

MAINE WOMEN



WINTER 2023

legacy

ALL THE WOMEN
WHO CAME BEFORE US

THIS ISSUE

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IF I HAD A MILLION DOLLARS.....

**Laura Clark is the director of
Florence House which provides
safe, supported permanent housing
to chronically homeless women in
Portland, Maine.**

This is her big dream.

Laura's big dream is to open another program like Florence House in a different part of our state. She knows the state desperately needs more Housing First Services that are in keeping with the mission of Preble Street. Their powerful mission is to provide accessible barrier-free services to empower people experiencing problems with homelessness, housing, hunger, and poverty, and to advocate for solutions to these problems.

It is that crystal clear mission that is what Laura loves so much about Florence House and Preble Street. Everyone who works at Florence House holds these values dear; that people have a right to barrier-free housing, a right to feel safe in that housing, and a right to access food. Florence House incorporates love and humanity into every interaction and all of the work they do. As one client said about Florence House, "this is a miracle building, full of miracle people." And for Laura Clark, expanding these life changing services to reach even more people who need a place to live would be a true miracle.

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big dream

Sarah Halpin understands uncertainty and risk, as well as opportunity. She arrived in the US over 30 years ago with just \$200 in her pocket. As a new immigrant with no job prospects and no family to rely on besides her husband, her journey to becoming a wealth advisor had its share of unique challenges.

Sarah grew up in England, where her father worked a menial job and her mother didn't work outside of the home. "The atmosphere at home was tense and unstable," says Sarah. "My mother didn't have the know-how or financial resources to leave a bad situation. From a young age, I learned how to create order out of chaos. I started my investment career at a Japanese trading firm in London and was driven by my need to be financially independent."

A couple of years after arriving in the states, Sarah spent two years as a sales assistant at an investment firm. The branch manager denied her entry into a Financial Advisor training program, claiming it would be too hard as a woman with two young children, even though Sarah had the work experience and had passed all the exams for licenses. Then, in 1997, large Wall Street firms started implementing quotas and bonuses for managers to hire women as advisors. The move was in response to the onslaught of women adding their names to lawsuits alleging a toxic work atmosphere and systemic exclusion from higher pay opportunities. Sarah says, "these women held the door open for me and others like me."

Thinking back to the early days, Sarah says it took time to be okay with being a minority in the financial industry and to build confidence. There were tough days when she went home questioning whether she was doing the right thing for her family. Things have changed a lot since then.

Her daughter Sophie joined the financial services industry in 2018, after years of communications and development work for non-profit organizations. Sophie's Environmental Science degree from the University of Vermont and fundraising skills from her previous career helped hone the perfect skill set for answering complex finance questions and expressing information in personalized and interesting ways.

"Sophie entered this business knowing that she wanted to be well-versed on Sustainable Responsible Impact investing (SRI), and she did just that," says Sarah. Sophie quickly became one of the first advisors in Maine to get the Charter SRI Counselor designation. She has built her own business, working with people and companies around the country who want to incorporate more of their values and interests into their investments and financial plans.

Sophie's knowledge and experience allows the pair to provide more thoughtful, meaningful solutions to clients' goals and questions. As a second-generation advisor and first-generation American, she has seen firsthand the difference financial wellness makes in



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lives. This inspired her Instagram @Halpinwithyourmoney, where she shares information and advice. Her passion to empower others as they build wealth also drives her consulting work, retirement plan education efforts, and Back Cove Financial's monthly coaching program.

"One of the greatest lessons I've learned watching my mom build her business is that women have options and power when they have money," says Sophie. "We see the positive impact women make in their communities and we want to lead the team that lifts them up, helps to plan for their goals, and cheers them on."

Sarah and Sophie Halpin work alongside each other—and often together. The pair are Wealth Advisors at Back Cove Financial, an independent financial planning and investment management company in Falmouth, Maine.

"We want all our clients, especially other female business owners, to know that they have earned the right to be selective around how they grow, protect, and transfer wealth," says Sarah. "As women, we understand the need to be heard and understood, and provided with a down-to-earth process where clients know their options and can make informed decisions every step of the way."

Back Cove Financial is located at 56 Depot Road, Falmouth ME 04105. You can learn more and contact them at their website: www.backcovefinancial.com.

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WORTH IT
WINTER 2023
Statewide happenings worth your attention

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Our Mission

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

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your thoughts

In our August 2022 issue "Your Thoughts" section, we received a letter from reader Marcia Blake asking how Holly Martin, writer of the "Postcards From Holly" column, was faring in her travels. Holly has been 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 to the inquiring readers of Maine Women Magazine.

Hello from New Zealand! After leaving French Polynesia in the middle of June, I turned my bow towards Fiji. Eighteen days later, I entered Savusavu to clear into my first new country in two years. Fiji is a country full of traditions that date back hundreds of years. My favorite of these is the kava ceremony. The local people consider the water in front of their villages to be an extension of the areas around their house. If a sailor drops anchor in front of a village, it's the same as someone walking up to your backyard with a tent and setting up camp. It is therefore tradition to enter the village with a bundle of kava for the chief. This must be done as soon as your anchor is down and your sails are stowed. Kava is easy to find in almost any market in Fiji. It looks like a bundle of sticks wrapped in newspaper and tied with a bright ribbon.

Before going ashore to present the kava, there are a few protocols that must be followed. Fiji is a very conservative country. In the more remote villages, women are not allowed to show their knees. While all the village women wear colorful pareos wrapped around their waists, the men get away with wearing shorts. Sometimes they also wear a pareo, but for the most part the dress code isn't as strict for men as it is for women. The body part that must not be exposed for either gender is the shoulders. Throwing on a simple T-shirt will do the trick for that one. These two rules are overarching for almost every small village in Fiji. However, some take it one step further. Some villages forbid wearing hats and glasses. Fijians believe the top of the head is sacred, and only the chief is allowed to wear a hat. As a precaution, I always make sure to remove my hat and glasses before entering any village - just in case.

Usually before I've even landed on the beach with my dinghy, there's a crowd of children waiting to greet me. After presenting kava to the chief of the village, he blesses both you and the gift and gives you permission to remain in the anchorage. More often than not, I come home laden with gifts of fresh fruit. In return, I always make sure to come with my own gifts. Pencils, notebooks, and other school supplies are always a welcome surprise.

My four month visa passed in a blur. My sister flew in to spend a few weeks in Fiji and join for the passage south. A week before I had to leave, my engine broke and I was

unable to fix it before my visa expired. Unphased, I cleared out anyway and accepted a tow out of the harbor. From there, my sister and I sailed fifteen days to New Zealand with no engine. We arrived safely and I managed to fix my engine (by replacing it with a "new" used specimen). I'll remain in New Zealand until May when it's time to head back into the Pacific Islands. It's easy-living being in a westernized country, but I already miss the island life. ●

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ASSET MANAGEMENT GROUP

seven

BY CAROL BACHOFNER

I feel the groan of a great fish as she struggles to part the sea between us. I call out to her in a language I never learned. She swam all night. Light from Polaris, the One Star, leads her on and on as I wait for her on the beach.

The tug of recognition, the pull of every moon set or rise grows in my bones. Grains of sleep from my eyes tumble into the sea, mix with tears shed a million years before by a grandmother who imagined me, blessed my coming.

I meet seven women coming toward me. Some are still crying as they walk to the sea from the Mountain. They join seven women who suffered behind me. The year is turning soon, so we ask forgiveness, Alnôbaiwi, as our ancestors did: anhaldam mawi kassipalilawalan.*

So it is among us.
So it has always been.
So it will be.

** forgive me if I have wronged you; Abenaki traditional "apology"*

Statement About Seven

As an Abenaki woman, I am acutely sensitive to the connections between seven generations on either side of me. I am aware of the grandmothers and other female relatives who have made a place for me and of my responsibility to the next seven generations of women. This awareness makes me careful and purposeful. It also gives me the resilience to carry on in times of distress. The legacy of being both thankful and remorseful comes to the flood at the new year, when we are led to apologize in case a wrong has been ignored or may have been innocently unknown.

Poem Note: The One Star is Polaris, our guide. Mountain refers to our sacred mountain, Mt Katahdin.

CAROL WILLETTE BACHOFNER, ABENAKI, IS AN AWARD WINNING POET, MEMOIRIST, PHOTOGRAPHER, AND WATERCOLORIST. SHE SERVED AS POET LAUREATE OF ROCKLAND FROM 2012-2016. CAROL IS THE AUTHOR OF 7 BOOKS OF POETRY, MOST RECENTLY TEST PATTERN, A FANTOD OF PROSE POEMS (FINISHING LINE PRESS, 2018). SHE IS AT WORK ON A MIXED GENRE MEMOIR, A LIFE BESET WITH WORDS (WORKING TITLE). HER POETRY HAS APPEARED IN NUMEROUS JOURNALS, SUCH AS PRAIRIE SCHOONER, THE CONNECTICUT REVIEW, THE COMSTOCK REVIEW, CREAM CITY REVIEW, AS WELL AS IN THE ANTHOLOGY, DAWNLAND VOICES, AN ANTHOLOGY OF WRITINGS FROM INDIGENOUS NEW ENGLAND (UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS, 2015).

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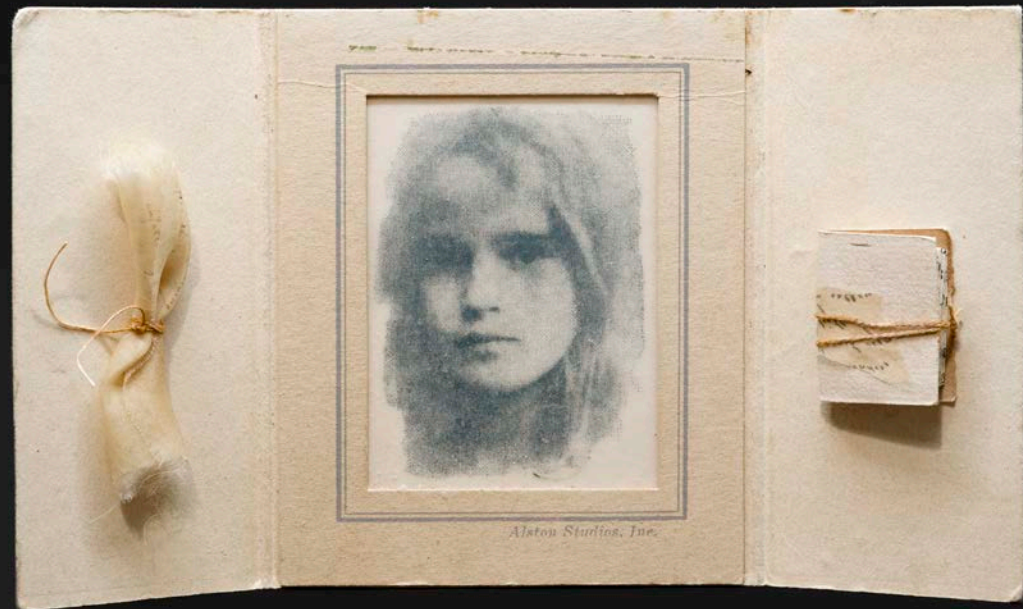
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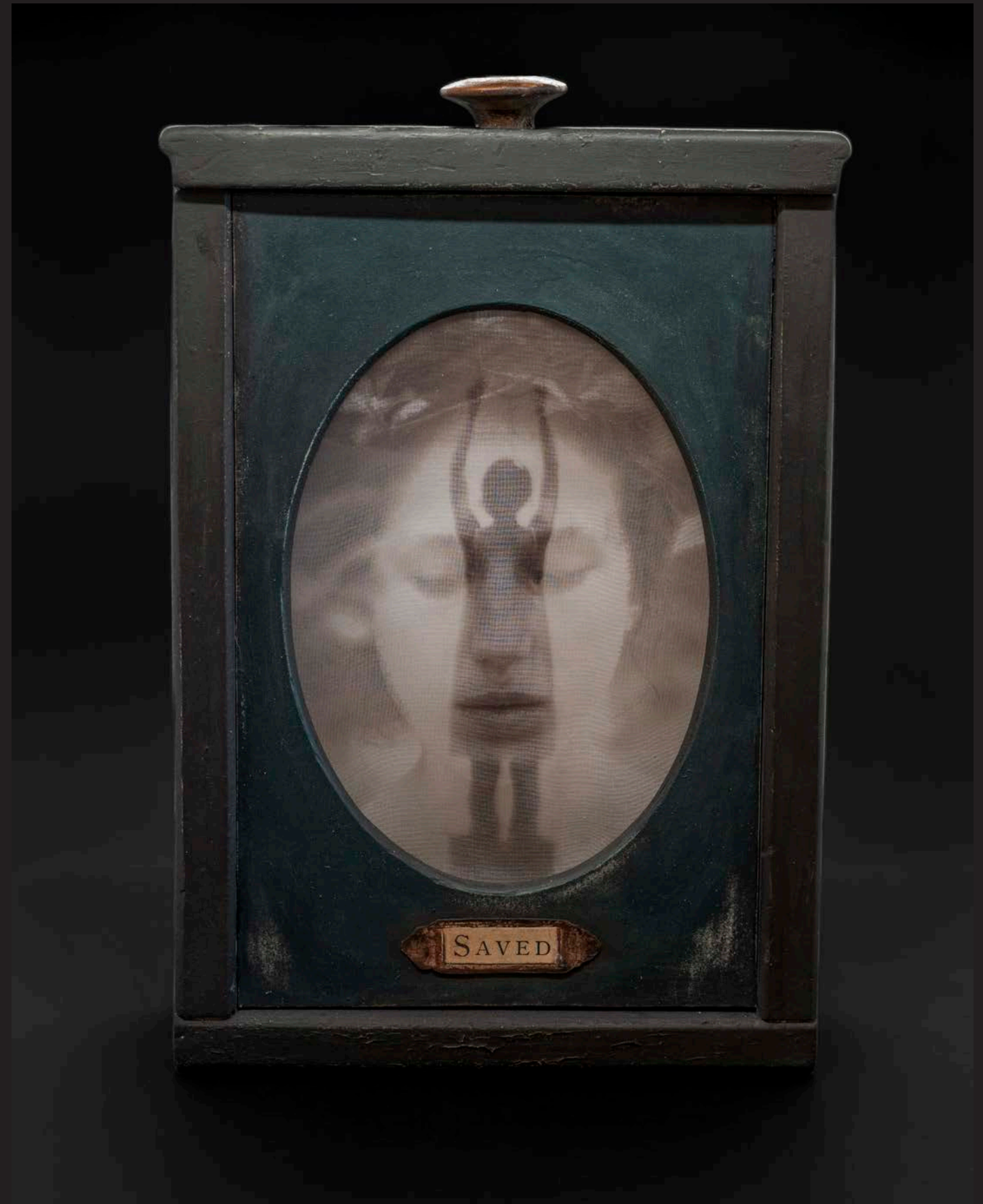


British-born artist Sal Taylor Kydd is a fine art photographer, writer and educator who uses various photographic media in a personal narrative that explores themes around memory and belonging; combining her poetry with alternative processes of photography and object-making.

Sal has self-published a number of books combining her poetry with her photographs. Her books are in private and museum collections throughout the country including The Getty Museum, MOMA, Bowdoin College, The Peabody Essex Museum and the Maine Women Writer's Collection at the University of New England. Sal's latest book "Yesterday", produced by Datz Press, is a limited edition book of poems and photographs that explores our sense of loss around the pandemic of 2020.

Sal's fine art photographs have been exhibited both domestically and internationally, including the UK, Spain, and Mexico, as well as Portland, Boston and Los Angeles. Sal has also been featured in numerous publications, including Shots Magazine, Don't Take Pictures, Lenscratch, Diffusion Annual and The Hand.

Originally from the UK, Sal earned her BA in Modern Languages from Manchester University in England and has an MFA in Photography from Maine Media College in Rockport, ME. ●



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Above: *Saved* by Sal Taylor Kydd
Left: *A Blue Day* by Sal Taylor Kydd

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INTERVIEW BY **LIZA GARDNER WALSH**

HOW DID YOU FIND THIS ACTIVITY?

My whole life has been about animals. I grew up with dogs and after high school, I worked as a vet tech in an animal shelter. One day, an elderly woman called who wanted to euthanize her 8 month old husky. When I went to see him, he was in a wire coop, surrounded by feces, no dog house, living in a hole. He stared right at me and through me and I knew he was my dog. Then I started rescuing every disaster dog until I had eight dogs, several who were hybrid-wolf mixes and I created my own team. I was living in Connecticut and we started doing wheel cart races and mini sprint races, all the while learning about teams and running dogs. Slowly, I started doing 30 mile races, then 60 mile races and then ultimately I qualified for the 250 mile race.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN DOING THIS ACTIVITY?

I became obsessed with the mushing lifestyle 20 years ago. Fifteen years ago, I fell off my ATV while training and split open my skull. That accident almost killed me, in fact it did. The hospital called my family to say that I had died but somehow I came back. That was the only year I missed a race. I have been doing the CAN AM for 15 years and have done the 250 mile race eight times.

WHAT DOES IT FULFILL FOR YOU?

The dogs give me my purpose, they ground me. I step on those runners or climb on the ATV I use to train them, and there is no responsibility other than being completely present. I am a "full-throttle" person so it isn't easy for me to be present in my daily life. I've spent my life forging through some really hard and terrible things, but when I am with my dogs that all disappears.

During the CAN AM 250 you are completely unassisted and on your own, but for me, that race is the ultimate team sport.

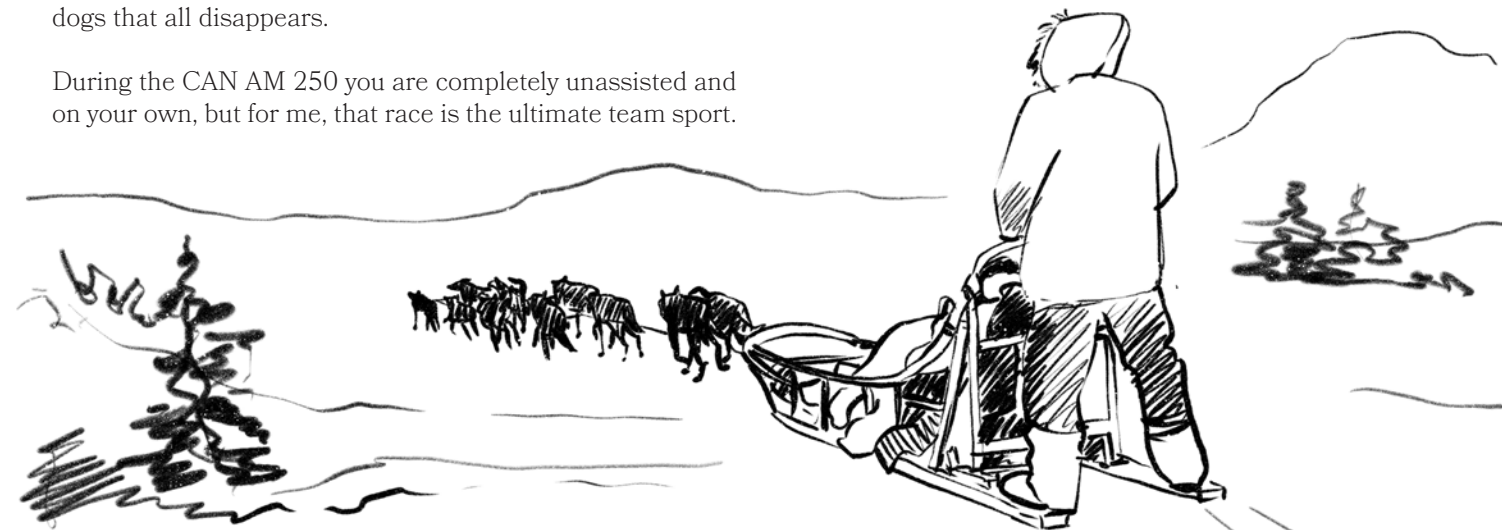
The dogs are always teaching you something. It's no longer in my control. You have to completely trust them. Especially because you spend four days not sleeping. You have to go with the flow and just see how it rolls. It's a beautiful detail about how what you put in, you get back a hundredfold.

WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF WITH THIS IN THE FUTURE?

I moved to Fort Kent from New Hampshire a couple of years ago. Every time I left after the race, I would cry because I felt like I was leaving my home. Finally I was able to get myself and the dogs here. I ran tours for years in New Hampshire and am getting ready to start doing that again this year after the CAN AM race in March. I'm not slowing down anytime soon. I would like to try to do the UP 200 and the Bear Grease races out west because it might be time to get out of our backyard.

HOW DOES THIS KEEP YOU SANE?

When you love what you do, there is absolutely no feeling of work in it for me, even though I wake and up feed 27 dogs, water them, clean up after them, and then dig through the snow so they can have a path. In the winter, I wake up at 3 AM to train. When I get outside in the cold, in the pitch dark, and all I hear is the sound of the dogs breathing and the plastic runners hitting the snow, it is pure magic. It's not a hobby, it's a lifestyle. It's in my soul. My dogs keep me sane and keep me in check. I can meditate all day long and nothing keeps me in alignment as much as training with my dogs. ●



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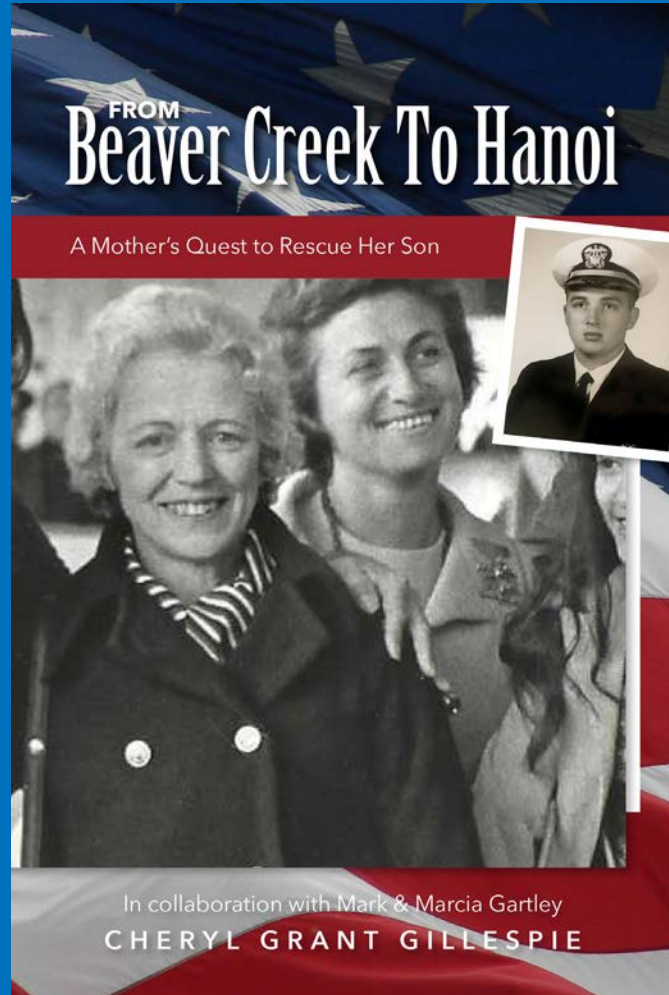
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FROM BEAVER CREEK TO HANOI:

a mother's quest to rescue her son



In recent years, tales of brave, yet unappreciated women, have become popular. There are many women in Maine history who have made a difference without receiving the recognition they deserved. It is time to have their stories told. From Beaver Creek To Hanoi: A Mother's Quest to Rescue Her Son is the story of one Maine woman's journey into political activism that culminated in an amazing act of courage.

Written by Cheryl Grant Gillespie in collaboration with Mark and Marcia Gartley, this nonfiction work is the story of Minnie Lee, whose son Mark was a pilot shot down in August of 1968 over North Vietnam while flying an F-4 bomber. He spent the next four years in prisoner of war

camps. His mother didn't just sit and wait for his return home.

Minnie Lee joined the League of Families of POWs and MIAs, and worked diligently to get them home. Minnie Lee is no longer with us, but she kept scrapbooks, tapes, pictures, and other things that helped tell her story.

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Minnie Lee Gartley stood stock-still at the kitchen sink of the cabin at Beaver Creek Camps in Maine. It was a hot August day, 1969. Her hands, held to her face, smelled of Ajax from cleaning. That scent mixed with the room's other odors—a potpourri of burnt fire wood, drying waders, fishing baskets, and pine—was the familiar smell of summer work at the camps her husband Gerry and she ran on Moosehead Lake. Minnie Lee, or Min Lee as family and close friends often called her, was finding it hard to get work done that day. She had spent the last year trying to get herself to accept the fact that Gerry's and her much wanted, first-born son Markham was missing-in-action in Vietnam and possibly dead. He'd been shot down just like her first husband whom Min Lee had lost during World War II; a husband she had kept a secret from everyone except Gerry and her childhood family in Kentucky. No one here in Maine knew this could be a double loss for Min Lee, including her two sons.

Markham, or Mark as most people called him, was a handsome child born in May of 1944 and named after Min Lee's father Markham Ligon. Blonde, hazel-eyed, and always with a smile on his face, he charmed people at the campground as a boy running around doing errands for his parents. An athlete in school, Mark graduated as the valedictorian of his high school class. After graduating from Georgia Tech where he had received a full ROTC Navy scholarship and was battalion commander his senior year, Mark informed his parents he was going into Naval Aviation to be a pilot, a top gun. Min Lee told him she wished he wouldn't do that, but Mark thought she was probably just being protective and proceeded with his plans. He wrote to his parents about the thrill of flying an F-4 phantom jet off the USS Constellation. After he finished his training, he hadn't been flying bombing raids in Operation Rolling Thunder for long when Min Lee and Gerry stopped hearing from him. After no word from him since August of 1968, they received a letter from the military in January of 1969 explaining that someone observed Mark and his navigator Bill Mayhew eject successfully from their plane after it was hit. The letter also said nothing more was known about what happened to them. The endless period of not knowing any specific details that followed had been excruciating. Min Lee had tried to ignore the calendar in the camp kitchen that reminded her it was August again, but this morning she paused and took a good look at it. Mark had been gone for a full year now. The tough shell Min Lee had tried to keep around her heart cracked slightly. And it ached.

"Min!"

"For God's sake, Gerry! You scared me half to death!" answered Min Lee, without turning around to look at her husband. "What are you doing here so early? Thought you'd be out longer with that fishing group." Min Lee fussed with a dish towel at the edge of the sink while trying to wipe her eyes. When she finally pivoted and saw Gerry's face, she noticed her usually stoic husband looked rattled somehow.

"Min, the worker from the camp store brought this up just now. Caught me outside running up to grab some more

lures for the guys to use at the dock. He was curious about the Chicago return address on the envelope. It's addressed simply to "Gartley, Greenville, Maine." Gerry paused and placed something down on the long, pine camp table and looked up. "Min, it's him!"

"What are you talking about, Gerry?"

"Look!" Gerry pointed to what looked like a page torn out from a magazine on the table. "It's Mark, Min!"

Min Lee walked over to the table and peeked at the page. It was a picture of men somewhere tropical. She looked closer. One did look like Mark. The caption under the picture had three words in English—Mark Ham Gartley. Min Lee looked closer at the picture. There was also a letter that had fallen out onto the table. Min Lee didn't need to read that right now. It was him. Her handsome son. He was alive? In a prisoner of war camp, but alive?

Min Lee spent a few seconds rubbing the tip of her right index finger on Mark's face in the photo. Then she hugged herself. She couldn't process this. The magazine photo cracked the shell around her heart wide open.

"Oh, Gerry," whispered Min Lee. "Why haven't we heard anything from someone official?" Her pragmatic husband kept telling her to expect the worst about Mark after all this time. Now this?

"Min, I don't know any better than you."

"I need a minute," said Min Lee as Gerry tried to approach her with one arm extended in her direction. She ran out of the camp and down to the shore of Moosehead Lake. With shaky hands, she whacked a cigarette out of the pack she kept in her apron pocket and lit it after four attempts and some curse words. Raised on a peach and tobacco farm in Kentucky, Min Lee took solace in smoking a cigarette, but today it wasn't working as well as it usually did. The massive stretch of open water before her did not have the calming effect it always gave her either. After a few puffs, she threw her half-finished cigarette to the ground and stomped it out. She shook herself and realized she might want to read the letter with the magazine. She hustled back up to the camp and found Gerry still standing at the table and simply looking at the picture. Min Lee grabbed the letter, unfolded it, and read aloud:

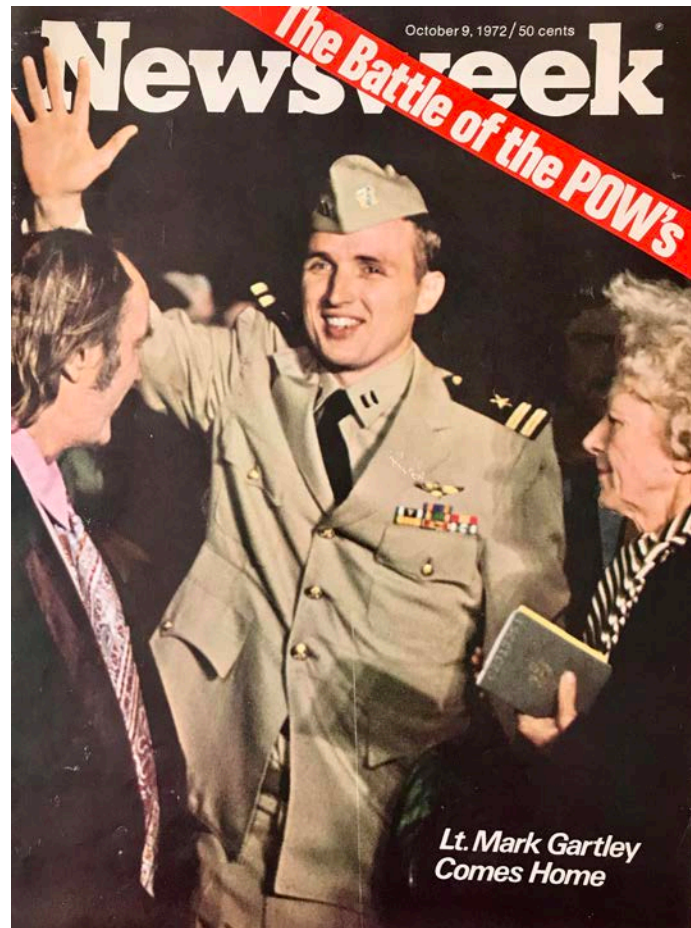
Dear Mr. and Mrs. Gartley,

We get a magazine from Poland which is where my husband and I are from. We were interested in this picture of the American POWs. The only name they seemed to have gotten in English was Mark Ham Gartley. In the article it said this Mark's parents were from Greenville, Maine, so we tried sending it this way. If this is not a relative of yours, please forgive us.

Sincerely,

Mr. and Mrs. Kowalczyk

"Good heavens," said Min Lee under her breath. Then she said a bit louder, "How did this couple get this information



was planning to start getting ready to go back to Dunedin, Florida, to their mobile home where she lived while teaching high school history and civics. Gerry would eventually shut the Maine camp down for the winter and join her in the warmer state. She and Gerry had done this double residency ever since Mark had gone off to college. Their second son Jim, diagnosed a few years earlier with bipolar disorder, went back and forth with his mother as he needed her support. Min Lee helped Jim get into therapy groups, find odd jobs, and take some college classes in Florida. There were so many services down there to help Jim with his problems. Gerry would return to Beaver Creek for the start of fishing season in the spring as soon as the ice was out of Moosehead Lake. Min Lee and Jim would go up to Maine when school closed down in Dunedin. It was an arrangement that worked for them. Min Lee considered those Maine winters brutal when she had taught at Greenville High School, and Gerry struggled with his younger son's illness.

Min Lee soothed herself by thinking about the fact that she would have more time and better resources to study the POW situation once she was settled in Florida. This war, or military action since war was not officially declared, puzzled her. A patriotic soul, she had been a WAC during World War II stationed at Fort Knox with her second husband Gerry and would have stayed longer than a year and a half if her mother hadn't taken ill. She was honorably discharged to go care for her. There was a purpose to the war in the 1940s. Everyone seemed to support it. The United States' intervention in Vietnam was chaotic. The media was filled with contradictions about why the U.S. was there and what they were doing for that country. Even the well-respected news anchor Walter Cronkite had openly criticized the U.S. involvement there over a year ago. Min Lee was startled when he spoke like that during his news broadcast, and she still thought about it now. The news was paying more attention to student protests and huge music festivals like Woodstock this summer than they were paying to the ongoing battle in Southeast Asia. Min Lee knew she had to get involved with the political debate. She had started questioning the purpose of the war before Mark went to Vietnam. She wasn't going to just sit back and wait to see what would happen with Mark now. That's for sure. ●

when you and I have heard nothing from the military, Gerry? How?"

Gerry shrugged his shoulders. "I have no idea, Min. No damned idea at all. But he's alive. Min, he's alive. At least he was when this picture was taken." They stood quietly for a few minutes until they heard a call from outside.

"Gartley, where are those lures?"

"Min?"

"I know, Gerry. Bring them the lures. We'll talk later. I need to let Jim know. Get going now."

Before Gerry came in with the news of Mark, Min Lee

AFTER RETIRING FROM FORTY YEARS OF TEACHING, CHERYL HAS PURSUED A SECOND CAREER IN WRITING. SHE WAS PROUD TO BE ONE OF FIVE AUTHORS OF COMPASSIONATE JOURNEY, AN ANTHOLOGY WHICH WAS A FINALIST FOR THE FORWARD, NEXT GENERATION, AND BOOK FEST INDIE AWARDS IN WOMEN'S ISSUES IN 2019. HER BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF HER PARENTS COPING WITH HER MOTHER'S MENTAL ILLNESS GRACIE & ALBERT WAS HIGHLIGHTED BY A SOUTHERN MAINE CHAPTER OF NAMI IN 2020. A MAINE NATIVE, CHERYL IS A MOTHER AND GRANDMOTHER.



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MALI OBOMSAWIN
BY ALISHA GOSLIN

SWEET TOOTH

Abenaki First Nation bassist, composer, and songwriter Mali Obomsawin released her first solo album, *Sweet Tooth*, in October 2022. The album blends Wabanaki stories and songs that have been passed down in Obomsawin's family, including field recording of relatives at Okanak First Nation. "Telling Indigenous stories through the language of jazz is not a new phenomenon. My people have had to innovate endlessly to get our stories heard - learning to express ourselves in French, English, Abenaki...but sometimes words fail us, and we must use sound. *Sweet Tooth* is a testament to this." Obomsawin grew up on ancestral land in Maine and Quebec, studied at Berklee and Dartmouth and toured as one-third of the acclaimed folk rock group Lula Wiles. In 2020 they co-founded the Bomazeen Land Trust, the first ever Wabanaki land trust, and currently Obomsawin is the executive director.

The album *Sweet Tooth* is broken down into three movements starting with "Odana" which, in the Abenaki language, tells the story of how their village was founded. "It's the story of my people and why we survived," Obomsawin explains. "Lineage" evokes the over 12,000 years that went by before the arrival of Europeans in Wabanaki land.

The second movement mixes the ideologies of Jesuit priests and the spiritual practices of traditional Wabanaki culture. "Wawasint8da" adapted from the hymn "The Harrowing of Hell." This hymn was translated from Latin into the Wabanaki language, as a way to indoctrinate Obomsawin's ancestors. "Pedegwajois" is an ancient story taken from a field recording of Okanak's Théophile Panadis. It tells of the

generational passing on of traditional teachings. It is an opposition to the violence in the Christian hymn mentioned prior.

The third movement highlights the album's themes of "adaptation under colonialism and the deceitful seduction of assimilation.

"Fractions," is a woozy confusion of borders, bloodlines, and values. The final song "Blood Quantum (Nəwəwəčəskaw-ikopáwihṭawə)" is a direct address to violent and misogynistic policies in North America written to tear Indigenous communities apart." It includes a Penobscot language chant written by Obomsawin and relatives from the

Penobscot Nation that celebrates the matriarchs of Indigenous communities. "Many Wabanaki communities are matri-focal, so women's leadership is and was a key part of our survival," Obomsawin states. ●



TO LISTEN TO **SWEET TOOTH** ON SPOTIFY, PLEASE SCAN THE QR CODE

FMI VISIT WWW.MALIOBOMSAWIN.COM

Virginia Oliver

Most people don't become famous for living a life they love, let alone after a century. However, 102-year-old lobsterwoman Virginia Oliver has captured hearts all over Maine and the country for that very reason. Virginia, or "Ginny" to close friends, has been lobstering on and off for over 94 years. Despite great hurdles and opportunities, she has decided time and again to live exactly the kind of life she wants to live. Her determination, work ethic, simple lifestyle, family, and abundance of good humor have carried her through rough waters and inspired many stories about her.

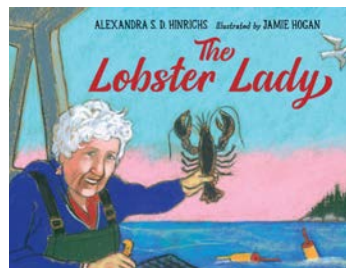
Virginia lives next door to the house she was born in – that her children were born in – in Rockland, Maine. Her father was a lobster dealer and owned a general store on The Neck of Andrew's Island. She has fond memories of living on the island with her parents and siblings, sleeping in rooms above the store, cooking Saturday bean suppers with her mother in the kitchen off the store, and weighing lobsters and assisting customers in the store. She helped her father with the weirs using materials he made in the island's sawmill and smithy, began lobstering with her older brother, and piloted her first boat at the age of eight, calling the fisherman in to work from neighboring islands. When Virginia was old enough to go to school, she moved back to the mainland with her older sister and lived with her aunts and grandfather in their Rockland house. Her childhood passed in this way, filled with adventures and separations, fresh air and learning. As she puts it, "I wasn't

scared of nothing. I'm not scared of stuff. If I have anything to say, I'll say it."

Virginia's ability to face life's storms head on buoyed her when her mother died. Virginia was only 16 at the time. The next year, she married a lobsterman, who grew up on the same street in Rockland. As their family grew, Virginia tested different jobs. She worked nights in a sardine factory while her schoolteacher aunt watched her children. After snipping off heads and tails for so many hours, she lost her taste for the small fish. When the youngest of her four children turned nine years old, she found a job working at a printing plant in Rockland. She never knew what she would do when she went in each day. She worked hard, sometimes hauling heavy boxes around, but doing whatever task was needed. Her coworker was paid more per hour and received most of the credit for her work, though, which was less than thrilling. After 18.5 years, she had had enough. She quit. She decided she wanted to go lobstering with her husband, and the very next day she did.

Virginia has been lobstering ever since, these days with her son, Max, on her husband's boat "Virginia." She enjoys being her own boss, the fresh air, the work. The two of them can be seen heading from Rockland to Spruce Head in Virginia's big truck during the wee hours of the morning about three days a week. She has no plans to stop lobstering any time soon. When asked her secret to life, she's quick to mention the importance of staying busy, and between the lines, of staying busy with something you like doing. Lobstering doesn't feel like work to her. If she didn't like it, she wouldn't do it. Certain rituals—such as Saturday bean suppers with family, daily creamy peanut butter sandwiches, and homemade chocolate doughnuts—and time out on the water help, too.

In May, shortly before Virginia's 103rd birthday, my picture book biography about Virginia will come out from Charlesbridge. Of all the books I have written so far (which will include 5 published by the end of 2023), The Lobster Lady has been the most special project. Virginia's willingness to share her story and time and infectious laugh are part of what makes her a joy to be around. During my visits, one or more of her children and friends were always coming and going. She is well loved and loves well. It feels fitting for this strong Maine woman to have her story come out from a team of Maine women. In addition to myself, The Lobster Lady's illustrator Jamie Hogan, editor Julie Bliven, and art director Kristen Nobles, all live in or have deep ties to Maine. We hope we do her story justice. It has truly been an honor to get to know Virginia, and we hope to introduce her to future generations. ●



BY ALEXANDRA HINRICHS

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LEGACY

all the women who came before us

It's no doubt that Maine is, and has been home to some amazingly fierce females. The following articles highlight an assortment of astonishing Maine women and the many outstanding achievements they have accomplished.

A Timeline of Trailblazing Maine Women.....BY **SARAH HOLMAN**

Dorothea Dix

1802-1887, HAMPDEN

Advocate, lobbyist, teacher, writer

Dorothea Dix began teaching at a school for girls at age fourteen. Before she was twenty, she had opened her own school in Boston. Dorothea suffered from debilitating depression, which eventually led to her leaving the teaching field. During a visit to Europe, she was introduced to the idea that the government should play an active role in social welfare. She went on to aggressively and tirelessly lobby the United States government to improve the care of the mentally ill. Dix is credited with creating the first generation of American public mental asylums.

Elizabeth Oakes Prince Smith

1806-1893, NORTH YARMOUTH

Poet, fiction writer, editor, lecturer, women's rights activist

Elizabeth Oakes Prince Smith is best known for her feminist writings, including a series of essays published in the New York Tribune called 'Woman and Her Needs.' Elizabeth also wrote the first woman's account of an ascent of Mount Katahdin's Pamola peak. About her September 26, 1849 hike, she wrote, "The view from the summit of Katahdin is indeed sublime [...] and the prevailing impression from Mt. Katahdin is one of immense and desolate grandeur."

Harriet Beecher Stowe

1811-1896, BRUNSWICK

Author, abolitionist

Raised in a deeply religious family, Harriet Beecher Stowe received a rare formal education at the Hartford Female Seminary. In her early twenties, she witnessed the Cincinnati Race Riots of 1829 and the Lane Debates on Slavery. Both significantly influenced her fierce opposition to slavery. The Stowe's home in Brunswick was part of the Underground Railroad, and it was there she wrote Uncle Tom's Cabin. The book depicted the inhumane conditions of slavery, invigorating abolitionists in the north and enraging proponents of slavery in the south. In its first year, Stowe's book sold over 300,000 copies, a remarkable number for the time.

Theodora Sarah Orne Jewett

1849-1909, BORN IN SOUTH BERWICK

Novelist, short story writer, poet

Sarah Orne Jewett was a leader in the style of American literary regionalism, a writing genre in

which setting and local details play an important role. She is best known for her stories set on the southern coast of Maine and for her descriptive writing that brought the voices of women to life. In 1901, Jewett became the first woman to be granted an honorary degree by Bowdoin College.

Catherine Furbish

1834-1931, BRUNSWICK

Botanist, scientist, illustrator

As a child, Catherine 'Kate' Furbish was introduced to the Maine woods by her father who took her on long walks and pointed out local flora. Kate studied painting and drawing in Portland, Boston, and Paris and attended George L. Goodale's botany lectures in Boston. After inheriting money upon her father's death, she set about collecting, classifying, and illustrating Maine's native plants. Kate traveled over thousands of miles throughout the state, often through untouched wilderness and usually alone. She discovered two plants that bear her name: *Pedicularis furbishiae* (Furbish lousewort) and *Aster cordifolius*.

Cornelia 'Fly Rod' Crosby

1854-1946, RANGELEY LAKES

Outdoorswoman, writer, angler, hunter

An early bout of tuberculosis left Cornelia Crosby in poor health for much of her young life. After a particularly bad lung ailment, she went to the foot of Mount Blue to spend her final days outside. Not only did she recover, she caught her first trout. Cornelia began writing a popular column promoting Maine's outdoor sports, attracting thousands of new tourists to the state and earning her the nickname Fly Rod. She was an early advocate of catch and release fishing, and when Maine began requiring hunting and fishing guides to register with the state, Fly Rod was given the first registered Maine Guide license. She is credited with coining the Maine promotional tagline: The Nation's Playground.

Abbie 'Gail' Hill Laughlin

1868-1952, PORTLAND

Lawyer, suffragist, politician, writer

Upon graduating Portland High School with honors (and the best grades of all females in her class,) Gail was offered a partial scholarship to Colby but could not afford the remainder. She worked as a bookkeeper until she saved enough to attend Wellesley College, after which she wrote for American Economist for two years to pay for Cornell Law School. Gail was one of

four women in the 127 person class of 1898. She became the first woman to practice law in Maine and was hired by the United States Industrial Commission to investigate the working conditions of domestic servants. The injustices she discovered based on gender inspired her to devote herself to the suffrage movement. Gail served three terms in the Maine Legislature, where she routinely submitted bills promoting women's rights.

Lucy Nicolar Poolaw

Wa-Tah-Wa-So & Princess Watahwaso

1882-1969, PENOBSCOT INDIAN ISLAND RESERVATION

Performer, artist, businesswoman, political activist

Lucy Nicolar Poolaw was exposed to politics at a young age. Her father was a lecturer, writer, and representative to the Maine Legislature. As a young adult, Lucy began performing at sportsman's shows and was offered an opportunity to study music in Boston and New York City. She toured the United States using the stage name Princess Watahwaso, often combining political activism and entertainment, and recorded with Victor Records. After retiring from shows, Lucy opened Chief Poolaw's TeePee, a store featuring Penobscot art, while working to improve the lives of native people in Maine. Lucy and her sister led the demand for voting rights, and when the state extended suffrage to people living on native land in 1955, Lucy cast the first ballot.

Toy Len Goon

1895-1941, PORTLAND

Businesswoman, homemaker, public figure

When Toy Len Goon immigrated to Maine in 1921, she spoke no English. Together, she and her husband ran a successful laundry business and raised eight children. When her husband died, Toy was determined to keep the business running and ensure all her children received an education. In 1952, a family friend nominated Toy as Maine's Mother of the Year, a title she won. Her name was then submitted to the national contest run by American Mothers Committee of the Golden Rule Foundation. She was selected as the 1952 Mother of the Year.

Margaret Chase Smith

1897-1995, SKOWHEGAN

Politician

After marrying Clyde Smith, a well-established local politician, Margaret Chase Smith became active in politics. Her husband was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, and she accompanied him to Washington DC where she managed his office. When Clyde fell ill in 1940, he asked Margaret to run for his seat. She won the special election and the following general election, becoming Maine's first female Congresswoman. Margaret was elected to the Senate in 1949, the first woman to serve in both houses. Throughout her career, she was

considered a moderate Republican and became the first woman to have her name put in for presidential nomination at a major party's convention (1964.) She was the longest-serving woman in the Senate until Susan Collins was sworn in for a fifth term in 2021.

Molly Spotted Elk

Mary Alice Nelson Archambaud

1903-1977, PENOBSCOT INDIAN ISLAND RESERVATION

Dancer, artist, actress, writer, anthropologist

The first daughter of a renowned basket maker and governor of the Penobscot Nation, Molly began performing traditional dances to help support her family at a young age. After studying anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania, Molly pursued a career on the stage. She toured the country with vaudeville troupes and starred in one of Paramount's last silent films. Molly spent time in France where she lived in an artists colony, danced, researched, wrote, and eventually married. Her husband, an outspoken anti-Nazi, vanished during WWII. Molly and her daughter fled over the Pyrenees Mountains into Portugal on foot and made their way back to Indian Island.

Mildred Brown 'Brownie' Schrupf

1903-2001, READFIELD DEPOT

Home economist, food educator, author

After graduating from the University of Maine, Mildred Brown Schrupf began her culinary career as a tester for home gas stoves. She went on to work for the Maine and United States Department of Agriculture, educating the public on food preservation, traditional Maine recipes, and home economics. Mildred began a weekly food column called Brownie's Kitchen for the Bangor Daily News in 1951 and continued writing it until 1994. She is well known for claiming chocolate brownies were invented in Bangor, an assertion that was initially dismissed and later supported based on recipe evidence. The Maine Department of Agriculture named Mildred the 'Unofficial Ambassador of Good Eating.'

Mabel Sine Wadsworth

1910-2006, BANGOR

Birth control activist, women's health educator

While in nursing school, Mabel Sine Wadsworth became familiar with the work of birth control advocate Margaret Sanger and subsequently dedicated her life to reproductive rights education. After graduating from the University of Rochester School of Nursing, Mabel eventually moved to Bangor where she established Maine's first family planning program, organizing teams of outreach workers to go door-to-door in rural Maine to educate women about birth control. She helped found the Maine Family Planning Association and successfully lobbied to expand reproductive rights for Maine women.

Judith Magyar Isaacson

1925-2015, AUBURN

Educator, speaker, author

Born in Hungary into a Jewish family, Judith Magyar Isaacson was deported to the Auschwitz concentration camp in 1944. After liberation, she married an American intelligence officer and moved to Maine. Judith studied mathematics, obtaining a bachelor's degree from Bates College and a master's degree from Bowdoin College, and went on to teach at Lewiston High School. She became the first computer science teacher at Bates and the Dean of Women. In 1990, Judith's memoir, Seeds of Sarah: Memoirs of a Survivor, was published.

Olympia Jean Snowe

1947-, AUGUSTA

Businesswoman, politician

By the time she was ten, Olympia Jean Snowe had lost both parents to disease. She was raised by an aunt and uncle in Auburn and earned a degree in political science from the University of Maine at Orono. After graduating, Olympia married state legislator Peter Snowe. When her husband died tragically in a car accident, Olympia ran for and won his seat in the Maine House of Representatives at age 26. Three years later, she was elected to the Maine Senate and then the U.S. House of Representatives, where she represented Maine's 2nd Congressional District from 1979-1995. During that time, she married Maine governor John McKernan and was First Lady of Maine. Snowe became a Senator in 1995 and served Maine until 2013. In all three elections Snowe ran in, she won every county in the state. Throughout her Senate career, she was known for influencing the outcomes of close votes and was considered one of the most moderate members of the chamber. When she chose not to run for reelection in 2012, Snowe said hyper-partisanship had created a dysfunctional Congress, leading to her choice to retire. In 2006, Senator Snowe was named one of America's Best Senators by Time magazine.

Susan Margaret Collins

1952-, AUGUSTA

Politician

Susan Collins was born in Caribou where both her parents served as mayor. During her senior year of high school, she visited Washington DC with the Senate Youth Program and met Margaret Chase Smith, Maine's first female senator. Collins went on to graduate magna cum laude from St. Lawrence University with a degree in government. Her first political job was as a legislative assistant to William Cohen. In 1994, Collins was a gubernatorial candidate, the first woman in the state to be nominated by a major party. She lost to her future Senate colleague Angus King. It would be the only race Collins lost in the state. She was elected to the US Senate in 1996, and upon her reelection in 2020, Collins became Maine's longest-serving member of Congress and the longest-serving Republican woman

in the Senate. Throughout her career, Collins has been known as a centrist Republican and an influential member of the Senate.

Joan Benoit Samuelson

1957-, FREEPORT

Marathon runner, Olympian, writer, coach

After injuring her leg in a slalom skiing accident, Joan Benoit Samuelson took up long distance running to help her recover. She was attending Bowdoin college at the time, and during her senior year, she entered the 1979 Boston Marathon. Joan won in 2:35:15, setting an American record that would stand for 28 years. While training for the first Women's Olympic Marathon Trials, she injured her knee and underwent surgery 17 days before the qualifying race. She competed anyway, won, and went on to win the first Women's Gold Medal at the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles. The following year she set a woman's record at the Chicago Marathon that stood for 32 years. Joan wrote two books about her running experiences and founded the Beach to Beacon 10K Road Race that takes place in Cape Elizabeth every year. A lifelong runner, Joan still competes, wins, and breaks records at age 65.

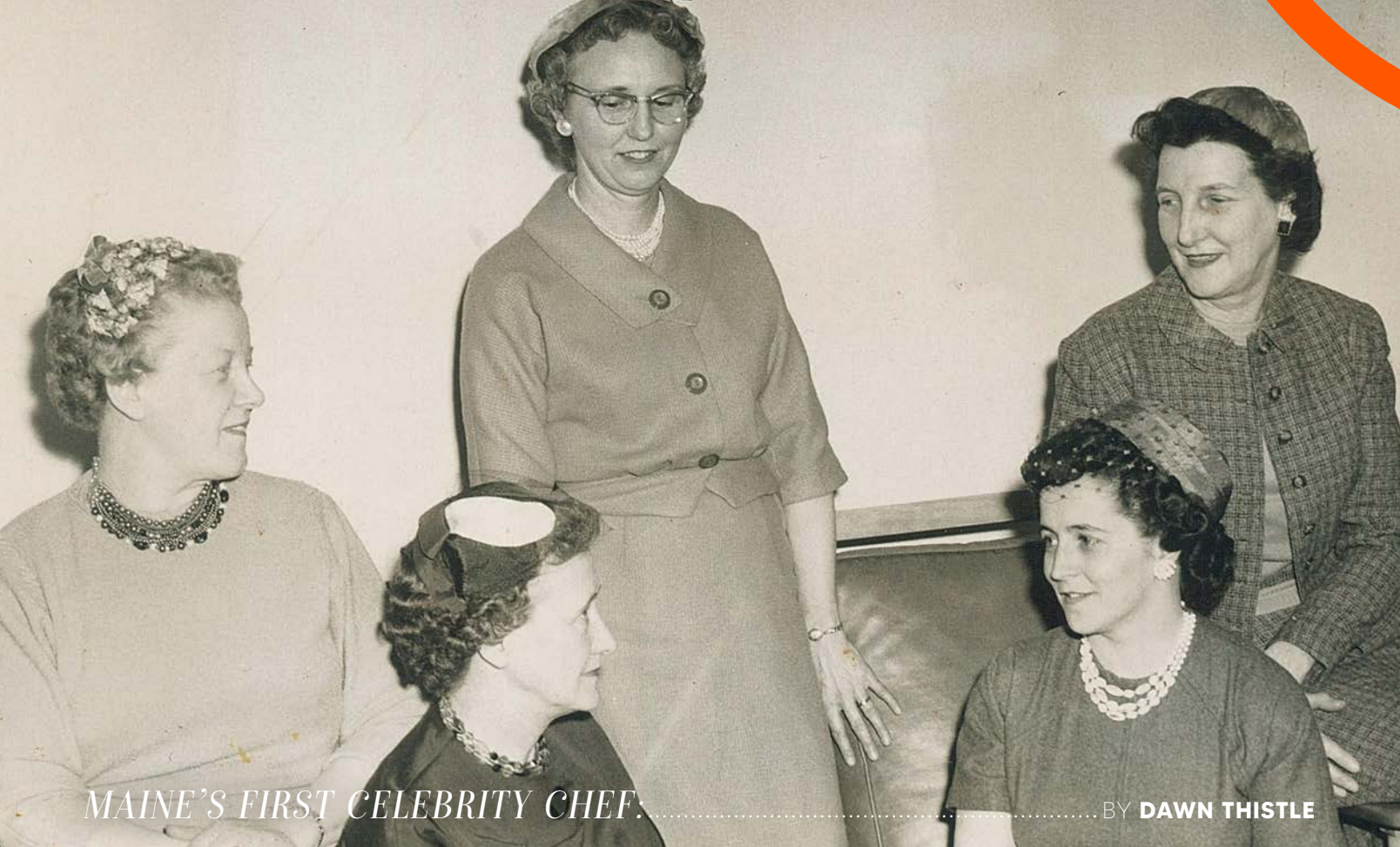
Theresa Secord

1958-, BAR HARBOR

Artist, basketmaker, activist, geologist

An elder in the Penobscot community taught Theresa Secord how to weave traditional Wabanaki baskets using tools passed down from her great grandmother. Theresa is the founding member of the Maine Indian Basketmakers Alliance in Bar Harbor, an organization credited with saving the art of ash and sweetgrass basketry by lowering the average age of basketmakers from 63 to 40 and increasing the number of weavers from 55 to more than 150. Among other honors, Theresa received the National Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts in 2016, and her work is shown throughout the country. She also served as staff geologist for the Penobscot Nation and is the great niece of Molly Spotted Elk, the famous Penobscot performer and writer. ●





MAINE'S FIRST CELEBRITY CHEF

BY DAWN THISTLE

Marjorie Standish

Unlike Betty Crocker, Marjorie Standish was a living, breathing, and trailblazing woman. Born and raised in Maine, she lived her adult years in Kennebec County, making a living and long-standing name for herself by cooking, testing, sharing, and compiling local recipes and anecdotes that spoke to untold others. She and her recipes made their way into the hearts and homes of countless followers. While the fictitious Crocker's name has graced millions of copies and dozens of editions and reprints, Standish's first cookbook, *Cooking Down East*, initially sold over 30,000 copies regionally (an outstanding record for any nationwide publication, even today) and continues to reign as a beloved standard throughout Maine and New England, still stirring a passionate interest and devotion for those who cook and care about Maine's cherished recipes.

Standish was a working woman and self-made icon, born Marjorie Holbrook in Brunswick, Maine, in 1908. She studied at the Farmington Normal School (now UMF), graduated in 1931, and married George Standish, whose family had moved to Gardiner from northern Maine in the 1910s. Marjorie and George established their own Gardiner homestead on Chestnut Street and, from there, she worked for Central Maine Power, teaching cooking and home

economics courses throughout Maine and penned her nearly 30-year weekly *Maine Sunday Telegram* column "Cooking Down East." She was a true historian, archivist, and purveyor of both past and the tried-and-true recipes for her readers - as well as future generations - translating Maine recipes, historical lore, and traditions into a common language and metric that still speak to our current kitchens, establishing a solid following and fellowship of Maine cooks.

Some may balk at the idea of a proud "housewife" (even a working one) proliferating advice to her compatriots, but Marjorie Standish was one whose reach extended farther than many might imagine and she did much more than cook and keep house. Standish embodied the melding of past, present, and future by taking cooking, history, and technology quite seriously. She was community-centered and focused on goodwill, volunteering, and getting things done - whether by direct action or engaging others in meaningful fundraising or awareness. Working for CMP, she grounded the futuristic magic of modern appliances and new-fangled kitchen advances, making them realistic and advantageous tools that served all cooking needs, historic or modern. Standish celebrated meals to be shared within the community, as well as how to make basic meals swiftly

and conscientiously. She perfected and touted traditional and regional favorites that Maine families held to heart. With awareness and standardization, Standish ensured that every kitchen could replicate a celebrated recipe.

My grandfather was born in Nebraska, raised in Washington, and lived in Maine in the 1960s. As the chef of our family, he loved to cook and traveled the world as a scientist for the federal government, gathering recipes and cooking techniques wherever he went. Marjorie Standish was an essential part of his rather worldly and refined cookbook collection and I first discovered her on his shelves. Although I lived in Maine and worked in Gardiner, it was decades before I discovered that she was a genuine local. I always thought she was a national treasure.

I count myself lucky to have been a child who had both the opportunity and requirement to complete courses in Home Economics and Industrial Arts (alongside all my classmates

in a decade that made no gender exclusions or prohibitions). I can personally vouch for what an impactful and treasured training we obtained. Reading and adapting recipes, measuring ingredients, and working our way around a kitchen was inspirational, engaging, and empowering. Together we created delicious food from scratch with standard tools, following recipes, and gaining a feeling of strength and independence in the ability to provide for ourselves. Wood and Metal Shop and Sewing were also inspiring but, for most of us, learning to cook for ourselves held a singular magic. Based on the anecdotes I hear regularly, I can only imagine that Marjorie's column and cookbooks did the same for generations of others.

In today's foodie/Instagram world, some of her recipes may seem a bit dated or "out of it" (e.g., I'll not soon recreate Broiled Cocktail Frankfurters, nor will either of two variations of Hot Clam Dip find their way into my rotation). Lard and

SIDEBAR: AN INTRODUCTION BY TWO-TIME JAMES BEARD AWARD WINNING CHEF AND OWNER OF PRIMO RESTAURANT, MELISSA KELLY FOR MARJORIE STANDISH'S *COOKING DOWN EAST*.

In 1968, just as Marjorie Standish was publishing her first cookbook, I was turning three years old. It was a time in history when the women's liberation movement was gaining speed and the sisters of the U.S. joined together to protest the injustices that were ingrained into American society.

It was a time when the stereotypical role of women was changing. Marjorie Standish was a woman way ahead of her time. She had earned a B. S. degree in Home Economics from Farmington Normal School in 1931. She penned a column in the *Maine Sunday Telegram* for twenty-five years, guiding her readers, and listening to them, too, by discussing the old and the new ways of cooking, and by championing heirloom recipes as well as the "new" convenience products that were now available (i.e., canned soups, seasoned salts, margarine). She cherished recipes from her readers, from their family histories, and added them to her collection. Some were fads, some treasures, just as they are today.

Cooking Down East is a collection of recipes, some fun and retro (Nuts and Bolts) some simple and delicious (Oyster Stew), a few strange, at least to me as a chef in this century (Hot Dogs Over Sterno). Reading Marjorie's cookbook is like opening a treasure chest: I am dusting off a few of the recipes and giving them a twenty-first-century spin.

I can clearly remember my first experience in Maine. I was on a family camping trip. We came to Maine as it was a place where there was still a bounty of wonderful ingredients, untapped in the woods, the sea, and best of all in the local communities. Maine has always been a step behind, and that is the reason I have always loved it. We are more cautious and maintain our traditions a little longer here; we may be resistant to change until we know the true value. And Maine cooking has always been down home—from

scratch and old fashioned. I believe that was a big lure for me to open a restaurant here. It is a place with deep roots, rich land, and a heritage of farmers, fishermen, and good home cooks. We are hard-working people who understand the value in these ideals. The old ways that have always been maintained here, such as capturing the fruits of the harvest—the canning, the preserving, smoking, salting—are still hanging on if not having a resurgence with the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association and the small farms that are trying to do things the old ways, the right way, the natural way.

In my cooking career I am always trying to learn the old ways, to stay away from the convenience and the processed and take the extra step to make it better. Like me, Marjorie enjoyed using the ingredients around her to showcase our Maine food products and to truly cook in a seasonable fashion. But today in Maine we are a bit more of a melting pot. There have been many people from all different walks of life migrating to the state, bringing their family history, recipes, and culture, which in turn is transforming Maine cooking. There is a strong movement towards local and organic, so here is one instance where I can say Maine is ahead of the curve we have been doing it for decades.

Marjorie teaches us the basics and some really good ways to bring great food, good ideas, and a passion for Maine ingredients to our friends and families. It was truly a pleasure to read through her recipes—like a tour of Maine with the nostalgic ties that bind us to our land. It has given me a greater appreciation to my sense of place and the opportunity I have to live and run a business here in Maine.

Thank you, Marjorie and to all of the Mainers who inspired her.
Happy cooking!

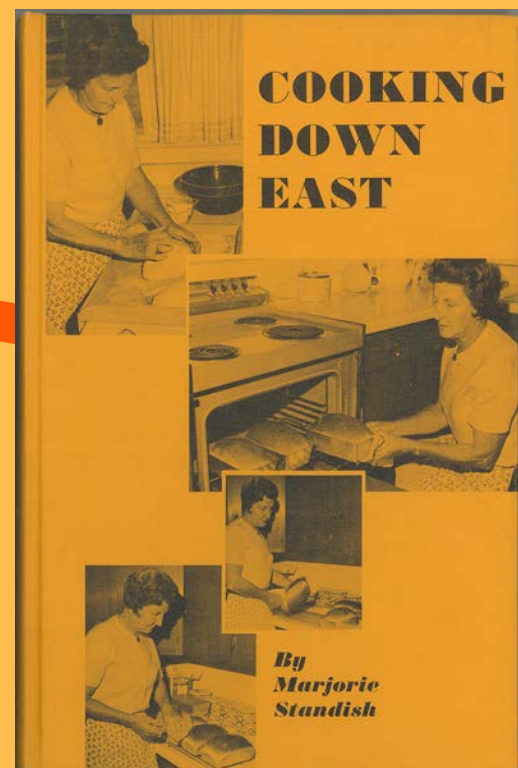
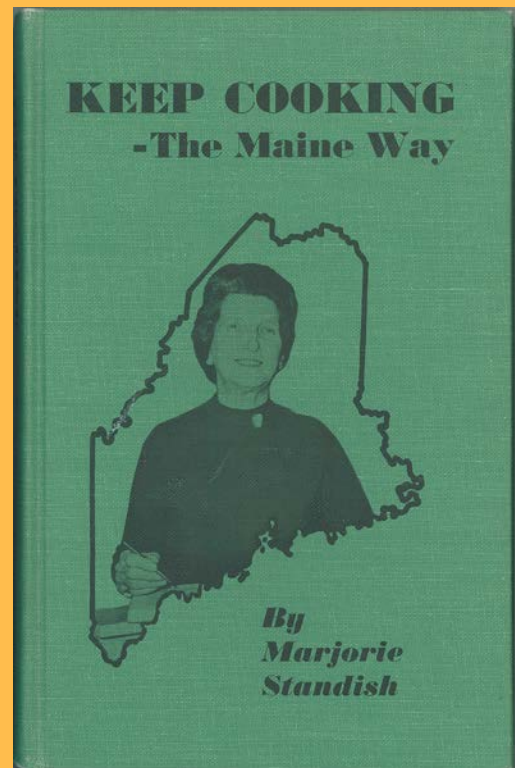
Melissa Kelly, June, 2010

From Cooking Down East: Favorite Maine Recipes. Reprinted by permission of Down East Books

gelatin were frequent ingredients and recipes such as Rolled Asparagus Sandwiches (featuring canned asparagus and Miracle Whip) might not speak to current cooks, but thousands of fans, spanning multiple generations, still hold many of her recipes as treasured heirlooms, family traditions, and the gold standard of the best of the best. Indeed, there are many of us who follow #marjoriestandish and delight in seeing the fruition of folks who still use her recipes in parts far-flung. In 2016, we hosted a Marjorie Standish potluck on the Gardiner Common and were pleasantly inundated with scores of dishes by Standish devotees. (We aim to host another this June in honor of Marjorie's 115th birthday – and hope you will join us!)

In gathering my thoughts for this article, I frequently toted the iconic cookbooks around with me. They were frequently recognized and commented upon whenever spotted. Whether tucked in my bag or splayed open with nothing but the Cooking Down East sunshiny marigold border visible, they were recognized with affinity - and a story every time. "Is that Marjorie Standish? Those are my mother-in-law's favorite cookbooks. We had a hard time finding the green one." "Are you reading Marjorie Standish? I still have my mother's copies and use them all the time." "Oooh! Marjorie Standish! What's your favorite recipe?" One woman spied the book and immediately shared that she lived in the Standish's Gardiner home, recollecting that one day she opened her door to find the stately cook standing outside. Recognizing Standish immediately, her greeting was simply, "You taught me how to cook chicken." Her adulation and respect sustain to this day, as she still touts Standish's cookbooks as those she cherishes most.

And perhaps that is the feeling we all have when we thumb through our worn copies of her cookbooks and share our appreciation of her recipes, that she is right outside, knocking on our door, paying us a visit. The legacy of Marjorie Standish is that we can visit her anytime through the thousands of recipes she left to us. Her spirit of community, love of celebration, and most importantly, her understanding of Maine, keep us creating dishes to share and savor. ●



New Jewish Traditions..... BY SARAH COTTRELL

Every Friday morning, I open my tattered, old bread book where the spine has cracked in two places; one on the bagel page and the other on the challah page, and I start separating eggs and measuring flour. After years of making challah, I've got this down to a science, but I still open my bread book where I've written notes in the margin. The book is a habitual comfort; I don't need it there, but when I open it, I can see why this weekly tradition is so important to my family.

"Finn made his first challah today!" reads one note. "I made two batches to deliver to friends...this virus is awful." reads another. "After watching the same YouTube video 50 times, I finally figured out how to make an eight-strand!" reads another with an emphatic underline. And in pencil, along the stitched seam of the center are a handful of Hebrew words, stained with drops of egg white and olive oil.

"Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha'olam asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hafeesh challah min ha'eesah," it reads. I sing these words into the kitchen as I hold up a small piece of the dough and light it on fire.

My Jewish practice is filled with traditions like this one that may be new to me but that date back thousands of years. Practices that my family has no roots in because Judaism, for us, has started with me. I often feel like an outsider at my synagogue, where families have been attending services for generations; they know each other in ways that I envy. And although my little, small-town Jewish community has welcomed my family and me with open arms, I still get sad that I lack a shared history of knowledge and heart.

"But you're the root now for hopefully generations of [Jews,]" my friend joked one day. He and his family have been pivotal in helping my family learn and practice Judaism on our long journey of conversion. He was trying to cheer me up when we talked about what it is like to lack tradition and history. But then he said, "You're taking up for people with roots that didn't make new Jews if you think about it." And that struck a chord with me. The traditions I am starting in my home aren't trivial things I am making up on the fly; they are part of something much bigger than us, something we love and hold dear.

But as much as I love becoming Jewish and slowly learning to be intimately aware of the ancient words and the motions of the lunar calendar, that doesn't mean my children are always on board.

"Mom, why can't I just stay home and play the PS4?" my teen grumbles one Saturday morning. "It's not like I'm missing anything; we literally say the same words every week...c'mon, please?"

Getting my children excited about this newness was initially awkward and challenging. So, I didn't push it—I didn't force them to go to Shabbat



service with me. And I didn't require them to read the Torah with me or observe all the rules of Shabbat, like turning off gadgets and not touching light switches. No driving, shopping, or cooking. No ordering pizza or watching movies. Just 25 hours of relaxing and resting together.

They hated it.

Gil Marks, a Jewish cookbook author, once said, "to know a community is to know its food." History, culture, humor, and humanity are all found in food, and for my kids and husband, it turns out that practicing and observing Jewish traditions starts with our plates.

My middle schooler—the pickiest eater I have ever met—loves canned fish. He'll gobble up kugel (he calls it Jewish mac and cheese), eat an entire jar of pickles, and thinks smoked salmon goes on everything. My oldest fist pumps and yells "YES!" when I make matzo ball soup or chocolate babka. And my youngest wants to know why we can't eat cheese and blueberry blintzes every day instead of on Yom Kippur and Shavuot.

Food became the lightning rod for introducing Jewish culture and history to my children. They want to eat bagels? Perfect. We open that tattered bread book and start the two-day process of making proper Jewish bagels. But they also get a history lesson about how bagels got invented because Jews weren't allowed to bake bread—they were forced to use malt and boil it. Thankfully, they found a way to turn a nasty, antisemitic law into a new tradition of eating.

In my quest to bring Jewish tradition into our home, I began to borrow books from my local library through their interlibrary loan program. I found a rare and difficult-to-find copy of *The Vilna Vegetarian Cookbook*, written in Yiddish by Fania Lewando in 1938. She owned a thriving vegetarian restaurant called *Dieto-Jarska Jadrłodajnia* in Vilnius, Lithuania—the very same

area where most of my local Jewish friends have their family roots. Lewando served celebrities like Mark Chagall and Itzik Manger. She was a beloved chef and well-known in her time. But sadly, she wouldn't survive the Nazi occupation, and she died in 1941. Then, to add insult to injustice, the Nazis burned her cookbooks. They were banned and thought to be destroyed, except that someone who understood the value of her work smuggled one out of Lithuania, and it made its way to the US, where more were published, and a single copy landed in a small synagogue in coastal Maine.

The day I got a copy of that book, I felt moved to tears knowing the history of how it got into my hands. Its art is stunning, and the recipes are incredibly humble and simple. I went to my friend's house to show them the book and see if they recognized any recipes. Of course, they knew plenty of them—who doesn't know what a latke is? But they also pointed out how hilarious old-school Jewish cooking can be and advised me to appreciate the art and history of the book but maybe don't eat a recipe that is 80% butter.

My children embrace Judaism in ways I wished for, but worried would never happen. My oldest is beginning his bar mitzvah studies, and my youngest is learning the stories of the Torah in Saturday morning Hebrew school. We have our favorite Jewish recipes—and ones we don't like so much but still make during the holidays (chopped liver, anyone?)

I had spent too much time trying to shoehorn ancient traditions into our family's way of life

without fully grasping why these traditions matter. It took time for me to understand that the way to pass on traditions to my children (even if they are new to us) isn't about strict adherence (although that helps) but about finding the magic spark that ignites a feeling of comfort and belonging for us. We observe Jewish traditions because they feel right to us. After learning so much about the history and culture of these traditions, we can see and feel their value. And after practicing them for as long as we have, they've become a vital part of who we are as a family.

I am the root of my family's Jewishness. That feels like a mighty and bold idea to hold onto because it also feels like hope. Our traditions are growing in our home, and with them, my heart swells. ●



FOREVER HOME

*In honor of
Shashikala Karnik
Desai, Homemaker;
Groundbreaker*

BY TANUJA DESAI HIDIER

My mother became a Mainer—in her 80s.

There's a Maine saying: You can't get there from here.

You can get here from there, though. All rivers lead to the sea, as my mother always told me (though you cannot step in any one river twice; change, a constant). And she—queen of brood, first to immigrate from her family, physician, artist, and groundbreaker of a homemaker—is proof.

Shashikala Karnik (not yet) Desai emerged from womb to room when her mother broke water in a Vile Parle village kitchen. Back when Mumbai was Bombay, and India was under British rule. Aided by a midwife, and attested to only by affidavit, my grandmother-to-be earthed this much-longed-for baby girl.

My future mother was Bombay-raised, with a few years, including her happiest childhood memories, in Kolhapur. In Kolhapur, when a plane swam the skies, children would run out to gaze up, thunderstruck—which amazed young Shashikala still more. She was a city girl, had often seen this winged wild blue yonder. Still, she goggled along, wondering: Where were these passengers heading?

Where would she, perhaps, go one day, too?

That first flight was nearly two decades away. Growing up, back in Bombay, Shashikala sojourned miles by foot, train, foot again to school (no easy feat in a sari during monsoon season). She could sketch and soak up any face. Her nimble fingers deftly wove roses, hewed hibiscus into hip-length plaits; friends flocked to her to flair up their hair like Bollywood ranis for Diwalis, shaadis. Multilingual (Marathi, Gujarati, Hindi, English) Shashikala spoke music, too: could thrum a harmonium, or simply tap knuckle and nail onto tabletop, accompany herself singing a jaggery-sweet stream into any room; even in Urdu.

At sixteen, countless of these rooms swooned when she

crooned on India's national radio.

My (apartheid–South–Africa–born Varad–Gujarat–raised) father fell in deep with this Bombayite of the shy smile, all-seeing gaze, when he heard her sing at the medical school class picnic in Borivali. “Zindagi Bhar Nahin Bhoolegi Barsaat ki Raat”—my parents' love song.

I will never forget this night of pouring rain.

They would not.

No rain, all sun that Borivali day.

How my mother loved my father's kind eyes, lush smile. His posture, walk, so elegantly upright—like a paddleboarder skimming Casco Bay waves, a near scriptural sighting she'd witness decades later.

The two eschewed straight-line rules from *kasā kai*; *kem cho*: hello. Diving into love and the uncharted—and, ultimately, that rarity in an era and environment of same-caste arranged unions: an intercaste love marriage.

Their first kiss: at Bombay beach Breach Candy, where my mother tread gracefully out across rock tips in swirling yellow sari and chappals hooked only to the toes, her sable waves rippling nearly to her knees.

Clearly, she'd had the gift of ocean-crossing even then. Sea legs. Land fins.

My father accompanied her. For a moment that would unfold into eons of lunar months and miles...to this coast by these so-called Calendar isles. This Breach Candy kiss proving to be not just a kiss—rather, a preamble to a lifelong ramble.

The wedded pair's first port of call: Sewickley, Pennsylvania. My future father went ahead for a cardiology job. Five months later, my 25-year-old mother-to-be (in lime-green ebony-embroidered georgette sari, burbling baby boy in left arm and pink plastic tote woven by her mother for



Friendly as this town's claim-to-fame ice cream, sometimes more of a curdling go-back-whence-you-came variety.

Difficult days to get there from here: Once in the US, my parents didn't see, speak, to their phoneless families for six years. Contact with India was solely via pale blue airmail letters that took weeks, sometimes months, to sail into our mailbox, turn it azure with that pined-for sky. These missives: triple-folded fins, wings, to a motherland that—especially with no people of our particular diasporic background on our streets, bookshelves, TV; in bands, magazines (nor even, yet, in my imagination)—seemed speedily receding: a fata morgana beyond horizon's horizon; a mergrrrl's ultramarine breach...and then silence.

Shashikala gave up medicine to be another kind of healer: a full-time homemaker. Fiercely loving, unflaggingly inventive. Sinking and swimming into this new environment. I may have—out in the world, and later on the page—struggled with not feeling Indian enough, nor American enough. Home, though, was a sanctuary, where my mother created ample space, safe amidships, for both sides of our Indian-American selves, turning that hyphen from border to bridge: Christmas tree near kitchen Krishna temple. Mango pulp (from three-hour-drive-away Indian grocer) residing beside alphabet soup. My mother melody-and-two-meals-making (spaghetti for my brother and me, for my father: khichdi khadhi), segueing seamlessly from “Rupa Tera” to Linda Ronstadt.

She emboldened authenticity: Be yourself. Buoyed creativity: Keep writing.

Dreaming.

She made our life a map that could fit all our parts. Made us forever home wherever we were. Whoever we are.

And whatever the world, or even we, might say: firmly included in our from here our from away.

(She also helped, with my father, numerous others grow land legs here, sponsoring, hosting—encouraging in word and deed—family and friends over the years: taking my

his belongings in the other's crook) boarded an Air India flight to join him—for the first time flying: crossing alps of oceans, summits of seas, leaving her country, and perhaps much more, behind.

At last, she descends the plane, walks toward terminal, JFK, jetlagged eyes searching, swimming. Landing upon him.

They step toward each other—into the start of the winsome lose-some American Dream.

Next up: Pittsburgh. Following: Boston. Shashikala receives her Master's in Public Health from Harvard (her work including groundbreaking research with rhesus monkeys). Arduously earned, this degree. All the while tending to her small son, busy catching every bug going round daycare.

All the while, a still-green immigrant to the red, white. Blues.

After my Brookline birth: ahoy, Bombay. And then West once more, eventually to Wilbraham, Massachusetts, where I grew up, and we all grew into America—sometimes



adoptive uncle out daily to teach him to drive; a 'mentor', in their words, of new country-borrowed blue brides; a navigator, form-filler, for immigrants recently arrived.

Providing a pillow to rest their heads; a freshly laundered bug-snug bed. Ensuring they were delightfully fusion-feast fed.

Friends to this day describe her as the 'rock', salt, of their lives.)

In 2000, newly wedded, my husband and I away'd to London for a year...which turned to seventeen.

Our UK era, my parents jetted Eastward (and we wended West) for treasured visits. They were all-hands-on-homemaking-deck for the births of my two book babies. And two human ones, too: Indo-Franco-Belgo-Americano London-born daughters with British accents, who grew up waking to Maine summers (where my brother now lived, as well as the first two Maine women in our South Asian American family: my nieces)—and dreaming it every season, their uncle's gifts of Blueberries for Sal and One Morning in Maine favorite bedtime stories.

And so the years ripened, kerplunk-kerplink. And when, after seventeen, it grew too difficult for my parents to fly to us, we fledged back to the US.

One-way tickets: Heathrow—Logan. Needing, wanting, to be beside them. In with the babies, bathwater. Blood, rushing: thicker than.

At my brother's suggestion, we frequent Maine, exploring it as more than Vacationland. And it was love at coucou, cheers: hello. First roll in the snow. Frozen ocean. Wild

blueberry sky.

Lighthouse: of family, after nearly two decades, so nearby.

Still: not close enough to my parents for our comfort. Our home base in Wilbraham, we wore-and-tore I-95.

You are in such a beautiful place, meeting such wonderful people, my mother said. Don't come back here for us. We will come to you.

My mother: mobile homemaker.

By fortuitous timing, just two weeks after the pandemic hit: We bring my parents to Maine, realizing the dream of uniting our three generations under one roof (and just up the road from my brother).

We are in such a beautiful place, my mother says now, the there transforming to here, for nearly two and a half more years, during which every sea, every shore, of our family's diasporic story is welcomed in all its fullness.

We celebrate birthdays. Holidays (Diwali, with our lobsterman friend's catch; Christmas with hake curry, a side of saag, a spruce sprung for at the town hall). My parents' diamond anniversary, my mother, smiling—short of breath now but long of feeling, faint voice perfectly pitched—sings of zindagi: Life. Of how she will never forget this night of pouring rain...which spills now from my father's all-ears eyes.

We celebrate every day.

She teaches me her recipes, and these are stories, too, a time-traveling topography of her own wayfaring: a Heinz ketchup shortcut for chole bhature. How to turn toor dahl (shout-out, South Portland grocer Masala Mahal) into the golden comfort food her own mother would make for her, and she, in turn, for me.

Gifting me the tools to feed our family—and find her in this act. To digest in a most sensory way, be nourished by: her love.

The recipes grow in frequency this past year. Helpful hints as well abound.

She is, as always, homemaking—but now it is to ensure we will be at home without her, too.

Blood, thicker than: what drew us from sea to shining sea. Now: a seasick quease. For hers: Thicker still, as this



salty summer steep.

The last Friday of July my mother shares with me a historic, herstoric, childhood memory: the day, 75 years ago that then upcoming August 15th, of Indian Independence; Partition. She was there, then, in Kolhapur, city of the Panchganga River, Rankala Lake: a jigsaw iota of atlas that meant so tremendously much to her. How: Ahh! Teacher distributed luscious longed-for laddoos from magic-hat barrel. How: Mmm! Sugar-lipped, salt-skinned, she imagined this boon in the hands of all! The Catholic schoolkids, too, tucking in. Polish children from the nearby refugee camp, with their fascinating faces and beautiful Marathi, in the semolina savouring a hint of the kasza manna from the homeland they'd been forced to flee. This—no flag-hoist, headline, parade—my mother's image of Independence: Sooji. Sakar. Badam. Ghee. A treasure in her, every, palm. A taste of sweeter days to come.

We speak, too, of those planes, the train; her arrivals.

That same evening she celebrates my younger daughter's done-and-dusted co-authored fantasy novel.

Over the weekend, I write up my mother's Kolhapur recollections as a poem for Pen America's India at 75 anthology. She loves it.

Keep writing, she tells me, has always told me.

I will think of so many nice stories to tell you, she adds, Monday.

Tuesday, she joyfully witnesses the finished copy of my elder daughter's first YA novel. Teaches me how to submerge; soak: sprout mung.

Wednesday morning papers didn't come.

Thursday, in the depths of a restless night, she rises again, again, points upward, elsewhere, repeats a word I do not know, sees a place—that winged wild blue?—I cannot yet go.

Friday, a week to the day, nearly hour, of her sharing her story of Independence, it is my father who now provides the mouth, the inlet where all rivers lead to the sea. Here, near the Royal and Cousins (diasporically arrived at via the Ganges, Hudson), he recounts, with such tenderness—to her, as her sleep irretrievably deepens; to her children and grandchildren, a life raft surrounding her; to himself, at sea, swimming in memories—a last, an avast, daytime-bedtime tale:

A girl. A boy. Borivali picnic. Breach Candy kiss.

The story of their love.

The map, this morning in Maine: of us.

You are in such a wonderful, beautiful place, my mother tells me during that last week, this woman who made everywhere—from Bombay, Boston to Mumbai, Maine—wonderful. Beautiful. Keep writing.

I am, Mom. These words are my water; my tears. Thicker than. A map to keep you near.

Home is not a place: rather, a safe space, with love, you make. And a legacy, a story across time we trace. A relaying and relay. A kind of state of aching grace.

This is one story of one Maine woman. My main woman. A Bombay baby, bacchoodi girl, who shaded her eyes, looked out to sea—then dove on in to an epic go-West land-ho: breaching

horizon's horizon: over the river, and through the woods, across multiple oceans and seas—and nearly a century—to this now grandmother's house she flowed. Bombay to Casco Bay. From away to here to stay..in the Land of the Dawn: this not-yet-in-her-lexicon fine Pine Tree State (Wabanaki land upon).

And who—I see now, and in my heart perhaps already sensed—became a Maine woman in her 82nd year to bring us all together in one place where she knew we could lay roots. Bloom. To launch a new chapter of our collective story to enjoy together. Surround us with beauty and wonder, both natural and human. And, superlative homemaker that she was, to build a safe harbour for my father, for all of us, for when her ship set sail.

Choosing Maine as the last earthly place she would see. Breathe.

Worth a visit. Worth a lifetime.

And before that room-to-womb avast—that mergrrrrl morgana in reach, at last?—she journeyed here to imbue this house with lifetimes of her love, laughter. Wisdom, words. Recipes, reassurances. Worlds. To gather all our from aways...

Here.

My first home.

Forever home.

No place like her. ●

*TANUJA DESAI HIDIER is an author/singer-songwriter. Her pioneering debut *Born Confused*, considered to be the first South Asian American YA novel, was named an American Library Association Best Book for Young Adults. Sequel *Bombay Blues* received the South Asia Book Award. Tanuja has also created 'booktrack' albums of original songs based on the novels. Please visit [www. ThisIsTanuja.com](http://www.ThisIsTanuja.com) for more info.*

*Teen author Leela Marie Hidier's debut YA novel, *Changes in the Weather*, was published this year by *The Telling Room*, a youth literary non-profit based in Portland, Maine.*



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MENTAL HEALTH

reconsidering the language and dynamics of gratitude

BY SARAH MACLAUGHLIN, LSW

When offering appreciation, it is often stated that one “stands on the shoulders of giants.” And while the intention is to give credit where credit is due, isn’t it a little crummy to stand on top of someone—even metaphorically? In the same vein, doesn’t it feel just as bad when the positions are swapped and the admired person is being “looked up to.” There is a reason for the wise saying about the discomfort of falling from pedestals. Ouch!

Language impacts our perspectives in deep and pervasive ways. Is it possible that our sayings and speech patterns breed comparison and competition among people, especially women? There is also a paradox here. People can be deeply connected and fiercely competitive—both supportive and cutting. Sometimes appreciation for another comes with a side of snark or self-deprecation. These aren’t necessarily “women’s issues” or even personal, but rather human foibles. In a culture that often tells its members—even young children—to pull themselves up by their bootstraps when facing a problem or to shake it off when they get hurt, it’s no surprise that later on adults are wary of collaboration. Hyper-independence breeds distrust and hinders our inclination to rely on each other.

“Comparison is the thief of joy.” –Theodore Roosevelt

What if we could be more aware of these tendencies and prime ourselves for connection with others? One way is through mindfulness of the words you use to describe others (and yourself!). Use non-comparative language when possible. That might mean avoiding labels, which are inherently limiting, and the better-than/less-than dichotomy. The pitfalls of the binary are tempting—someone else is good at something in comparison to us being terrible at it. See how things shift when you give a compliment alone, “You have a beautiful voice,” without a follow-up barb, “I can’t sing a note.”

On the topic of compliments, practice receiving them without explaining them away. In fact, try to get better at receiving in general. Many of us feel more comfortable giving—our time, energy, and gifts—than receiving. This can sometimes be a trauma response in that we don’t want to get accustomed to relying on others. Get curious about your reflex to deflect generosity and kindness from

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



others, or to feel like you have to do everything yourself.

Another approach to consider is in growing your emotional vocabulary. Famed social worker and storyteller Brené Brown found in five years of research that among 7000 people surveyed, most could only identify three emotions as they were having them: happy, sad, and mad. That is a limited palette to choose from. Her recent book, *The Atlas of the Heart* is a wonderful resource that maps the nuance of 87 emotions. The Center for Nonviolent Communication (check out their Feelings Inventory: <https://www.cnvc.org/training/resource/feelings-inventory>) is another great place to expand your emotional literacy.

Gratitude is more than just the words we say or how we speak them. It is a mindset and a perspective. Gratitude and appreciation are lenses through which we can more clearly see the world around us, and each other. ●

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Care Connection

LIVE-IN HOME CARE

FCP Live-In Caregivers Care Hand-In-Hand With Family Members So Loved Ones Have A Rewarding In-Home Care Relationship!

Arthur Barnes likes to spend his summers in Boothbay Harbor, ME, but at 92 years old, he needs assistance with daily living activities. Arthur's daughter, Holly Barnes, was talking to a friend at work about the situation. Holly's friend told her that her mother also needs assistance, and she uses FCP Live-In, a company that provides a live-in caregiver for her mother.

Holly had not heard of FCP Live-In before. So, she contacted FCP Live-In and spoke with Care Coordinator Constance McFarland. Holly explained the situation to McFarland and wanted to ensure the company would provide another live-in caregiver if the first caregiver wasn't a good match.

McFarland assured Holly that FCP Live-In is flexible and dedicated to meeting the unique needs of its clients. Moreover, the company finds a good match between live-in caregivers and clients.

"Once we had a few conversations about how it would all work and the price point, I figured I would try it," Holly recalled.

Compatibility between FCP Live-in

caregivers and clients does not happen by accident. The company has developed an extensive process to ensure that caregivers have the necessary skills to provide quality care. All FCP Live-In caregivers are either Certified Nursing Assistants, Home Health Aides, or Personal Care Assistants with two or more years of experience. But, caregiver applicants are not hired immediately.

"We worked well together as a team. I would say the caregivers were invested in my dad. I feel like there was a general warmth towards him"
-Holly Barnes

Applicants must undergo an extensive state and national background check and are evaluated through a round of in-depth interviews and a personality profile, and pass skills assessments and attend a full-day orientation designed to further evaluate their capabilities and attitudes.

"This process is important to ensure that FCP Live-In provides quality care to its clients," McFarland said. "It also contributes to establishing a trusting relationship between our live-in caregivers and clients. Live-in caregivers work in a wide range of care situations, yet they can handle individualized care plans. In this way, our clients receive the

best care possible."

In instances where caregivers and clients are not compatible, FCP Live-In will continue to find the best client-caregiver match, which clients and their families appreciate.

FCP Live-In also adapts to changing circumstances not only of its clients but of caregivers. For example, Arthur's first caregiver wanted to visit her family in Europe because she had not seen them in two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the caregiver planned to be off for an extended period of time, FCP Live-In provided another live-in caregiver. Both live-in caregivers, Holly said, "have been really great, very helpful."

Not surprisingly, family members also support caregivers caring for their loved ones. So Holly was there to help out, too.

"I think we worked well together as a team. Generally, I would say the caregivers were invested in my dad," Holly said. "He is not difficult to take care of. I feel like there was a general warmth toward him."

Holly said her father Arthur, appreciated the care he received from FCP Live-In. "I am hoping that we can do something similar next summer," Holly said. "It is hard to know. But we will consider using FCP Live-In again. It has been great for us."

For more info on FCP Live-In and Live-In care, visit liveinhomecare.com or call 866-830-4443.

To learn more about FCP Live-In home care, call 866-830-4443 or visit www.liveinhomecare.com today!

FINANCIAL ADVICE jill of all trades

BY CHELSIE L. CRANE

CHELSIE L. CRANE IS AN INVESTMENT ADVISOR REPRESENTATIVE WITH CLEAR PATH FINANCIAL SERVICES, A MEMBER OF ADVISORY SERVICES NETWORK, LLC.



An idiom that has been used for many of the women in my family is, "Jack of all trades, master of none". This phrase is often used with a tinge of negative association. It is usually applied to folks who are viewed as having a lot on their plate. They are proficient in the many activities they engage in, but not "focused" enough (or privileged enough) to dedicate their time to only one pursuit. With my curiosity and many interests, I accepted that I was destined to be a Jack of all trades, or rather a Jill of all trades.

What I discovered later is that this idiom doesn't end at "master of none". The complete saying is "a jack of all trades is a master of none, but oftentimes better than a master of one." The more I experience life, and the world of finance, the more this whole quote seems true.

It is well known and common general advice amongst the financial community that diversifying investments is advisable, so why stop there? I wouldn't invest all my money in just one company, so why put all my skills into only one aspect of life? Having more than one talent, ability and or knowledge in a topic is arguably safer. There are no guarantees in life, and so being able to be resilient, and well diversified is crucial for protection.

I see this diversification in income streams often in my line of work. Working with clients to purposefully utilize multiple income streams is a basic step in the retirement planning process. Multiple income streams do not need to only exist in retirement.

Creating a secondary income in working years can help accelerate your financial goals. My colleague and mentor Steven Harrison said it well on our first day working together; a lot of people have an income problem, not a spending problem.

So, while many may argue, why should I need more than one gig to succeed, I say why wouldn't you? Protecting yourself against job loss, boredom, and debt is well worth the extra effort. At the same time, you get the opportunity to nourish talents or skills that have been ignored.

Think of ways that can create either passive income, or income that is generated when you want, in an area that is fun for you. You set your schedule and then give that money purpose. For example, I have a small side business that has nothing to do with finance, but rather it feeds my creative side. I choose the hours, number of clients I work with, so I don't sacrifice time away from my family unnecessarily.

The most important part is, every dollar I earn in this secondary income goes directly towards paying my student loans. It doesn't get deposited into my main bank account, but instead a separate account that is dedicated to this cause.

While your goals may be different from mine, the premise is the same. Creating a secondary purpose driven income stream can insulate and accelerate your financial goals. Don't wait until retirement to take advantage of all your skill sets. Consider being a Jill of all trades. ●



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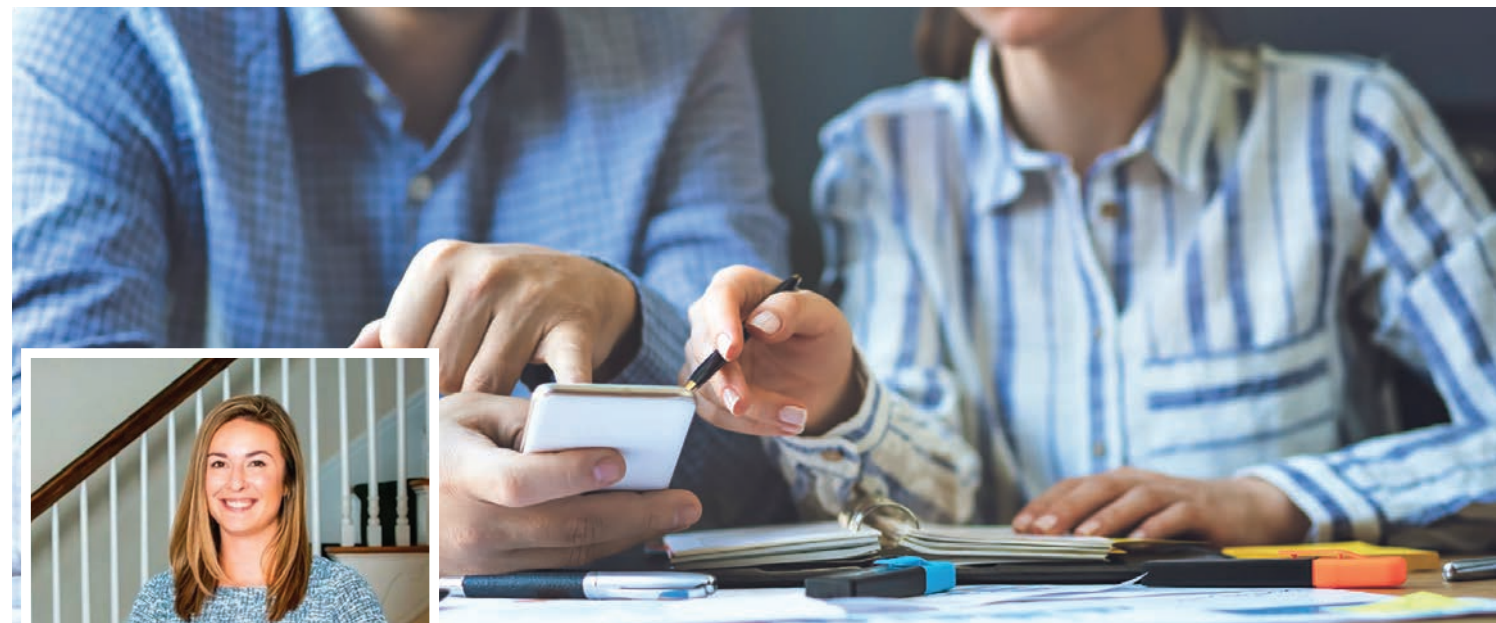
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Understanding Roles in Family Finances

By *Katie Brann, CFP®*

At my house, my husband and I have a fairly clear division of chores and responsibilities. My husband takes out the trash, mows the lawn, hires the snowplow driver, and gets cars inspected. If it happens physically outside the house, it's his job. I make sure the floors and countertops are clean, dishes are washed, and laundry is done.

Most families divide their financial tasks and chores as well. In my own experience working with families, one spouse has often taken on the role of "Chief Financial Officer (CFO)" and the other holds the title of "Chief Operations Officer (COO)."

The CFO is more interested in the family's portfolio, its performance, and the stock market itself. Their primary focus is on the financial outcomes.

The COO is more interested in and responsible for day-to-day household finances, namely paying bills. They are more focused on "real world" outcomes – what money does for their family.

Division of labor is necessary in a household; however, I have found that couples become very entrenched in their roles over the years. This leads to both people not taking the time to really understand the other's responsibilities. This can make it difficult for the couple to come together to see the "big picture" - which includes financial and real-world factors.

For example, a newly-retired COO* might withdraw more than they plan to spend from their portfolio because a) they are so used to saving every month and b) they perceive safety in building up excess cash. Their primary focus has been on the bank account, not the investment portfolio. There can be a significant opportunity cost to moving money into cash unnecessarily in the long term.

Conversely, a newly-retired CFO might be hesitant to make any withdrawals from the family's portfolio after many years of saving and accumulation. They can become so focused on the numbers and the "bottom line" that they lose sight of what the money's for: health, wellbeing, and quality of life for their family or community. They might come to regret not taking that vacation or making that charitable donation.

In both examples, the COO and CFO had the best intentions which resulted in less-than-optimal outcomes. Situations like this can be avoided by opening the lines of communication between partners in regular "business meetings." Each needs to understand the other's perspective and goals for the family's future. The COO and CFO should also work together to create a big picture investment and spending plan. The plan will differ for every family but should find an appropriate balance between growing & preserving family wealth and allowing it to support your current lifestyle. In some cases, the COO and CFO should consider hiring an outside consultant to provide objective advice, facilitate the big picture conversations, and to help turn ideas into actions.

*Definitely an oxymoron but necessary for the sake of this metaphor!

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Grab your skates and hockey gear and head to Rangeley for the Annual Pond Hockey Festival **February 3rd through February 5th**. Must be 18+ to participate. FMI visit thirdassist.com/blogs/pond-blog/rangely-pond-hockey-festival



The 2nd Annual February Festival takes place **February 24th** (the Friday of school vacation) at Saddleback with music, events, bonfire, and Torch Light Parade! Visit rangeleymaine.com/calendar/event/12117 FMI



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Join harpist Bridget Kibey as she explores migration stories with Iranian singer Mahsa Vahdat and percussionist John Hadfield from Silk Road Ensemble in From Persia to Iberia on **February 11th from 7 - 8 pm** at 24 Central Street in Rockport. Visit baychamber.org/calendar/persiatoiberia



Portland on Tap takes place on **February 4th** at the Cross insurance Arena from noon until 8pm. Sample over 120 craft beers from over 60 breweries! FMI visit www.crossarenaportland.com/events/portland-on-tap

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