever enjoy. And the cost factor? Less than a dollar for a dozen.

INGREDIENTS

Cinnamon Sugar:

- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon

Cake Donut:

- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 1/3 cup packed, brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 2/3 cup nonfat evaporated milk
- 1 egg, beaten
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine, melted
- 1 tablespoon vanilla
- Oil for frying

Enough for six to seven large donuts.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Heat oil in deep fat fryer until 350 degrees F. You can also heat one quart of canola oil in a sturdy pot over medium heat, using a clip-on thermometer.
- In a shallow bowl, mix together sugar and cinnamon; set aside. In a large bowl, combine next five ingredients. Add milk, egg, butter, and vanilla. Beat with a sturdy wooden spoon until it leaves the side of the bowl. A tabletop mixer with a dough hook or paddle attachment works well, too. Empty out onto a well-floured work surface. Knead only for a minute, until smooth.
- Roll out to about 3/4-inch thick. Cut out with a 3 to 3 1/2-inch donut cutter.*
- Cooking two to three donuts at a time (see **Note**), fry them for three minutes per side. Remove each donut onto a rack or paper towel-lined plate. Let grease come back to temperature before continuing to cook remainder of donuts.
- While the donuts are still warm, dip in cinnamon sugar to evenly coat both sides. Eat while warm for the best flavor.

* I use the rim of a cup or glass, and then cut out the center with the screw-on cap of a soda bottle. It leaves a smaller hole, just enough room for the oil to cook the donut, making it as puffy as possible.

Note: Never allow donuts to be so crowded as to touch each other while cooking. Not only does this significantly drop the oil temperature, but it also prevents them from expanding to maximum capability.

HALLOWEEN

BY SHELAGH TALBOT

When my daughter was little, Halloween was a big deal—especially since it involved getting all dressed up and, best of all, getting lots of candy. This particular year she wanted to be a tiger. We searched everywhere for a tiger costume but had no luck, and time was running out. I decided the best thing would be to make the costume myself.

So, we found some soft, fluffy fabric with tan and white stripes – not real tiger colors – but we agreed she could be a tiger from an exotic country, like Tasmania. She said if there’s a Tasmanian Devil maybe there’s a Tasmanian Tiger, too. How can you argue with that kind of logic from a 4 year old? So, Tasmanian Tiger it was.

I found a pattern that was her size and got busy. I basted everything together and she tried it on – thank goodness it fit with very little adjustment needed. I’m kind of a “Sewing 101” person and anything complicated just flummoxes me! But I was able to stuff and add a tail, which she delighted in grabbing, similar to Bert Lahr, the Cowardly Lion in the *Wizard of Oz* movie.

Once everything was finished, I painted her face with a tiger nose and tiger whiskers. She was thrilled and growled and hissed around the house making frightening tiger noises. In our part of Maine, it can get really chilly in October, so the costume turned out to be perfect. My daughter could wear her warm clothes underneath since there was extra room. We went out to join the other mothers with their various fairies, princesses, hobos, and dinosaurs. The Halloween candy hunt was on!

My daughter spent time at the door of each house explaining that she was no ordinary tiger but a Tasmanian one. Her friends, the princesses and so forth, tried to hurry her up to

the next place, but she was big into explanations at that time in her life. One elderly lady thought she said Maniac Tiger and closed the door in mock fear. The lady peeked out after a few seconds, and much to my daughter’s delight quavered, “You are very scary looking! You’re not going to eat me, are you?”

Needless to say, in her homemade costume, she ended up having her Halloween pumpkin container filled to the brim.

“This is my favorite Halloween ever,” she pronounced, tail in one hand, pumpkin in the other. I was very relieved.

We stopped for a visit at her grandparents at the end of the evening and they were so sweet – admiring her costume and adding to the heaps of candy she already had.

“Where did you find that costume?” her grandmother wanted to know. “Mom made it!” my daughter crowed. Then she leaned in to whisper to her grandmother. “You know,” she confided, “This is not a regular tiger costume!” Her grandmother went along with the joke. “No?” she asked. “Then what could it possibly be?” “It’s a Tasmanian Tiger,” my little girl announced, pointing to the stripes. “See, these are Tasmanian Tiger stripes, not like regular tigers.” Her grandfather chuckled. “It looks to me like Tasmanian Tigers have a better chance of getting a lot more candy, too,” he grinned, looking at the pile we had poured onto the kitchen table.

He was right. That candy lasted until almost Christmas, and my daughter loved her costume so much she wore it to death. It’s so nice to know that something handmade is cherished over time. And, when the tail finally fell off, that costume made a dandy pair of pajamas – just perfect for those long, cold Maine winters! •



QUESTIONABLE ADVICE

BY L.C. VAN SAVAGE

I live alone, and I find that I talk out loud to myself sometimes. Is this a weird and sad thing to do, or is it an okay and harmless thing to do? And if something to stop, how?

Why would you wonder if chatting with your best friend might be thought of as weird and sad? It's absolutely not. You're talking to maybe the one person on the planet who really listens, who really hears you, who really understands. That'd be you! Sometimes we have to chat or speak to ourselves to kind of sort things out, when we know we won't be interrupted, mocked, or disbelieved.

But there is one thing you really should give thought to: if you like to chat with your best friend (that'd be you) and you like to hear yourself organize your thoughts or give verbal comfort to yourself when you're hurting, or you like to hear a human voice (yours) telling yourself that you're cool and smart and gorgeous, then go for it. But try to train yourself to keep it all inside your head when others are nearby. You see, even though we all think we're terribly enlightened and terribly together, when someone in the next room hears us having a deep and important and maybe even loving conversation with folks who are not there, well, you know how some people can be; they'll think we're bonkers. And we just can't have that, can we?

I would like to publish a book. What do you think about the pros and cons of going the self-publishing route?

"They" keep saying it's so much easier to self-publish one's book these days than it was back in the Jurassic when I did it. Oh yeah? Not. If there is any way on God's green earth to find a publisher to get it done for you, do it! Ah, but getting a publisher, unless you've written the newest GWTW or Bible, is nearly impossible these days even though the self-publishing industry has cut severely into book publisher's annual coffers, so one might think that bigtime book publishers would be seriously wooing authors. Self-publishing is hard tedious work – few rewards, hours and endless hours of research. And by the way, who in the publishing business reads and decides what books the public will love and/or buy anyway? The publisher? Or a hired lackey desiring winter work between shifts as a summertime park ranger? Who knows? No folks, if there's even the slightest chance of getting a publisher to do most of the work for you with your GAN (Great American Novel) get them to do it (although rumor has it that even publishers in the Big Houses want the authors to hawk their books themselves and do a lot of the grunt work publishers in the Hemingway/Fitzgerald/Mead era would never have asked their authors to do). Self-publishing means you work yourself to distraction, sometimes with great success, and yet still end up with 500 unsold books in your garage.

Compared to the past, we now know the downsides of smoking, unregulated hair and beauty products, processed foods, sun tanning, garden chemicals, asbestos, and sedentary lifestyles. What hazards do you think will cause future people to marvel over how oblivious we were? They are sure to say of us, "Poor fools back then, they didn't know that _____ was dangerous."

Yes, I'll bet a lot of money our descendants will look back at us and wonder why we did many things, even when we knew while doing them, they were stupid, not PC, and occasionally fatal. But we did 'em anyway. Like, for instance, crossing Niagara Falls on a wire holding a big, long balancing stick when everyone today knows doing that causes ceaseless migraines. They will wonder why we, way back in 2021, thought it was cool to swim with sharks when even back in 2021 everyone knew that causes sushi. They will read about the people back in 2021 who held contests to see who could swallow sixty-seven hot dogs without choking to death even knowing way back then that the ingredients in hot dogs were bad for people. Our descendants will wonder who truly desired to willingly leap out of a plane thirty miles in the air trusting that the guy hired to pack the parachute wasn't hung over from a very big drunken/drug-fueled party the night before he packed it. Our descendants will wonder why their ancestors (that'd be us) were so hell bent on being big sports stars when it was known, even way back then, that sports can cause fatalities. "Poor fools back then," they'd think. "They had no idea that watching a dog's wagging tail for seven and a half minutes causes seizures, and that contact sports cause hemorrhoids, and that haircuts cause stunted growth, that having wall-to-wall carpeting is the leading cause of brain rot, that clocks really watch us, that in some countries purses become alligators, and that birds are actually flying mushrooms. Let's hope our future relatives will be sure to not make the same ignorant and stupid mistakes we're making."



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