



Summer 2018 Women's Quarterly

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Special Advertising Supplement

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My personal book list

Just a Thought

BY TERRI HIBBARD

When Mrs. Kelly, my third grade teacher, read to us from The Boxcar Children series by Gertrude Chandler Warner, I became a book lover. Before that, I hadn't understood the power of a book to open up a new world and invite me in. Dick and Jane with their lively dialogue "Come Spot. See Spot run." had failed to excite me. But those Boxcar kids were independent and adventurous. (Just like me!) I could scarcely wait for the next chapter.

Fairfield's Lawrence Public Library soon became one of my favorite places, as did every library in every town I've lived in since.

I've spent countless hours immersed in the characters, places and stories in fabulous books, but a few left an indelible impression on my life.

"The Grapes of Wrath" by John Steinbach. I was barely 17 when I began college and this was assigned in freshman English. Being small town, naive and mostly ignorant about our history, I was appalled by this story.

"This is ridiculous," I said in class. "Nobody would drive across country in an old truck with a dead grandmother in the back of it."

That was the beginning of an awakening about a world beyond Benton and Fairfield, Maine.

"Gone with the Wind" by Margaret Mitchell. At age 19 I was completely swept away by this story. I wanted to be Scarlet O'Hara (but nicer). It was the first time I wanted a book never to end. I've been searching for others that engrossing ever since. The most recent one: "All the Light We Cannot See" by Anthony Doerr.

"All Quiet on the Western Front" by Erich Maria Remarque brought the horrendous reality of war—the gore, the suffering, the waste of young life—into unbearable focus. Unlike the star-studded movies of the 40s and 50s glorifying war, this book shoved the dreadful truth in my face.

"Black Like Me" by John Howard Griffin. He was a white man who used chemicals and other ways to darken his skin to learn for himself what life was like for a black man in the South in 1959. I lived in white, white Maine, but even when I went to New York to work after college and met many black people, I was blind to discrimination because I lived and worked in a white world. I had roomed with a college kid from Alabama who was sweating a return home because de-segregation had begun. She was a sweet southern belle and seriously worried that hatred could explode. Of course it did. "Black Like Me" instilled in me the first glimmer of understanding about white privilege and black disadvantage. I'm still trying to comprehend the tremendous and lifelong impact of both.

"The Thorn Birds" by Colleen McCullough. At a time when kids, housework and sameness were my life, I spent delicious snatched hours on a private island, luxuriating in a passionate and forbidden love affair. I couldn't afford a vacation and had no time or desire for a lover but this book took me away for a needed respite.

"Mirror, Mirror on the Wall" by Gaylord Hauser. He began teaching Americans about the connection between healthy food and a healthy life in the 1930s, long before doctors and scientists began to confirm it.

When I discovered his books, including "The New Diet Does It," I was producing babies at an alarming rate and wanted them to be as healthy as possible. Gaylord inspired me to eat more fresh foods, short-cooked vegetables, yogurt (which no one but weirdos ate) and leanest meats. A near miracle happened along the way. I was a confirmed sweetaholic, always making sure to have room for dessert and a stash of candy within reach. Eating the right foods killed my sugar addiction and influenced my children's diets from then on.

"Dr. Spock's Baby and Child Care" by Benjamin Spock saved me from panic over and over again as I tried to do the right thing for my growing family.

When three-month-old Eric rolled off the changing table and slammed into the floor as I turned to reach for something, I was terrified. I clutched my screaming baby to my chest, grabbed Dr. Spock off the book shelf and frantically looked for information. As Eric's sobs wound down, I was relieved to learn that he had none of the signs of serious injury. Still, I worried about brain-damage after that blow to his soft little head. Eric is now 55, his siblings say he's probably the brightest of the bunch and we all rely on his incredible memory.

I've read classics, read books on lists of the greatest books of all time and read books on the PBS Great American Read list, and I love books by Maine authors. Almost all add understanding and immense pleasure to my life. They just haven't touched me in the way my personal (and incomplete) book list has.

Being a single mom has rewards and challenges and that's a gigantic understatement

BY KATE CONE
Correspondent

Every third Sunday of June, I receive a text message from my son. It reads: "Happy Father's Day, Mum." What gives? My son, now age 33, appreciates that when his father kept cutting in and out of his life, mostly out, and I stepped up my parenting, I became both parents.

Happy Father's Day, Mum.

That message makes me smile, but it also breaks my heart a little. Knowing that a beautiful, thoughtful, talented and smart little boy, then teenager, then young adult, didn't have either his biological father, or a step-dad (I married later,) be involved in his life is heartbreaking. The reasons for the father/step-father's lack of interest isn't important. It was their choice to be unavailable geographically or emotionally or both. What is important is that this phenomenon is probably much more frequent in the lives of custodial single moms than not. We have the kids more often, unless couples are co-parenting with equal time allotted in visitation.

For the purposes of this article, I chose to focus on my situation and how I navigated this path, the successes, the downright "fails" and how it all turned out. And offer some tips for others on the same journey.

DIVORCE: When I told my two kids' pediatrician in 1986 that my husband and I were about to divorce and asked what I could expect, he said, "They will act out at every stage of their development." I thought it would take a couple of years for them to get over our split. But no, I was being told that I had a long, long way to go with repercussions, bumps and messy emotions for years to come.

He turned out to be right. What behavior was "just a stage?" And what was buried anger toward me burbling up to the surface? I decided early on to get both kids into a counselor to work out what they could the best they could express it. My daughter was six, my son was two.

REMARRIAGE: In 1989 I married again, feeling certain that this was the right man, situation, move (to Maine), all of it. We had a daughter together, and even though the older two were "half" brother and sister to my new daughter, I insisted that "there are no 'halves' in our family - you are brother and sisters, and that's final." That put to rest what to tell people



The author with her children in 2010

Contributed photo

who felt the need to inform my older two about the legal relationship between them and their new sister.

Nine years in, the situation wasn't the perfect marriage I had hoped for. Far from it. My youngest daughter had a great dad. But he remained distant to my older two kids. And it was worsening as they went into their teen years. The end was near and inevitable.

It was during those nine years that I was so desperate to have a male role model for my son that I called some of his friends' dads and asked if they would take him fishing or *anything*. It happened a few times and for that I was grateful. My son did have the praise and love of his friends' parents, coaches (soccer, basketball, lacrosse) and his teachers. He was, like all my kids, a stellar student.

TEEN YEARS: My second divorce became final in 1999, a year after it was filed with the court. It went to trial, a two-day affair where we contested just about everything, including who got the camping equipment and who got the beer-brewing equipment. It's so difficult to see clearly when you are in the middle of a divorce, and I was no different. It was a mess and by the time it was decided by the judge, I

needed to move from my rental house. I quickly bought a house I never really loved, but it was big enough for the kids, now 18, 15 and 9, to have their own bedrooms and a family room. It turned out to be a great home for their high school years.

FINANCES: That brings me to finances. Although the court decided what I would receive for child support of my youngest child, it seemed never to be enough and it was never increased between the years after it was awarded (she was age nine) and the time it ended (when she graduated from high school). I had gone back to work, and at times made a decent income, but and every time I received a chunk of money, it seemed to fly out the window. New cleats every season because a teen's feet grow that fast, groceries, gas, college tuition, bills, bills, bills. All the things couples pay for, but with half the income.

MENTAL HEALTH: How I survived the teen years? Lots of help. My friends and co-workers listened and gave advice. I consulted doctors and therapists. When my sixteen-year-old son was up to some shenanigans, a male colleague said, "Boys' brains don't mature until they are

When my sixteen-year-old son was up to some shenanigans, a male colleague said, "Boys' brains don't mature until they are 26." I said, "I'm not going to live that long." But we got through it.

KATE CONE, FORMER SINGLE MOM

26." I said, "I'm not going to live that long." But we got through it. He was finally diagnosed at age sixteen with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and severe depression. I had been pleading with doctors for years to help what I knew was depression to no avail. We finally found a doctor who got to the truth, and there was a huge turn-around. His grades improved, and a doubtful high school graduation became a successful one.

There is much more: my daughters turned out great, too. Both are now married and working in challenging careers, balancing those with toddlers in tow. Things are calm and drama-free. My son is now a college soccer coach, which was his dream since childhood, and is engaged to be married to a lovely young woman.

Did I make mistakes? Too many to mention. Did I learn a lot? Oh, yes. Here are some things I highly stress to the parents going it alone:

Use the Mister Rogers approach to tell your kids that you are divorcing their dad: "Sometimes two people marry and then after some time, they don't love each other anymore." That's it.

Never, ever criticize your ex to your kids. Just don't.

Get the best legal representation you can afford. Don't be "nice," in the sense that you give up what you need financially.

Get the best mental health support for both you and your kids. It will make a huge difference and get a lot of the anger and sadness to the surface

Don't jump back into the dating scene right away. Tell yourself, "I'm beautiful, smart, funny and talented." You don't need to have that reflected from someone else, just yet.

If you do choose to date, don't bring that person into your family life right away.

Assure your kids that no matter how much or little money you have, you'll be together and get through the split and the aftermath just fine.

Know that you can't force your ex to be a good parent. That was the hardest lesson for me.

If you must be both mom and dad, you'll be the best, most loving, multi-talented parent ever and much loved.

"Happy Father's Day, Mum."

Cannon's enthusiasm keeps Main Street Skowhegan moving

Leader says recreation and agriculture both important

BY DARLA L. PICKETT
Staff

A bundle of energy with snappy hazel eyes and a contagious smile, Executive Director Kristina Cannon is a master of multi-tasking at Main Street Skowhegan.

Whether it is polishing previous projects, such as River Fest or Run of River, or taking on new plans—like the Skowhegan Craft Brew Festival or the more recent Moose Festival—they all flourish under her enthusiasm.

A country girl at heart, the 33-year-old Cannon admits that agriculture is her first love. She grew up as part of a farm family on the fertile land alongside the Kennebec River in North Anson. The Williams farm traces its roots back to the early 1900s, to her grandfather's grandmother. Her grandparents, Harvey and Jean Williams, parents Richard and Lorelei Williams, and Uncle Andy Williams continue to run it.

It's a heritage she's very proud of, and one she says goes hand-in-hand with all she hopes to accomplish as part of the busy organization where she began her leadership role in September 2015.

"It's Skowhegan's brand, these natural resources, this beautiful river," Cannon said. "I grew up on a farm; our future revolves around the river, and recreation is a piece of all that."

Cannon believes recreation and local agriculture offer a good balance "to attract more people to the region, and not just as tourists, but as new residents."

Just two months shy of her three-year hiring anniversary date, her accomplishments already are many and varied in one of the 10 remaining accredited Main Street programs in the state.

Cannon's footprint is firmly planted in the third annual Skowhegan Craft Brew Festival, which "broke the thousand-person mark the second year," said Matt DuBois, president of Main Street Skowhegan and a co-owner of The Bankery and Skowhegan Fleuriste & Formal Wear.

The Brew Festival is not about getting drunk, Cannon said, but about craft brewers in Maine, the business it creates, sampling the wares, food vendors and getting together in the spirit of friendship and good will.

DuBois said Cannon is the driving force behind Main Street's successes in Skowhegan.

"She works very hard, is very dedicated to our community, and has the passion to move our community forward," he said.

That Midas touch and penchant for hard work is also what helped deliver the



Contributed photos
Kristina M. Cannon, executive director of Main Street Skowhegan, gives the welcome address at the Moose Festival in Skowhegan June 9, 2018.

success of the Moose Festival last month in Skowhegan. Cannon said Selectman Soren Siren and Businesswoman Amanda White approached her about the Moose Lottery in Skowhegan and how to celebrate it.

Siren said a great group of people helped make it happen, but Cannon was the glue that pulled it together.

"She's the one who really made it happen. We raised the bar and shot over the top of it," said Siren, who noted that members of the Skowhegan State Fair Association credited Cannon for her efforts. "(They) were super impressed with how Cannon managed the whole thing."

Cannon said it's important to take on every task with a strong belief in its outcome.

"My motto is, 'Go big or go home.' I strongly believe if you're going to do something, you do it well," she said.

So she drafted a 12-page proposal to Commissioner Woodcock at Inland Fisheries & Wildlife and the outcome was a Moose Festival that drew record attendance.

"It drew a completely different group of people; they came out in droves to help.



Cannon enjoys paddle boarding Aug. 2017 during Riverfest in the Gorge of the Kennebec River behind the Old Mill Pub in Skowhegan.

Dozens and dozens of volunteers," said Cannon, who devoted at least 130 hours to the project.

Cannon has invested that same kind of energy in the Run of River project, a white water park plan initiated by Road Commissioner Gregory Dore and a group of supporters in 2004.

"We had gone as far as I knew how," Dore said. "She knows how to go find funding. She's right full of energy. That helps. She is doing an excellent job moving this project along."

"She's such an asset to Skowhegan. Look at the job she did with the Moose Festival," Dore added. "It's a much better town because of her."

Cannon said she was a little skeptical of the Run of River project at first, then decided to jump in with both feet, and an economic impact study was one of the first steps. Last summer, a visit to other water parks in Colorado, accompanied by Town Manager Christine Almond, capped off her resolve.

"I'm 200 percent sold now; Run of River is going to transform and revitalize Skowhegan," she said. Recently, Cannon's networking strength paid dividends when a philanthropist donated \$10,000 through a Maine Community Foundation donor-advised fund to pay for a fundraising consultant.

Meanwhile, Cannon credited others for laying a good foundation for an agricultural hub before she even arrived in Skowhegan. She said people like Amber Lambke and young local farmers have taken giant strides in recent years to set the stage. Lambke started a Kneading Conference highlighting bread in 2007 and also co-founded Maine Grain Alliance and

the Somerset Grist Mill, which produces organic flour and oats.

Cannon brings to the table nine years of experience in the marketing communications field, having worked at a Boston advertising agency and most recently in the communications office at Colby College.

She graduated magna cum laude from Emerson College with a bachelor's in marketing communications, and earned a master's degree in marketing from Southern New Hampshire University. She was awarded a 2011 Service Industry Advertising Gold Award and was named a CASE (Council for Advancement and Support of Education) 2013-14 SimpsonScarborough Scholar, an accolade recognizing young marketing professionals in higher education.

One of several internships was at one of the breweries in Boston, which she said was very helpful with organizing the Brew Festival in Skowhegan.

Cannon's farm roots were never very far from the surface, even to her early choice of an agricultural college at the University of Connecticut.

"Whenever I got homesick, I would go over and hang out with the cows," she said.

Even as a student at Carrabec High School in North Anson, she never strayed far from the farm, except to play soccer, basketball and soft ball.

"In junior high, I start milking the cows with Mom and Dad on the weekends," she said. "That is a lifestyle that is very hard. When it's 2 a.m. and 30 below, you have to put your hands on the udders to keep them

Cannon

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

warm. It's a harsh lifestyle. It gives you work ethic like nobody's business."

She can still feel the pull of the farm; she lives only a mile away today.

"Part of me wishes I could be more involved with the farm; I needed to go somewhere and find my own way, but the farm holds a place in my heart that is a huge part of who I am."

Even her "spare time" hobbies are tied into who she is and how she views life.

She has taken up paddle boarding, and one Friday night a few weeks ago gathered up 30 people from all over the state for an excursion on the Kennebec.

She mountain bikes, cross country skis, trail runs with her two Labrador Retrievers, Gauge and Brackett, and grew up fly fishing. She said she and her husband, John, love to travel and eat, and search out unique restaurants: "We enjoy good food."

And when the weather is unfit for activity, Cannon admits to being a huge fan of Game of Thrones— and an occasional trashy romance novel: "It helps give the mind a break," she said with a smile.

"I love my job. It has occurred to me that somehow, it was what I was meant to do," Cannon said. "Skowhegan has such great potential."



Cannon in the Kennebec River Gorge in Skowhegan — the future site of Run of River — during River Fest 2017.

"I love my job. It has occurred to me that somehow, it was what I was meant to do. Skowhegan has such great potential."

**KRISTINA CANNON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
MAIN STREET SKOWHEGAN**



Cannon participates in the National Main Street Conference bike ride in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, May 27, 2017.

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Inland Hospital helps its community find resources for food and other needs

BY SUSAN VARNEY
Correspondent

Inland Hospital is working with the Good Shepherd Food Bank on a pilot project to provide emergency food kits at medical practices. By asking patients questions like “Have you run out of food or feared running out in the last 12 months?” during medical visits. When the need is obvious, the care provider alerts the Community Health Navigator, Bridgette Gemelli, who will help the patient with local food resources.

Because often there is an immediate need, Good Shepherd started providing Inland with rescue kits of food: cans of tuna and chicken, rice, pasta, peanut butter, shelf-safe milk, fruit, vegetables, oats and soup mixes. This is enough food for two or three days giving a person time to get to a food pantry, soup kitchen or another resource.

Food kits are delivered by Good Shepherd to local food banks and Gemelli picks them up for delivery to participating medical practices.

Gemelli said it’s difficult for anyone to focus on health needs when the immediate worries are about whether there is food enough for the next meal, how to pay the rent, repair the car or get to appointments.

Inland Hospital puts a local resource guide for local foods and essentials in each kit.

“The kits are a way to bridge the gap between hunger and getting to a food bank or other services and community resources,” said Gemelli, who has been Community Health Navigator for two years at Inland Hospital.

It’s all about connectedness. Connecting physicians, women’s health providers and community services for health, nutrition, transportation, communication such as safe-link phones and other needs.

Waterville has a resource guide online at: waterville-me.gov/healthwelfare/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2016/11/Food-Resource-Guide.pdf

Among the Waterville resources are:

- Waterville Food Bank at United Methodist Church, 61 Pleasant Street.
- Sacred Heart Soup Kitchen at Sacred Heart Church, 70 Pleasant Street.
- Evening Sandwich Program at Universalist-Unitarian Church, 69 Silver Street.
- Sandwich Program at First Baptist Church, 1 Park Street.
- Spectrum Generations at Muskie Center, 38 Gold Street.
- Meals on Wheels at Muskie Center, 38 Gold Street.

“I have had several patients get emotional and hug me when I tell them I have an emergency bag of food for them. Some patients are in dire straits with no money coming in and are really struggling to afford food, let alone pay bills.”

LORAIN PARADIS, DO

PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN WITH INLAND FAMILY CARE IN MADISON



Items from the emergency food kits include tuna, chicken, peanut butter shelf-safe milk, rice, pasta, fruit and vegetables along with a resource guide and recipes.

- Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter at 19 Colby Street.

Some have residency requirements, proof of age/disability, ID. Some require no screening.

Other towns provide support through food pantries, Community Supported Agriculture programs, farmer’s markets, summer backpack program and the federal Women Infants and Children’s nutrition programs (WIC).

“Food insecurity is a real problem in our area. We are very grateful to the Good Shepherd Food Bank for the emergency food kit program,” said Loraine Paradis, DO, a primary care physician with Inland Family Care in Madison. “I have had several patients get emotional and hug me when I tell them I have an emergency bag of food for them. Some patients are in dire

straits with no money coming in and are really struggling to afford food, let alone pay bills.”

Inland Family Care-Waterville location: 16 Concourse West Beyond Waterville, other Inland Family Care locations include: Oakland, 74 Water St.; Unity, 80 Main St.; Madison/Skowhegan, 344 Lakewood Road.



Contributed photos
Volunteers unload Emergency Food Kits from Good Shepherd Food Bank for use at Inland Hospital physician practices.

BookTalk

by Nancy P. McGinnis

“What You Should Know: A Field Guide to Three Sisters Farm”

BY RUSSELL LIBBY



Summer. A time to relax, breathe, savor. With our troubled, complicated world and our busy lives, that can be easier said than done.

A most effective and worthwhile remedy: a small, thoughtful book, an easily portable paperback intriguingly titled “What You Should Know: A Field Guide to Three Sisters Farm”. It is in fact a gathering of poems written by Russell Libby of Mount Vernon, Maine and published in 2013, a year after his untimely death.

Libby cultivated his passion for organic farming and small family farmers while working at the nonprofit National Center for Economic Alternatives, and

later for the Maine Department of Agriculture, and finally during his 17 remarkable years as the executive director of the renowned Common Ground Country Fair.

This poetry collection affords the reader a personal, colorful and accessible glimpse into Libby’s vast and intimate agricultural knowledge as well as his inner musings, in poems grouped under headings that include “A place to start; the dooryard; the orchard; the woods; the soil; water; a history;” and finally, “a way forward.”

To peruse and ponder these 44 poems is a rare calming experience. Libby’s voice is authentic and grounding as he shares his candid meditations on the 65 beloved acres of organic farmland, forest and streams where he spent more than half of his life with his wife and family. These are the intimate thoughts and words of a man who is thoroughly comfortable and familiar with his chosen universe and his place in it. Throughout this body of work, his words convey his respect and appreciation – whether, as in one poem for rhubarb, or, in another for time-honored tradition such as planting a spruce tree to mark the birth of each child – as well as moments of joy and whimsy.

Other poems express curiosity, share observations, and raise questions and concerns. One example is “Changing Lines,” noting how the wording of the deed to the farm became irrelevant and problematic once the construction of a dam long ago altered the flow of a landmark stream. “The lines are blurred and watery/just like the handwriting /on those very old deeds.”

At the ceremony where he posthumously presented Libby with the Distinguished Service award, Walter E. Whitcomb, commissioner of Maine’s Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources, said: “Russ Libby held a passion for agriculture and our natural resources that he proudly wore on his work clothes, wrote into his poetry, shared both publicly or with anyone who wanted to talk about it and leaves to an inspired generation that has morphed from cottage beginnings to industrial-strength impact. Russ Libby advanced a lifestyle into practically an art...”

How fortunate for us to have the opportunity to sit quietly on a summer’s day in Maine, and appreciate the legacy that Libby graciously left behind, in his Field Guide to Three Sisters Farm.



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Creating A Life

by Susan Varney

Add some pizzazz to life with a jazzy pair of boots

Even Cowgirls get the Blues.

I never particularly liked horses after having been scraped through the lilacs by an out of control roan, disguised as a "gentle mare," while my relatives roared. And later, bitten by a greedy equine wanting my cotton candy at the fair . . . But shoes, boots and hats would take up the closets of my life.

Who doesn't love cowboy boots? Boots like Chili are best found in their native habitat - the southwest and hotter than hell - but here on the east coast we make do with what we have and have fun with it.

Into recycling, I haunt the second-hand stores and re-sale stores, yard sales and junk shops. New boots are pricey even on sale, beautiful as they may be, I go for serendipitous found objects. I use them for costuming and not all that often so I can play with colors and wear them occasionally. My first pair of cowboy boots came from the free box at a Hospice Thrift Store . . . What a find, I almost felt guilty taking them, FREE.

I wanted a pair of turquoise boots but could only find a spray paint in Chevy body paint, a soft blue-green. So I overlaid that lightly with purple and even though the boots are getting a bit sad, I'm still wearing them.

Growing up wearing sensible brown shoes with white socks and taking care of younger brothers and sister, painting cowboy/cowgirl boots wasn't even in my viewfinder . . . Ballet slippers were the only thing we painted to go with costumes I didn't want to wear. Oh, the Eisenhower years were so dull as veterans came home to make lives, marry and have children.

The adult me still loves costumes and I can throw something together for Halloween, like fortune teller Madam Zenobia, tarot card reader Zoey Ravenwood, Belly Dancer Sasha, Black Witch, Pirate, Summer Solstice Ice Cream Socials and Winter Solstice Bohemian Bouillabaisse parties, Island Girls birthday parties, Mid-Summer's Night Dream garden parties.

Invite your friends, let your imagination go, wear a costume and have fun with it. Get a big hat and funky shoes and you are half way there!

Mix up a pitcher of martinis, dirty, one olive and serve with sushi, old Agatha Christie films with Hercule Poirot, painted nails, toes and fingers in Pop-arazzi red, morally outrageous Frida Kahlo earrings . . . and cowboy boots. Let your hair down, put on a hat, feather boa and sunglasses and work on your novel or write poetry with erratic and suspicious meter.

Back to boots. You've got to find them first. Then decide on a color or colors for your boots. Next, mask off the heels and soles with masking tape carefully adhering the tape to the area to be protected. Spray paint is good for covering the entire boot area.

Details can be made with artists' brushes and acrylic paints. If you don't like your first try just paint over it. It is best to use a light hand so the paint is not too heavy and thick and more apt to peel off or flake with use. A little wear will make it look natural.

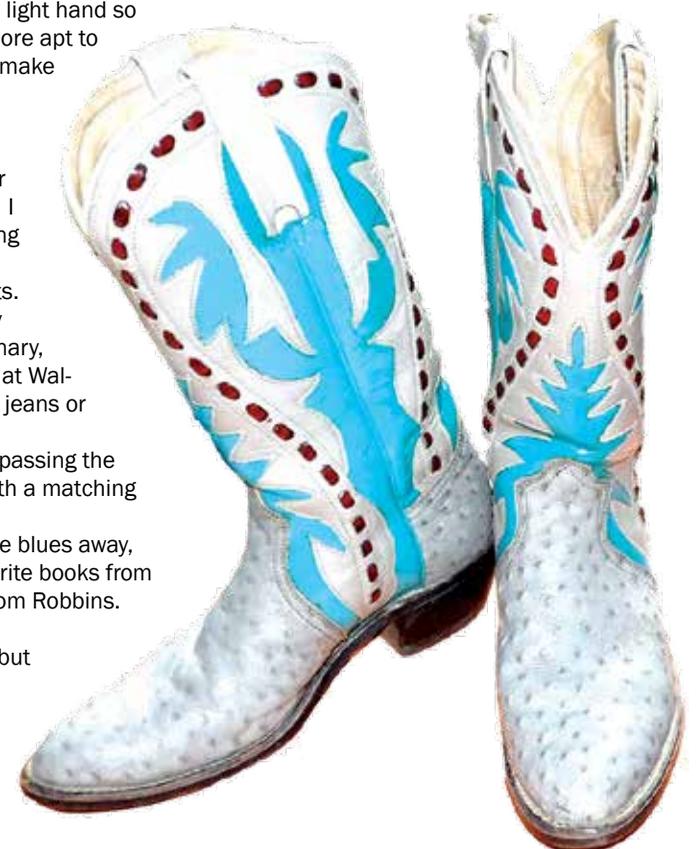
If you are happy with the base color, the next decision is what details to paint and what color or colors. Do you want subtle or bold? Where are you going to wear them? I find cowboy boots have two seasons: Spring and fall, summers are too hot and winters are too slippery for smooth bottomed boots.

Painted boots are just plain fun and they make me smile, feel funky, out of the ordinary, creating my own style that won't be found at Wal-Mart or L.L. Bean. Boots can be worn with jeans or that little black dress.

Buy boots in a size you can wear unless passing the boots on to friends as gifts, sometimes with a matching hat and a favorite book.

Go line dancing with friends. Chase those blues away, cowgirl! Makes me think of one of my favorite books from the 70s, *Even Cowgirls Get the Blues* by Tom Robbins. I have an autographed copy!

I need a bootjack and I could make one but haven't, and never think of it until it's time to take a snug pair of boots off. I remember my dad every time with his boot jack outside the kitchen door where he took off his barn boots and overalls. Oh, my, my, so long ago.



More women are getting into politics but many are still hesitant

BY VALERIE TUCKER
Correspondent

Every year, citizens in Maine municipalities choose candidates willing to serve on their behalf as decision-makers and leaders. Voters go to the polls and town meetings to elect city councilors, selectpersons, planning and school board representatives, budget committee members, county commissioners and sheriffs at the local level. They choose by secret ballot or by raising their hands at town meetings. Although more men than women have filled these positions, that pattern may be changing. In the past year, more Maine women have decided to put their names on a variety of ballots, regardless of political affiliation.

Three local public servants represent that shift in thinking. Marci Alexander, an Augusta City Councilor, has just finished her first three-year term and plans to run again. As MaineGeneral Health's attorney, as an assistant attorney general in the Maine Attorney General's Office and as a board member of HealthReach, she knew she had the requisite good listening skills and the appreciation for varied points of view. She also said political party designations didn't seem to matter as much as a true interest in making Augusta a great place to live.

"At the City Council level, you can really make a difference," she said.

She's met many older residents living on fixed incomes, and she knew that tax increases that seemed small to many would be a real hardship for them.

"Their tax bills and oil bills are a big part of their incomes," she said.

One of the biggest learning curves for her, she said, was absorbing the procedural process and interpretation of rules. She keeps all necessary information for quick reference on her iPad, which helps during discussions at meetings. She also found her past experience in resolving conflicts and negotiating equitable solutions helps her do her job more easily.

Cherianne Harrison of Wilton said a frightening bout with cancer 13 years ago

caused her to reflect on priorities and goals for her life. She stepped out of her comfort zone to make a successful run for a seat on the town's Planning Board. She also won a seat on the Mt. Blue school district school board, and that job has been a challenge. The proposed 2018-19 school budget was a particularly difficult process, with voters in 10 towns voting down three versions of the budget. Unfazed, Harrison is now taking the next step in her quest as a public servant, running for the 114th District seat in the state's legislature.

"People really want their government leaders to represent their concerns, no matter what party they belong to," she said. "It shouldn't be about a letter after your name."

Lauren Lessing, a Waterville City Councilor, said the challenges which face her as a public servant are well worth the time and energy she spends listening to constituents and solving problems. When she lived in Kansas, she worked with her neighbors to save a local park from a bid by Cingular Wireless to turn it into a cell phone relay station. In Waterville, her motivations remain the same.

The rewards are clear, she said.

"I love being able to help people," she said.

Lessing said that making sure snow is removed, potholes are filled, and public parking is safe might not sound like exciting goals, but it's part of the job. She also enjoys her work with colleagues on the city council.

"This year and last, we were able to reach across party lines and find consensus among ourselves on a compromise city budget," she said. "I'm proud of that."

All three women said they were grateful for family, friends and their network of supporters to get through the maze of campaign requirements, including gathering signatures, raising funds and getting their message to voters.

"The key is to get out there and meet voters face to face and listen to them," said Harrison. "I also have such a supportive network that's always there for me when I need them."

Lessing has suggestions for female candidates at any level: "Build strong personal relationships

Suggestions for female candidates and office holders at any level:

"Build strong personal relationships with neighbors and constituents and listen to them actively and with empathy. Connect people with one another, seek consensus, make peace when you can and fight when you have to."

LAUREN LESSING, CITY COUNCILOR, WATERVILLE

with neighbors and constituents and listen to them actively and with empathy. Connect people with one another, seek consensus, make peace when you can and fight when you have to."

For all women new to the campaign process, whether as president of the local Parent-Teachers Association or running for the state legislature, networking is the key, according to Jennifer L. Lawless, director of the Women & Politics Institute and a Professor of Government at American University. She wanted to know why so few women ran for office, what happened when they did and the extent to which their presence affected the legislative process. She's written extensively on the subject.

"When asked what made someone qualified to run for office, women named very specific

credentials, like a law degree or a business degree," Lawless said. "Men mentioned more general traits, like passion and vision."

Lawless says women hold themselves up to a hypothetical standard that neither they nor anyone else could ever meet.

"I think a lot of it has to do with traditional gender socialization and this idea that a lot of professional fields, certainly politics among them, have been male-dominated," she said in a recent Politico interview."

If women enter male-dominated fields, they think they have to work harder than their male counterparts to be perceived as qualified, she said.

"I think that perception is deeply embedded in women's psyches," Lawless said.

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Taking a workout outdoors is one way to increase the enjoyment factor.

5 fun ways to get fit

Exercise benefits both the mind and body. Study after study indicates how physical activity can reduce the propensity for illness, boost mood, lower stress levels, and much more. Still, certain people find it difficult to muster the motivation to get up and move.

Researchers at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention analyzed data from more than 450,000 American adults ages 18 and older who were randomly polled across the 50 states. Participants were asked about aerobic physical activity outside of their jobs. The findings were eye-opening. Estimates indicated nearly 80 percent of American adults do not get the recommended amounts of exercise each week. People most likely to exercise, according to the CDC study, were between the ages of 18 and 24.

Lack of time and inspiration may be to blame for disinterest in exercise. Boredom with routine and being unaware of alternative fitness regimens also may be contributing factors. Increasing the fun associated with workouts could lead to greater success in or outside of the gym.

1. Do what you enjoy.

Wasting time on activities that you don't enjoy may cause you to throw in the towel prematurely. Don't base fitness choices around what worked for others; find things that work for you. Exercise physiologists at John Hopkins Weight Management Center say to start with an activity that you already enjoy, even if it's aligned with the trend of the moment. Chances are you can find a class or make up a routine that works for you.

2. Tweak your playlist.

Music can improve performance during a workout and may actually take your mind off of strenuous or repetitive activity. Tunes also can be coordinated to the

workout. Songs that feature lyrics such as run, punch, push, or groove can reinforce movements in the routine, offers the National Academy of Sports Medicine. Also, tailor songs to coordinate to the beats per minute of different activities. Strength activities and endurance activities can feature songs with higher BPMs.

3. Exercise with friends or a group.

Having other people around can make workouts more enjoyable, and that interaction may spur competition that can make you more inclined to stay the course. People who were in the competitive groups in a study of 800 graduate and professional students at the University of Pennsylvania went to 90 percent more classes than those who exercised independently or were not competitive. The results were published in the journal "Preventative Medicine Reports." Competition can be a driving factor in efforts to exercise.

4. Head outdoors.

You may be more inclined to workout if you do so outside. Activities such as hiking, snowshoeing, swimming, and cycling on natural courses can be inspiring and burn calories.

5. Try sports or another activity.

Exercise regimens do not have to include running on a treadmill or lifting weights. All types of activities can work, and some may be more enjoyable to you than traditional exercises. Everything from martial arts to dance classes to volleyball can offer cardiovascular and muscle-building benefits in a fun atmosphere.

Making exercise fun motivates many people to embrace fitness and stick with their workout regimens.

Identifying and understanding dehydration

Dehydration is a simple condition to understand, but one that can lead to a host of complicated problems. Many people may be quick to associate dehydration with athletes, particularly those who exercise outdoors in warm climates. But dehydration can affect anyone at any time, which only highlights why men, women and even children should learn to identify signs of dehydration and what to do should it surface.

What is dehydration?

Dehydration happens when the loss of body fluids, namely water, exceeds the amount of fluids that is taken in. When a person is diagnosed as dehydrated, that typically means his or her body has lost so much fluid that it has begun to lose its ability to function normally.

Who is vulnerable to dehydration?

Anyone can suffer from dehydration, which can be especially dangerous to young children and older adults. The Mayo Clinic notes that older adults, who naturally have a lower volume of water in their bodies, may not feel thirsty until they are already dehydrated, so it's important that aging men and women understand that thirst is not always the best indicator that they're becoming dehydrated. Babies may become dehydrated when they get sick with an illness that causes vomiting and diarrhea. But even teens and otherwise healthy adults can suffer from dehydration.

What are the symptoms of dehydration?

Symptoms of dehydration vary with age. Parents of babies and young children should be on the lookout for signs of dehydrations, as infants and even toddlers may not be able to communicate that something is wrong.

Signs of dehydration in infants and young children include dry mouth and tongue, a lack of tears when crying, sunken eyes and cheeks, and a sunken soft spot on the top of the skull. In addition, babies who produce no wet diapers for three hours may be suffering from dehydration. A sense of listlessness or irritability in infants and young children is another potential indicator of dehydration.

Adults who experience extreme thirst may be suffering from dehydration. Less frequent urination and a dark-colored urine when going to the bathroom also is symptomatic of dehydration. Fatigue, dizziness and confusion are some additional indicators of dehydration in adults.

Can dehydration be prevented?

Dehydration can affect anyone, but there are ways to prevent it, even among those people who are especially susceptible to dehydration, such as children and older adults.

Parents of babies who are vomiting or experiencing diarrhea should speak with their pediatricians and discuss the ways to prevent such children from becoming dehydrated. Breastfeeding more frequently and giving the baby a medicine such as Pedialyte™ can prevent the occurrence of dehydration in babies who are sick. The Mayo Clinic recommends parents take a proactive approach to preventing dehydration in young children, meaning they should not wait until dehydration occurs or symptoms of dehydration present themselves before taking action.

Adults who want to prevent dehydration should drink plenty of fluids and include lots of fruits and vegetables in their diets. Such foods contain lots of water and can help the body avoid becoming dehydrated.

The Mayo Clinic recommends that athletes begin hydrating the day before engaging in strenuous exercise. A telltale sign of a well-hydrated body is clear, diluted urine. Athletes should replenish their fluids during exercise and continue doing so even after they finish working out or competing.

Older adults should make a concerted effort to drink more fluids when suffering from minor illnesses, which is when such men and women most commonly become dehydrated. Drink extra water when battling influenza, bronchitis or bladder infections, remembering that feelings of thirst often surface only after the body has become dehydrated.

Dehydration is a serious yet preventable threat to men, women and children. Learn more at www.mayoclinic.org.



Free up your summer with simple time-saving tips

Summertime is all about enjoyment, whether that means taking a vacation, spending time on the beach or enjoying the company of family and friends at parties and on patios.

With so many fun things to do, who wants to stay cooped up indoors with housework and a to-do list? Make sure you're able to take advantage of everything the season has to offer with these tips that can help you spend more time under the sun.

Avoid shopping on weekends. If you work a typical nine-to-five schedule, you probably do your grocery shopping and home renovation store visits on the weekend because it's when you have more time on your hands. Since that's true for most people, you'll face longer trips and more crowded spaces. Try to carve out some time on a weekday evening, especially Monday or Tuesday, and you'll free up precious weekend time and avoid long lines.

Simplify meal prep. Don't sacrifice eating healthy, nutritious food when you're pressed for time. Instead, look for low- or no-prep meal options like Mann's Nourish Bowls at the grocery store. These ready-to-eat single-



serve meals feature superfood veggies like sweet potato, kohlrabi and kale. Developed by chefs, the bowls are ready in just a couple of minutes in your microwave. Serve as a standalone meal or as a base with your favorite protein.

Clean as you go. When it comes to keeping your home clean and organized, it pays to do a little bit at a time rather than spend a whole day or weekend on chores. Wipe down your shower after each use to avoid the build-up of mold and mildew. Dust

surfaces in your closet regularly to keep items and clothes clean longer, and wipe kitchen surfaces while cooking. Regular maintenance goes a long way towards keeping your home tidy and ready for spur-of-the-moment summer gatherings.

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Light, luscious and lovely: summer fruit desserts

BY NANCY P. MCGINNIS
Correspondent

Summer in Maine may be lamentably short, but that's all the more reason to celebrate the season while it's here with fruit freshly picked from the garden, vine or tree. Even if you don't grow your own, it's easy to find local farm stands, farmers' markets, and "pick your own" opportunities where you get to literally enjoy the fruits of your labors.

When the weather is hot and humid, who wants to spend time in the kitchen? But that doesn't mean you have to eat out, or settle for "store bought" convenience food. Instead, by preparing your own dishes with ingredients to suit your own needs or preferences. Whether in a picnic basket or your dining table, they can be enjoyed when you're ready with minimal fuss and usually at less cost than commercially prepared and packaged alternatives.

Jewel-toned berries and juicy stone fruits are naturally delicious, not to mention filled with healthy antioxidants, fiber, vitamins and minerals. But even for those trying to eat light and avoid excess sugar and fat, grabbing a piece or a handful of fruit just doesn't seem like "having dessert."

Here's where a little prep makes the difference. When it's presented in bite-sized morsels, drizzled with a pleasingly bright, tart/sweet dressing and served in a pretty bowl, suddenly eating fruit becomes something to look forward to beforehand with no remorse later.

There's almost no need for a recipe. Start by gently rinsing and drying your chosen fresh fruits. Ideally, they will all be local and seasonal; in any case, avoid bananas as they are vulnerable to turning unpleasantly brown and mushy. Figure on a half to one cup of mixed fruit per serving. For example, for two servings, cut up one ripe peach, and combine it in a small bowl with one cup halved or quartered strawberries and a

generous handful of blueberries. Stir gently with a large spoon to mix the fruits without crushing.

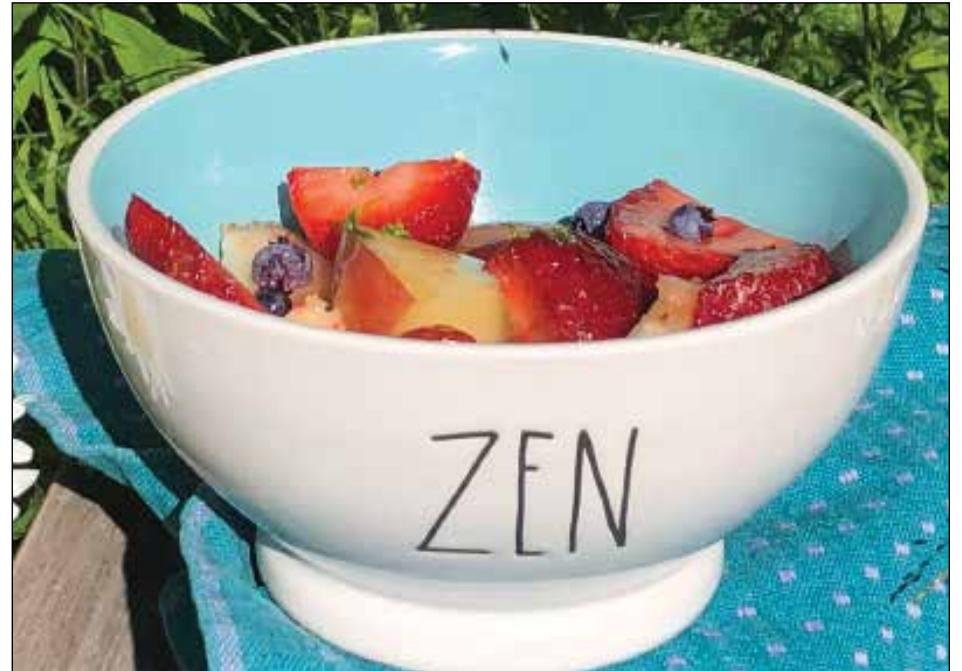
For the dressing, start by grating a little zest from the skin of a washed, fresh lime; set aside. Cut the lime in half and squeeze it over the bowl for a few seconds to release the juice. Reserve the cut lime for another use. Next, in a similar fashion, drizzle a thin stream of honey over the bowl. Mix once more just before spooning into serving bowls, to distribute the dressing evenly over the fruit. Garnish with a sprinkle of lime zest.

If you are making a large quantity of fresh fruit salad to share at a potluck or picnic outing, you may wish to pre-mix the dressing rather than drizzle on the separate components. To do so, squeeze the entire lime into a small bowl and combine the juice with 2 to 3 tablespoons of honey. A little lime zest may be mixed in at this point, but do save some as a garnish. Then drizzle the mixture from a spoon over the bowl of fruit.

The prepared fruit mixture can be enjoyed right away or will keep, refrigerated, for a day or two at the most. You'll notice that even though the lime juice prevents browning, inevitably the fruit does become softer and the mixture becomes more soupy over time as the honey and natural sugars marinate the fruit. When this happens, simply put the mixture into a blender or food processor, blend and pour portions into popsicle molds. Stash in the freezer for a refreshing and healthy homemade treat!

Nancy McGinnis photos

A selection of your favorite fresh, local fruits in season, some honey and a lime are all you need for a healthy, yummy dessert (or breakfast indulgence!) Served up in a pretty bowl, bites of seasonal fruit get a punch from a drizzle of tart/sweet dressing.



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Wise Words *from* Wise Women

Sandra Day O'Connor, a wife, a mother and something of a ranch hand as a child, was in 1981 the first woman appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court in its nearly-200 year history.

Her nomination as a moderate Republican by President Ronald Reagan caused concern for pro-life and anti-abortion groups that were hoping for a justice willing to overturn Roe v. Wade. Conservative senators were also concerned, but in the end, the vote to confirm was unanimous, 99-0.

Sandra Day was born March 26, 1930 in El Paso, Texas, the daughter of Harry Alfred Day, and Ada Mae (Wilkey). She grew up on her parents' cattle ranch, the Lazy B, which was nine miles from the nearest paved road and without running water or electricity for the first few years of her life.

A typical Texas rancher's kid, O'Connor shot jackrabbits for food, helped out with ranch chores and learned to drive around the ranch as soon as she could see over the dashboard. Because the schools were a 32-mile school bus ride away, she went to Bradford School for Girls, a private school in El Paso where she lived with a grandmother. She graduated from Austin High School in El Paso and went on to Stanford where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1950 and a law degree from Stanford Law School in 1952.

In law school O'Connor met her husband-to-be, John Jay O'Connor III, and they were married six months after her graduation.

O'Connor's grit and determination was evident after she applied for and got turned down by several large legal firms because, after all, women were not considered able to handle such jobs.

She then got her first job as a deputy county attorney in San Mateo, California by offering to work for no salary and share office space with a secretary.

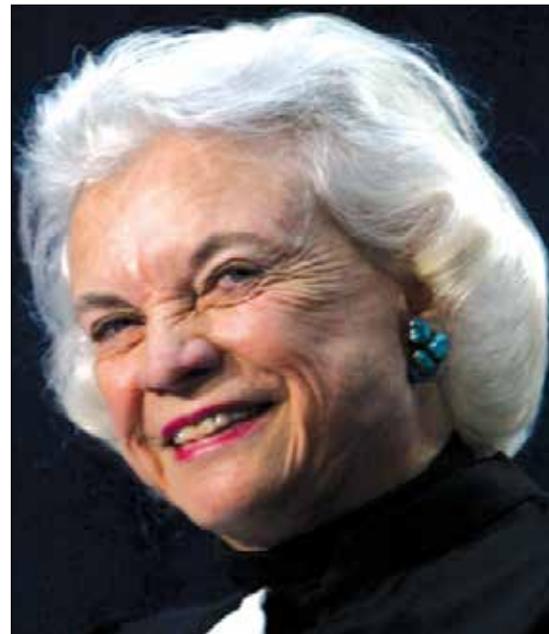
When her husband was drafted, O'Connor went with him and worked as a civilian attorney for the Army's Quartermaster Corps. Back to the states and settled in Arizona, O'Connor began her career in private practice.

The couple had three sons. O'Connor took five years off from her law practice after her second son was born in 1960 and it was during that time that she became involved in volunteer organizations and local politics. She returned to work as an Arizona assistant attorney general and, in 1969, was appointed to fill a state senate seat after a resignation. She won two subsequent elections and became the first woman in the country to be chosen Senate Republican majority leader.

In 1974, she ran and won election as a judge in the Maricopa County Superior Court, earning a reputation for being firm, but just. In 1979, she moved up to the state's court of appeals.

Two years later, President Reagan called. Although O'Connor was considered an unlikely candidate having little to no significant national reputation, once she met with President Reagan the job was hers. Here was a woman who could talk intelligently with him about constitutional issues, and horses.

During her 24 years on the court, O'Connor was considered to be a moderate conservative who occasionally broke from Republican ideology, particularly when she was the deciding vote to uphold Roe v. Wade. Her legacy is still apparent. Significant Supreme Court rulings on abortion rights and



“Society as a whole benefits immeasurably from a climate in which all persons, regardless of race or gender, may have the opportunity to earn respect, responsibility, advancement and remuneration based on ability.”

SANDRA DAY O'CONNOR

Photo courtesy of biography.com

university affirmative action relied on precedents crafted by O'Connor.

O'Connor was also the deciding vote in the Bush v. Gore case but later admitted the highest court should probably not have taken the case.

More than anything, Sandra Day O'Connor served as an inspiration for women in this country who were—and still are—vastly under-represented in positions of power.

During her time as a Supreme Court Justice, O'Connor developed breast cancer and underwent a mastectomy in

1998. She retired in 2006 to care for her husband, who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. He died in 2009.

In retirement, O'Connor founded iCivics, a website “To cultivate a new generation of students for thoughtful and active citizenship.”

To learn more about this incredible woman, read “Lazy B: Growing up on a Cattle Ranch in the American Southwest,” written with her brother H. Alan Day, or “Majesty of the Law: Reflections of a Supreme Court Justice.”
Compiled by Terri Hibbard

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Stay cool this summer while limiting energy consumption

For many homeowners, summer is all about staying cool. But that comfort comes with a hefty price tag. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, air conditioners cost homeowners more than \$29 billion a year in energy costs. While that's often money well spent, there are ways to stay cool this summer while simultaneously limiting energy consumption.

Air conditioners are a necessity in areas where temperatures rise to uncomfortable and often unhealthy levels in the summer-time. But employing air conditioners is not the only way for homeowners to keep their homes cool during the dog days of summer.

• **Embrace strategic landscaping.**

The landscaping outside of a home can contribute to cooler climates inside the home. Deciduous trees shed their leaves annually, and when planted on the western and southern sides of a home, these trees can block the sun from entering the home during the hottest times of day, reducing the need to lower the thermostat on air conditioners. Of course, when these trees shed their leaves in late fall, sunlight can then make its way into the home, potentially reducing heating costs.

• **Maintain air conditioners.**

Air conditioners contain air filters that, over time, can wear down and become dirty. The DOE notes that the relatively simple task of replacing and cleaning these air filters can reduce air conditioners' energy consumption by as much as 15 percent. If the unit does not respond after routine filter

maintenance, the DOE (energy.gov) lists issues with refrigerant, thermostat sensors and drainage as some common air conditioner problems. Homeowners who suspect these issues can contact certified professionals to inspect their units and perform any necessary repairs.

• **Install ceiling fans.** Cool people in a given room by installing ceiling fans in areas of the home that might be warm but not too hot during the summertime. Modern ceiling fans with the ENERGY STAR™ logo can be as much as 75 percent more efficient than older models, and ceiling fans typically consume far less energy than air conditioners. Install fans that can rotate forward and in reverse, as the direction the fan is rotating can actually heat or cool a room. Consult the owner's manual to determine which direction fans should be rotating in on hot and cold days.

• **Draw the blinds or close the drapes on especially hot days.** Drawing blinds and closing drapes can keep the sun out of the home, lowering temperatures inside as a result. While many homeowners understandably do not want their homes to be dark all day long, on especially hot days when the summer is bearing down, drawing the blinds or closing the drapes can have a substantial impact on comfort levels inside the home.

Air conditioners help to keep homes cool on hot summer days and nights. But homeowners who want to stay cool while cutting their energy costs can try various alternatives to air conditioners when the temperatures allow.

Air conditioner buying guide

Window air conditioning units help people who do not have a central cooling system stay cool when temperatures rise.

When shopping for window air conditioners, consumers will no doubt encounter the acronym BTU. BTU stands for British Thermal Unit, which is a traditional measurement of heat, defined as the amount of heat required to raise the temperature of one pound of water by one degree Fahrenheit at sea level. While BTUs may make sense when determining heat output of gas grills or the warming capacity of a heating appliance, just what do heating units have to do with air conditioners?

According to Compact Appliance, when BTUs are used in relation to air conditioning systems, the measurement expresses how many BTUs can be removed from the air per hour, essentially reflecting how well heat can be extracted from a room and cooled by the unit.

While it may seem like having the highest BTU rating would always be ideal, this isn't always the case. Cooling a room too quickly with an oversized unit may result in the appliance having to cycle on and off frequently, eventually overworking the air conditioner's compressor and potentially shortening its life span.

Similarly, using a unit that doesn't have enough BTUs will prevent the air conditioner from making a room comfortable, potentially compelling users to run the appliance in excess.

Instead, consumers need to find the right unit for their needs. Measuring the square footage of a room and then comparing it against BTU guidelines for particular air conditioner units is a great way to ensure you find the right window unit. According to the home improvement experts at Lowes, the following are the advised BTU ratings matched up with room sizes:

- 150 to 350 sq. ft.: 5,000 to 8,000 BTUs
- 350 to 550 sq. ft.: 8,000 to 12,000 BTUs
- 550 to 1,050 sq. ft.: 12,000 to 18,500 BTUs
- 1,050 to 1,600 sq. ft.: 18,500 to 25,000 BTUs.

Other factors will influence cooling capability as well. Consider whether a room gets a lot of sun or shade, and then adjust the BTU rating accordingly. Second-story rooms may have more ambient heat. Also, the number of occupants in a room may drive up the temperature, which may require purchasing a large unit.

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Enjoy a stress-free summer with the kids

Between camp, going on holidays and playdates, summer vacation can feel like endless planning and shuffling from activity to activity. Fortunately, you can use these tips and tricks to cut down on your stress and enjoy quality family time together.

Create a schedule. Jot down family activities and commitments on a large calendar and keep it on the fridge so everyone can see what's coming up. This will help give the kids a sense of security and routine that's missing during the summer months. Just be flexible, and make sure to schedule plenty of free time to relax and enjoy quiet time with a book.

Cut down kitchen time. Don't like having to choose between healthy and quick, easy meals? Look for simple, nutritious meal options that take much of the work out of cooking. For easy lunches and dinners you'll feel good about serving the kids, try Mann's Nourish Bowls. Ready in just a couple of minutes in your microwave, the bowls were developed by chefs and feature superfood veggies like broccoli, sweet potato and kale. They work as great side dishes to complete a fast and healthy meal.

Plan special dates. Getting out of the house regularly doesn't mean having to



use up the family travel budget. Give the kids an excuse to use up their energy and get some fresh air by scheduling

some fun, free activities. Go to the park, spend time in the library and visit your local community swimming pool. Keep the

kids on top of chores and other duties by presenting these activities as rewards for a job well done.

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