

# WQ

## Women's Quarterly

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Rocket Man Ranch  
is all about a  
love of animals**

**Health food store  
owner, "Ginny" Jewell,  
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***Creating a life:*  
A sign of the times  
and a life  
worth living**

**2019 Fall Edition**

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*The cover features Kat Johnson of Rocket Man Ranch.*

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# You need a good laugh and so do I

## *Just a Thought*

**By Terri Hibbard**



**L**aughter may not be the best medicine, but it's a lovely balm for a frazzled soul. And who isn't at least a little frazzled these days as we're bombarded from all sides with bad news, worse news and catastrophic news?

I'm thankful that the newscasts I watch at least try to lighten things up with clips from late-night shows like Stephen Colbert's or James Corden's. And I appreciate it when they insert occasional videos, like the pit bull that pretends to faint to avoid having her nails trimmed or the many videos of babies' reactions at first tasting avocado.

If we try to keep up with what's going on in the greater world, we really need to offset it with good, healthy doses of belly laughter.

Some people are lucky enough to have a spouse, a partner or a roommate with a lively sense of humor and can enjoy several doses of laughter every day. Lucky you. Kids can provide a few chuckles, too, as they learn our language and culture. You've got to smile when a little one asks for her favorite kid meal of "pissgetti." Or the little guy warns his brother that if he doesn't shape up, those television crook-catchers, the "yippie i" will come after him. Or the child raised in a smoke-free home who catches a whiff of cigarette smoke and declares "I fell folk!"

We who live alone lack handy helpings of humor, so we must look elsewhere.

I often count on Frazier re-runs for my at-least-a-laugh-a-day life. The show is one of the best-written sitcoms ever, although Big Bang Theory runs a close second. Luckily, there are 11 years' worth of Frazier, 24 episodes a year, available on Netflix, whereas BBT has gone someplace I can't get to.

Sadly I no longer see a Dave Barry column in the newspaper. When his column came into the Morning Sentinel newsroom when I worked there, we knew it by the editor's laugh. His column about a colonoscopy was a real winner. I had to stop reading and wipe the tears away more than once before I got to the end. It was published in 2008 in the Sentinel. I saved it in my computer to offer to friends who are desperate for a laugh. It's still out there on the web. If

it doesn't make you laugh, I feel sorry for you.

There also was a wicked funny television commercial for Jenny-O oven-ready whole turkey called Woman vs. Turkey. After she had seen it once, all we had to do was mention it and my daughter would collapse in uncontrollable laughter. You can find it on YouTube. Also on YouTube is Ellen DeGeneres and her Hawaii chair—fantastic.

Then there are books with great humor. Those by David Sedaris or, one I read recently although it was published 20 years ago, "A Walk in the Woods" by Bill Bryson. In Bryson's book, there are long sections about the stunning beauty and almost unbearable hardships of the Appalachian Trail walk, as well as rants about the lousy upkeep by the Park Service. But now and again I hit sections that were so hilarious I had to stop to wipe tears before continuing. I love that!

Many years ago, I was in bed reading "All Creatures Great and Small" when an incident involving an old car, a bumpy field and assorted scattering animals had me laughing so hard the bed shook.

"What's so funny?" my husband asked. I read him the scene.

"Huh," he said, "I don't think that's funny."

Yep. Taste in humor can be very personal. It can also change with time. A case in point: "Mr. Hulot's Holiday," a French film with almost no dialogue had me and a friend in the late 1950s all but falling out of our seats with non-stop laughter. I pegged it "the funniest movie ever."

When our Railroad Square Cinema brought the classic comedy to town in the early 1980s, I was over-the-top excited about sharing "the funniest movie ever" with my entire family, as well as my daughter's boyfriend.

This event lives on in family lore as one of my really bad ideas. There might have been a couple of giggles during the show as we sat in the theater, but the decades had apparently removed the humor. Funny it was not. Even to me.

In his book, "Anatomy of an Illness," the late Norman Cousins claimed that he was cured of an incurable disease by laughter and massive doses of vitamin C. I don't recommend that protocol, but if you add a good dose of laughter to your life, I know you'll feel better.

I'd love to hear your suggestions for more great laugh-producers.

Contact [terrihibbard41@gmail.com](mailto:terrihibbard41@gmail.com)

# Kat Johnson's Rocket Man Ranch is all about a love of animals

BY NANCY P. MCGINNIS  
Correspondent

It may not be everyone's idea of Zen, but at the end of a long work day, Kat Johnson looks forward to decompressing and mellowing out by cleaning up horse manure.

She changes her clothes, walks away from her cell phone, and loses herself in this simple but necessary task at Rocket Man Ranch, the Wales home she shares with her husband Kevin and her four horses. They include Raja, a 26-year-old Arabian, Robert and Pebbles, both 18-year-old Morgans and Twinkle, a 13-year-old Welsh/Shetland pony cross.

Equine boarders include Dixie, a quarter horse and Maggie, an Appaloosa, both 24 years old, that occupy their own nearby paddock. And rounding out the household, are three cats, two dogs and a tankful of fish.

Being around animals, especially horses, has always been second nature to Johnson. She grew up "just down the road in Greene, where I raised every domesticated animal you could think of," she said. "I got the horsey gene from my Mom — she first plunked me on her Arabian when I was three. I had my own little pitchfork and I used it to shovel poop every chance I could get!"

Johnson's lifelong affinity for horses is matched by her boundless knowledge of all things horse-related and her enthusiasm, affection and respect for the magnificent animals.

"I was kicked by my pony when I was seven — I stopped breathing and suffered cracked ribs. Later, I was thrown on the trail from the same pony multiple times. No real injuries there, other than having the wind knocked out of me and my pride bruised.

"Then I was thrown from Brandi, the wild one that I helped break to saddle. One bad spill cracked my helmet after a bucking bronco routine. She and I went rounds for years, but finally came to understand each other and we had an incredible bond. She was 32 when we lost her a couple years ago.

"These times confirmed my love of horses — no matter how badly I was injured, I couldn't wait to get back on!"

Johnson has fond recollections of her youth spent in "three-day eventing, gaming, trail riding and showing." Adventures from which she emerged "relatively unscathed, due mostly to my awesome girls, Castile Spring (a grey Thoroughbred) and Ginger (a fiery chestnut Morgan)."

Johnson earned a B.S. in Animal Behavior from the University of New England and has worked in the animal field most of her life, from training at horse farms, interning at a large animal vet, working in shelters and as a store manager at Pet Life. Trained in equine, canine and feline massage, Johnson has also been keenly interested in the role of nutrition and herbs as a key to wellness.

"I became fascinated by homeopathy and felt like there was a different way to do things in the veterinary field."

Five years ago, Johnson took a position as a veterinary assistant with Judy Herman, DVM CCH at the Animal Wellness Center, a homeopathic clinic in Augusta.

"I knew I would learn a lot and I certainly have," Johnson reflects.

The notion of Rocket Man Ranch, sprawling over 65 acres of quiet countryside with plenty of space for lessons, clinics and



Nancy McGinnis photo

The notion of Rocket Man Ranch, sprawling over 65 acres of quiet countryside with plenty of space for lessons, clinics and trail riding came to Johnson in a dream about 10 years ago. When she is not serving clients at the Animal Wellness Center, Johnson currently works with about 20 students, most of whom happen to be women, ranging in age from four to 40 and over, at the Ranch.

trail riding came to Johnson in a dream about 10 years ago. Johnson worked hard over the ensuing years to make it a reality and purchased the property in 2014. It's named for her beloved, late chestnut quarter horse Doc, "the best gelding I've ever had," she said in a whisper out of earshot of the other horses, "who ran so fast that people nicknamed him Rocket Man."

Running a ranch, and tending to the horses, is a never ending job. Johnson is beyond grateful to her husband Kevin, whom she describes as a "city boy turned country," for doing "whatever needs to be done when I'm at work. He had never been around a horse until we met almost 15 years ago. Now he handles them like a pro and he's an amazing horse Dad."

When she is not serving clients at the Animal Wellness Center, Johnson currently works with about 20 students, most of whom happen to be women, ranging in age from four to 40 and over, at the Ranch.

"Some are newbies, but most have been with me for years — some even rode Doc," she said.

On a recent afternoon, 15-year-old Kaylee Mousseau arrived for a lesson. The young Litchfield resident has made great progress, Johnson said, coming after school and on Saturdays for more than a year. She not only rides Pebbles but has also taken an active part in grooming and saddling up. She has also learned how to conduct herself around horses and become familiar with using and caring for the tack (gear), as well as the care and feeding of horses. Mousseau's mother said that though there are places closer to home to take riding lessons,



Tiffany Studios photo

Johnson partners with photographer Tiffany Dumas to offer photo shoots for various occasions featuring the horses and the scenic natural backdrops. On request, a horse can be transformed by the addition of a sparkly horn "for a magical, memorable photo session with a unicorn!"

they prefer coming here for the small scale operation, reasonable price, and Johnson's personalized approach tailored to her daughter's interests.

In keeping with Johnson's holistic approach, Rocket Man Ranch is not just for horseback riding lessons and trail rides. She has recently started hosting weekend open-air yoga sessions on the scenic property, led by Kavita Sharma-Nason of Chill Yoga. Johnson said looks forward to expanding with Tai Chi and Pilates classes next year.

She also hopes to offer old-fashioned sleigh rides this winter.

Johnson has welcomed group visits by young adults with special needs, and looks forward to offering a confidence clinic conducted by the National Mounted Police Services for civilian horse and rider teams to overcome fears in the face of obstacles such as loud noises, smoke and fire and the like.

A mounted archery clinic at Rocket Man Ranch is in the works for next fall.

Johnson has also struck up a partnership with photographer Tiffany Dumas of the Tiffany Studio to offer photo shoots for senior portraits, engagement pictures and other special occasion photos featuring the horses and the scenic natural backdrops. On request, a horse can be transformed by the addition of a sparkly horn "for a magical, memorable photo session with a unicorn!"

Rocket Man Ranch can be found on Facebook, or contact Johnson at 740-5319.

# Can you hear me?

## *Hearing well is essential to living well*

BY SUSAN VARNEY  
Correspondent

“Listen up,” people say when they want to be heard by others, but what if you can’t? One can turn up the volume on the radio, television or computer but risk alienating others unless one lives alone or uses headsets. But losing birdsong and thunder, waves crashing on the beach, friends singing Happy Birthday, cows mooing in the barn, cats mewing for dinner or police and fire sirens behind you on the highway can be frustrating and dangerous.

There is help. Waterville Audiology at 124 Silver Street is ready to test your hearing, evaluate your needs and provide help if needed.

Rebecca Rancourt, Au.D., CCC-A is young, enthusiastic and armed with all the latest technology to help with everything from tinnitus to severe hearing loss. And she has deep roots in Waterville, as in the Rancourt building on Main Street downtown.

A licensed doctor of audiology, Rancourt earned her doctorate of audiology from the University of Wisconsin and her Bachelor of Arts in Communication Sciences and Disorders, from the University of Maine and did a clinical externship at the Mayo Clinic Health System. When Ann Pratt Giroux was ready to retire, Rancourt was there to step up to the challenge.

Jennifer Rancourt, MPA, is her daughter’s business office manager and is there to greet patients when they visit or call. The business plans an Open House from 4 to 6 pm. October 16 with games, refreshments, and information.

There are hearing aids especially for tinnitus, that dreadful ringing in the ear, that include a program for ocean waves. Amazing. Hearing aids can even stream music or phone calls, even more amazing.

“Ear protection is the best prevention” for hearing loss, said Becca Rancourt. She also educates people in the use of earplugs, which if not used correctly will not protect hearing as they are designed to do.

Hearing aids are small electronic devices that can be highly customized to address different types of hearing



*Susan Varney photos*  
Jennifer Rancourt, Au.D., CCC-A, Doctor of Audiology in her office at 124 Silver Street, Waterville.

loss. All digital hearing aids contain at least one microphone to pick up sound, a computer chip that amplifies and processes sound, a speaker that sends the signal to your ear and a battery for power. More sophisticated models provide additional features such as direct connection to a smartphone or rechargeable batteries.

Hearing aids range in cost from less than \$1,000 to more \$4,000.

“We get people coming in who have tried the specials on the market,” Rancourt said. They are often not happy with the fit, service or sound and end up spending more to get a product that works for them.

“I want to sell you a product you will like,” she said.

Rancourt said the most satisfying thing is seeing the difference between how people behave coming in and leaving. Often couples are alienated from each other, not talking because one of them doesn’t hear well. When they leave after being fitted with hearing aids they are all smiles and admit to Rancourt that the spouse no longer mumbles. Rancourt had changed their lives.

Services offered by Waterville Audiology include: adult hearing screenings, hearing tests, hearing aid evaluations, hearing aids, computerized hearing aid fittings to ensure proper amplification, hearing aid accessories, hearing aid cleaning, checks, maintenance and repairs and hearing aid batteries.

If the hearing test shows hearing loss, a hearing aid will be needed. While this can be hard to accept, going without hearing aids increases the risk for a host of social and medical problems such as isolation, dementia or cognitive decline and depression.

All hearing aids today use digital signal processing (DSP) technology to amplify desired sounds (such as speech or music) in the ear while filtering out the undesirable sounds such as background noise.

PHONAK, Starkey, ReSound, Widex, Signia, Unitron, Sonic, Advanced Bionics, Cochlear & Oticon Medical are just some companies offering a variety of hearing solutions. Waterville Audiology has a wide selection of hearing aids from several manufacturers to ensure patients get the right fit.

Rancourt is dedicated to helping each patient hear their best.

Hours at Waterville Audiology are 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Monday - Thursday and 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Friday by appointment for clients over 18.

For more information call the office at 872-0320.



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# Health food store owner has a passion for life

BY DARLA L. PICKETT  
Staff

For Virginia “Ginny” Jewell, the word “quit” doesn’t exist. The Canaan native has overcome major obstacles—including a car crash that nearly took her life in 2002—before recently opening her third store, Ginny’s Natural Corner, this summer in Skowhegan.

The natural health food store on North Avenue is gleaming with shiny new shelves filled with an expanded line of products, including supplements, herbs, health supplies and fresh produce straight from local vendors.

But what really makes the place light up is Ginny’s passion—for work, for her community and for life in general. Despite setbacks that would have left many people running for the hills, Jewell just keeps on going. And she takes none of the credit.

Her husband, Chad Brooks, her family, the community and her faith are what keep her going, she said. Each time she makes a move, or changes a plan, or faces a dilemma, people turn up out of the woodwork to help, Jewell said.

“Everywhere I go, I have this outpouring of support,” she said.

A car accident in 2002 left her body like a “jigsaw puzzle,” she said, with significant frontal lobe damage and multiple physical injuries.

“They called my family home to say goodbye,” the now 41-year-old recalled. They also told her she couldn’t have children.

They didn’t know the determined Jewell, who, just before the accident, had obtained a master’s degree in psychology from Norwich University, Montpelier, Vermont in 2002, majoring in family therapy with a specialty in abuse. She wrote her 278-page thesis on infanticide.

“My dream has always been to get my doctorate,” she said.

Today, she has three biological children, one stepson, and has worked on child protection cases and foster care, most recently with two children who were just reunited with their Mom.

“I’m real proud of that,” she said.

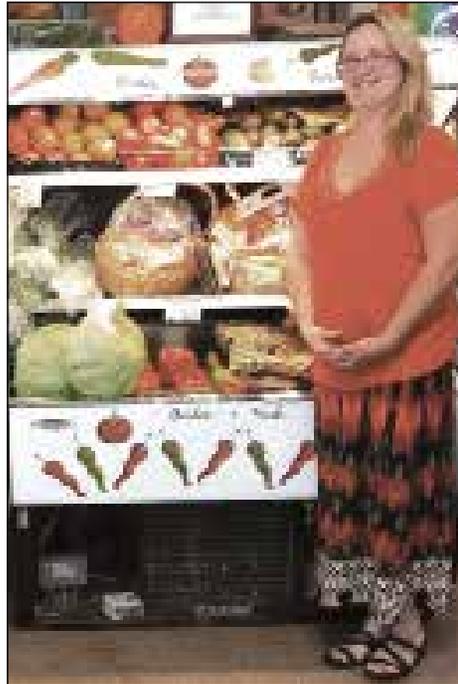
To pay the bills, go to college and keep money in her pocket, she has worked wherever those needs could be met.

“I’m not afraid of hard work ... babysitting, housekeeping ... When I was 15, I wanted a car. I took a summer job and got a little red Escort. I’ll do whatever it takes to get it done. I don’t mind getting my hands dirty.”

For 17 years she worked part-time at Spice of Life health food store in Skowhegan; she left as the primary purchasing agent.

A health food store was not on her list of career of choices, however.

But, Jewell has a strong faith and an in-



Staff photo by Darla Pickett

Virginia “Ginny” Jewell, owner of Ginny’s Natural Corner, shows off the local vegetable section at her new store on North Avenue in Skowhegan, former home of Evelyn’s furniture.

stinctive belief that good will overcome; it just happens.

“The doors keep opening and I walk through them,” she said with a big smile.

In 2012, she was one of three people who opened health food stores in Skowhegan; hers is the only one that remains.

“My husband was my biggest supporter,” Jewell said of Chad Brooks. She said he made all his financial resources available to her—IRAS, savings accounts, whatever it took for her to build a success in five years.

“I had five years to stand on my own—I did it. Each year she said she has seen an increase in business.

She opened the first store on the south side of town in a big, open space at the corner of Main Street and Waterville Road. Then the parking lot flooded following a powerful rain storm and put a big dent in her business.

“We were ankle deep in water,” she said. The flooding resulted in a significant drop in business, so she packed up the contents of the whole store and moved, in 2015, to 78 Water St., where she leased the former Karen’s Kloset—part of the Holland block in downtown Skowhegan. Cornville Regional Charter School purchased the Holland block of stores downtown, but Jewell was set to buy

it first. Then, on the on the day of the closing, her tax identity was stolen and the deal fell through.

So here she was again, fighting for space, more parking and a foothold in the business. She had mere days to bring Karen’s Kloset up to code. She opened Oct. 19, 2015.

“She’s an extremely hard worker,” said Randall T. Gray, former building inspector for the Town of Skowhegan. “She did everything we asked her to do; she’s always dedicated to the project at hand. And, she’s just the nicest woman too.”

When she had to move from Karen’s Kloset this year, she wasn’t finding it easy—until Jim and Roland Veilleux approached her about a deal at Evelyn’s furniture on North Avenue.

They, too, may have spotted her can-do attitude. They not only made her a generous offer and gave her a long-term lease, but helped pull the deal together as well.

“They are awesome landlords,” Jewell said.

Around her she points to all the help she got: businesses who came forward with shelves, strangers who drove up with moving trucks, a person gave a freezer, no strings attached.

“I didn’t do it alone,” she said.

She moved within days and was open the Tuesday after Memorial Day 2019.

Even so-called failures spell success for Jewell. Several years ago, she applied, unsuccessfully, for an entrepreneur grant from Main Street Skowhegan that would have given her start-up a real boost.

“But I learned so much. I knew nothing about a business plan until then,” she said, after having to put one together as part of her application. “It was a learning curve for me.”

Maria Landry, associate director of Main Street Skowhegan, said Jewell’s work ethic is impressive.

“When I was talking to her, I noticed how passionate she is about what she’s doing, and about making sure she has the things the community wants and needs,” Landry said. “She’s so excited about her new space, that she can carry more items, and offer classes and things like that. She is on this path and doing her best to be a resource for the community.”

One of Jewell’s strengths is her love of people.

Everyone is treated the same, homeless or disabled, old or young, blue hair or blond, on food stamps or not—“they are treated with love and respect; this is a safe place.” She even offers free soup on Thursdays every fall.

Jewell also gets along well with her health food store colleagues around the state, collaborating in joint purchasing arrangements to keep up with demand and keep the prices down.

She participates in the state’s Farm Fresh Rewards Program for eligible families through

Maine Farmland Trust, and even does some home deliveries when asked. She invests time in the KVCAP early childhood program, and the Cornville Lunch program, helping with the Healthy Kids Back to School packs for 300 children.

When Bigelow Brewing needed 500 pounds of pie pumpkins, she stepped up. When the Cooperative Extension asked for help, she gave it. She even has been known to do wellness checks at home for older customers.

Jewell adds her mother, Louise Sanders, and father, Wayne Sanders “Mr. Fix It” to her layers of support.

“My Mom is naturally nice. She can do anything. If I lived in a cardboard box, she’d still love me.”

Her daughter, Lisa, belongs on that list of family support too.

Jewell is pleased with the growth of her business.

“We have one of the biggest bulk herb and spice sections — we have over 300 different herbs and spices now, and it grows monthly,” she said. She also has hand-ground peanut butter and natural sugarcane molasses, along with essential oils, unhulled hemp seeds and tinctures.

“We do a ton of special orders for items that we research, and are willing to think outside the box to get customers the products that they want,” she said. “We shop around to keep our prices low.”

The store also carries the regular health food selection of grains and cereals, fruits and vegetables, eggs, meat and poultry, cheese and dairy products, along with more than 30 varieties of dry beans, pastas and rice.

Jewell said because Somerset County has become somewhat of an agricultural hub, with the farmers market and the grist mill, it has been a plus for her business. Right now she has three regular part-time employees and two or three family members who are available to work when necessary. She said she plans to increase current staff hours as money provides.

Lisa Chase, one of those employees, said Jewell’s people skills are outstanding:

“I’ve known her forever, she definitely has a relationship with her customers. She connects with people easily. It’s not just about the products for her.”

Jewell said demand for healthy foods has steadily increased in the past 10 years.

“Every community needs a health food store. We bring back that personal touch,” said Jewell, who attends multiple shows a year to find new products, new lines and bring in things that local customers want. That sets her apart.

“We can customize our store to fit our community. And when you come in, you’re greeted by name.”

# Golden Sesame Cookies

BY **NANCY P. MCGINNIS**  
Correspondent

**T**hese cookies are a delightful departure from the usual varieties found on buffet tables and at holiday cookie swaps. Created from a handful of interesting ingredients, they are a subtly sweet, sophisticated alternative to cap off a big meal, to accompany a cheese plate or to simply enjoy with a cup of tea.

Making these cookies is uncomplicated, and with rolling and flattening, even somewhat Zen. The process is simple enough for kids or grandkids to help.

You may need to plan a shopping trip to a natural or health food store, or shop online, for some of the ingredients – though it's becoming easier than ever to find items such as tahini and almond flour in mainstream grocery stores.

When entertaining these days, it's always thoughtful to offer options to accommodate dietary needs and preferences. Since these cookies are indeed made with almond flour (which is actually not a flour, simply finely ground almonds) they happen to be gluten free. An added bonus: when maple syrup is used (rather than honey), the cookies are vegan. And omnivores will still find them simply yummy!



## GOLDEN SESAME COOKIES

Makes about 2 dozen cookies

- 1/2 cup sesame seeds
- 1 1/2 cups almond flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/3 cup maple syrup or honey
- 1/3 cup tahini (sesame paste), well stirred before measuring
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1. Toast the seeds over medium heat in a heavy frying pan until they are fragrant and slightly golden. Watch carefully, and shake the seeds in the pan from time to time so that they do not burn. Set aside to cool on a large plate or pie dish.
2. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
3. Combine the almond flour, baking soda and salt in a small bowl. Whisk together to combine thoroughly.
4. Thoroughly mix the remaining ingredients in a large bowl until smooth.
5. Add the almond flour mixture to the large bowl and mix gently until well blended.
6. Using a large spoon or a 1½-inch scoop, shape the dough into uniform balls. Roll them evenly in the toasted sesame seeds. Flatten them into rounds, spaced about two inches apart, on the parchment-lined baking sheets.
7. Bake the cookies for approximately 8-12 minutes total, shifting the pans from top to bottom rack about halfway through the baking. Watch carefully so the bottoms do not over-brown. Use a spatula to transfer the cookies gently to a wire rack to cool completely before serving.

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# Bargain hunting at resale shops is a favorite pastime of many women

BY WANDA CURTIS  
Correspondent

A favorite pastime of many women today is shopping for bargains. Good Morning America's co-anchor Lara Spencer recently wrote a book "I Brake for Yard Sales: And Flea Markets, Thrift Shops, Auctions, and the Occasional Dumpster" which tells of her passion for hunting down bargains (which she learned as a child) and about repurposing the items she finds.

Like this television personality, old and young, married and single, career women and stay-at-home mothers, all love to find a bargain.

Melissa Holmwood, who owns Madlyn's New and Used Consignment Shop, was also introduced to bargain hunting as a child. Holmwood said that her consignment shop is actually named after her grandmother, who raised 10 children on a shoestring budget and dressed them in clothing from resale shops.

"I decided to name the shop after my grandmother to honor her for the special person that she was," said Holmwood.

At Madlyn's, located at 42 Main Street in Waterville and 157 Waterville Road in Skowhegan, women from across New England buy high-quality, brand name, new and used clothing for their entire family at bargain prices. Holmwood said that she carries women's clothing sizes small through size 4x, men's extra small through 4x clothing and newborn through size 20 clothing for children at both shops.

One feature unique to Madlyn's is the vintage room located in the cedar closet formerly serving as a storage area for out-of-season furs. Holmwood said that one of her customers travels from Boston each week bringing in a fresh supply of vintage clothing to restock the cedar closet.

"We accept high-quality, name brand clothing purchased within the last few years on consignment," said Holmwood. "We're currently accepting fall and winter clothing."

In addition to everyday clothing and accessories, wedding and prom dresses are also sold at Madlyn's. Holmwood said that all wedding dresses are currently on clearance.

For more information about Madlyn's shops see [facebook.com/madlyn2010](https://www.facebook.com/madlyn2010).

Another resale shop owner inspired by her grandmother is Judy Haar who owns Judy's Jewels & Forgotten Treasures located at 1046 Western Avenue in Manchester. Harr said that her grandmother collected antiques



Contributed photo

Women from all over New England can find high quality, brand name clothing for their entire family at Madlyn's New & Used Consignment shops in Waterville and Skowhegan.

and she used to travel to sales with her grandmother.

"I fondly remember that from when I was very young," said Harr. "My grandmother loved antiques and had different little collections."

After operating Judy's Jewels, a successful antique business in Florida for 29 years, Haar decided to move to Maine. She's a native of Augusta and had continued to visit Maine for several months each year while living in Florida. Last year she returned to her roots.

"It was a huge step of faith," said Haar. "I sold everything and moved to Maine."

At the shop in Manchester, Haar sells fine estate vintage jewelry, Victorian jewelry, Bakelite jewelry, sterling silver jewelry, costume jewelry, antique mesh and glass beaded purses, inkwells, door stops, book ends, pottery, art glass, sterling silver flatware, tabletop frames, perfume bottles, porcelain, fine crystal, paintings and art. In regards to vintage jewelry, Haar said there's something for everyone at the shop, from the everyday shopper looking for simple costume jewelry to serious collectors looking for that special piece of jewelry they've always wanted. She said the prices of her jewelry range from \$1 to \$2,500.

While in Florida, Haar said that customers traveled from all over the world to buy and sell vintage jewelry at her shop. She has handled many unique and valuable pieces of jewelry and has become very knowledgeable regarding their worth. She said that, besides meeting interesting people, one of her favorite aspects of the business is researching the vintage items that she sells.

To view photos of items carried at the Manchester shop, see [judysjewelsmaine.com](https://www.judysjewelsmaine.com).

Another central Maine shop that features vintage items, both new and used, is Freckle Salvage Company at 129 Main Street in

Winthrop. They sell vintage furniture, home décor and gift items. Many of the new items are handmade by locals. They also sell a lot of reproduction pieces including posters.

The owners Nicole and Jesse Stanford used to enjoy visiting flea markets. Nicole said that one day she and her husband decided to try selling items at flea markets themselves. She said they rented a booth and sold items at flea markets for several years. They did so well and enjoyed it so much that Nicole decided to quit her job and they opened Freckle Salvage Company. They chose that name because her young son has a single freckle behind one of his ears which everyone has teased him about over the years. He's also involved in the business.

"The shop is located in the building that was the old Winthrop Post Office," said Stanford. "It became available at the same time that I was looking for a place to open a shop."

See [facebook.com/pg/Freckle-Salvage-Company](https://www.facebook.com/pg/Freckle-Salvage-Company) to check out items sold at this shop.

Retail Consignment Boutique at 270 Kennedy Memorial Drive in Waterville, specializes in women's clothing size small to 4x. The owners Erica Johnson and Angela Hallee said they would like for women to have a memorable experience when they come there shopping.

"Our goal is to empower women of all ages and sizes," Johnson said.

According to Johnson, the shop was originally located on Elm Street in Waterville and was later moved to Augusta. She said that it was relocated to its present location about five years ago.

More RESALE, PAGE 9



Wanda Curtis photo  
At Judy's Jewels & Forgotten Treasures in Manchester, there's something for every customer, from simple costume jewelry to that special piece.

# Inland program helps patients get transportation to food banks

**WANDA CURTIS**  
Correspondent

**F**ood insecurity in Maine is a growing problem. A statewide community health needs assessment conducted last year revealed that one in six families in Kennebec County lacks enough food to maintain healthy, active lifestyles for all family members.

Nutritious food is available through many area food banks but some individuals and families are unable to access that food because they lack transportation.

Bridgette Gemelli, community health navigator at Northern Light Inland Hospital, said that for the past year Inland has been partnering with Good Shepherd Food Bank to make food more accessible to families in this area. Inland staff, she said, have been screening patients in their primary care practices, the emergency department, inpatient units and other care sites for food insecurity. If an individual or family indicates that they don't have enough food, they are provided with an emergency food bag containing canned tuna, canned chicken, canned vegetables, a jar of peanut butter, soup mix, rice, applesauce, oatmeal and shelf-safe milk.

"The emergency food bags are really just a band aid to address their need on a temporary basis," said Gemelli.



*Contributed photo*

If an individual or family indicates that they don't have enough food, they are provided with an emergency food bag containing canned tuna, canned chicken, canned vegetables, a jar of peanut butter, soup mix, rice, applesauce, oatmeal and shelf-safe milk.

said this time of year they are selling a lot of tall boots, sweaters, leggings and dresses. Some of the name brands they carry include L.L. Bean, Cabot's, Christopher & Banks, and LuLaRoe.

"We also carry jewelry and accessories," said Johnson. "We carry Vera Bradley, Dooney & Bourke and Coach."

For more information about the shop see [facebook.com/RetailTherapyCB](https://www.facebook.com/RetailTherapyCB).

As of last month, Inland is taking another step in addressing the ongoing nutritional needs of their patients. Gemelli said Inland was awarded a \$25,000 grant by the John T. Gorman Foundation, which will be used to provide vouchers to primary care patients who are unable to access local food banks due to lack of transportation. She said that each person will be allotted a certain amount for taxi rides, which she will schedule for them. In her role as community health navigator, Gemelli helps direct patients to resources that can meet their needs. She said that food is a basic need and sometimes that need must be addressed in order for them to achieve wellness.

"One of the biggest problems is getting people to the food and food to the people," said Gemelli. "If one of our patients needs a ride (to the food bank) they can contact me and I will do all of the scheduling."

Donna-Jo Mitchell, director of philanthropy, was a member of the Inland team that secured the one-year \$25,000 grant. Mitchell said

securing the funding to help support transportation vouchers to local food banks for Inland's primary care patients "was a natural evolution in Inland's efforts to address food insecurity in the community."

"We had already been working with the Good Shepherd Food Bank to provide immediate food packs to food insecure patients, now we are helping people with transportation to a local food bank for ongoing needs," said Mitchell.

Mitchell explained that, "the John T. Gorman Foundation grant program focuses on nonprofits who work to provide quality supports and services that address the immediate basic needs of economically-disadvantaged people in Maine."

Gemelli said that other hospitals within the Northern Light healthcare system are also participating in the efforts to increase their patients' access to food. For more information about accessing emergency food or transportation to food banks for Inland patients, contact Bridgette Gemelli, by emailing [bgemelli@northernlight.org](mailto:bgemelli@northernlight.org) or call 861-6091.

## Resale

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

All items at Retail Therapy Consignment Boutique are on consignment. Johnson said they're currently accepting winter clothing in good condition by appointment only. She



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# A sign of the times and a life worth living

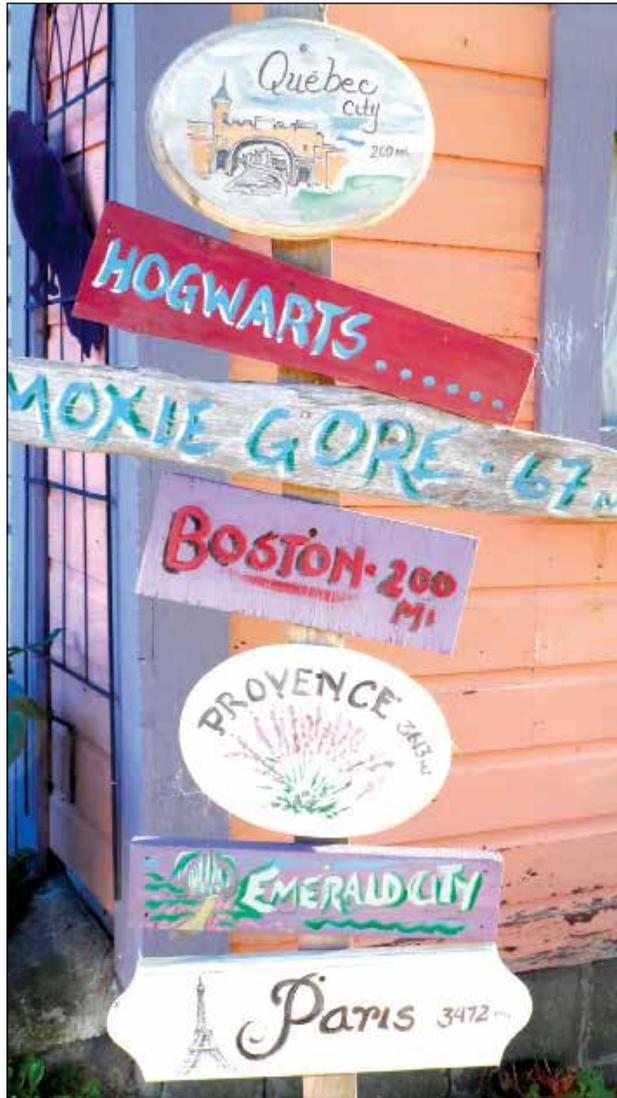
## Creating A Life

by Susan Varney

**N**ames are important. Give a creature a name and it becomes real. It has a personality. Give it a number and it's just a number in a long line of numbers, whether it is a dog, a cow, a president or a number on a street.

English place names are informative and often humorous;; Stratford on Avon, Maggot on Wormshead, Piccadilly, Goon-hilly, Water-Ma-Trout, Brownwilly Downs, Puddinglake, Bottom-of-the-Oven, Giggleswick, Devil's Lapful, Wappingthorn Wood, Garryborn Burn, Beachy Head. These give you an idea of Monty Python's wacky sense of humor.

Some people name their cars, something I've never understood - "Let's take Gladys out for a spin."



Travel signs to favorite places with mileage as a reminder of trips fanciful and real.



Susan Varney photos  
Bahama Town House sign painted on a board end collected from the trash for a pink cakebox house in Key West, Florida.

I guess I've never had a car I loved, certainly not an MG or an Aston Martin or even a Mustang - but they already have names inspired or invented by the manufacturers. They are transportation, something reliable, starts when the key turns, is the smallest vehicle for the job and lasts a long time without costing an arm and a leg. Right, dream on.

Home. What is home? It's a place to keep your stuff, your books, art work, writing. A place to cook and entertain friends, a place to sleep, bathe, feed the birds, have a garden and take shelter from the storm - political, emotional, physical and spiritual.

Home is such a personal thing. It is a place of wonder and grace, a place to be yourself, a place to paint the colors that delight. It is more than a place to live. It is a place to live and laugh often and love deeply.

Spend your time making money or making a life, trying out new things from food to books, art and travel wherever your fancy takes you. Collect recipes and people and combine the two for gatherings of friends for conversation, laughter and acts of civil disobedience. Travel bumpy roads, the slower you go the more you see if you are looking. If you can, put a name to the species of trees, flowers, birds you pass along the way.

I've named the places I've lived - often picking up a scrap of wood, a box end or a shingle for Chez Chocolat in Augusta, Never Never Land for the cabin in the woods of Strong, Lilac Cottage for a little cape on an outlet stream, The House on the Hill in The Forks with views of Bigelow Mountain, The Dark Side of the Moon in Portland. And then there was The Escape Hatch in St. Pete Beach, The Pink Cake Box in Bahama Town, Key West and now RiverSong on Kennebec, for a terracotta and lavender bungalow on an island in the river in Fairfield.

Names just happen sometimes. Like shelter dogs often come with names you would never have chosen but hate to change because the poor animal responds to that name. But there was Toulouse Lautrec, Jack Kerouac and Flannery O'Kafka (because a good man is hard to find).

I knew as soon as I found this house what its name would be amidst the bird song and pines, maples and oaks of the island. RiverSong where the crows nest and caw out in the morning, ordering me out of bed and outdoors to see another beautiful day in paradise.

Keep your gated communities, your McMansions and split-level ranches, I've known people who can take a shack and make it into a magical place and I've know people who can take a mansion and turn it into a dump. It's all in your perspective, creative initiative and magical inspiration.

My favorite signs have been made from found objects like a broken apple box end for a sign on the lane to a log cabin in the woods of Strong, Never Never Land - sadly, later stolen by a funky-sign aficionado, perhaps.



RiverSong sign made on an antique bureau top found on a discard pile on trash day, with additions interchangeable with seasons.

If you are into recycling as I am, another good place to find sign material is yard sales, church fundraisers and construction sites. People are often willing to part with board ends they are not going to use. Or perhaps you see a sign at a yard sale that can be repurposed to your needs.

One can always get a professional to paint a sign for you. It will be perfect and beautiful and done to your specifications. Personally I like funky, imperfect, slightly out of line signs. Some things are just too perfect and you can be sure it is man-made because nothing in nature is straight and square. Every river has its bend, every tree its curve, every rock its nature and every trail detours around the impassable leading perhaps to something wonderful and breathtaking.

# Wise Words *from* Wise Women

BY TERRI HIBBARD

**W**ho hasn't heard of Gloria Steinem? In the late 1960s and early 1970s she was an unabashed and articulate spokeswoman for women, all women, everywhere.

While many American women were at first taken aback by her feisty rhetoric and colorful actions, she never backed down from her belief that the world would be far better when women share an equal place in it.

The world got to know Steinem because she was impossible to ignore. A journalist, an impassioned speaker and a fearless fighter for women's rights, this beautiful woman was never to stop pushing against the limits society had put on women since forever.

Steinem and those who either joined her or led their own crusades, prompted changes in society that women and girls have benefitted from immeasurably: in the workplace, in schools, in institutions of all kinds.

In the last 50-plus years, since it began, the women's movement has created the world we live in today. Never finished and never perfect, there will always be more to do. But our lives and our country has benefitted tremendously from Steinem's lead.

Younger generations of women have no idea what it was like before the women's movement. Women earned half or less of what men in the same job earned. And that was legal. All wages are not exactly fair now, but things are much better.

Women's school sports teams routinely got a pittance in financial support, play time, facility time and the like compared to men's teams. "Girls' games" were often seen as a joke by athletic directors, coaches and jocks.

A woman, even if she worked at a job that paid well, could not go to the bank and take

out a loan to buy a car or a house unless her husband also signed the paperwork. Imagine!

Yes, Gloria Marie Steinem, born March 25, 1934 in Toledo, Ohio deserves the endless awards and accolades she has received through the years, albeit she also got plenty of blistering attacks. She grew up with a mentally-unstable mother and a traveling salesman father who offered little in the way of stability to the family. Nonetheless, she graduated from high school, went to Smith College and graduated as a member of Phi Beta Kappa. In the late 1950s, Steinem spent two years in India as a Chester Bowles Asian Fellow, where she was briefly associated with the Supreme Court of India as a Law Clerk to Mehr Chand Mahajan, the Chief Justice of India. Spending time with the women of India was transformative. In that day, and to a large extent still, a woman's role was to stay in the home and be a good wife. She was expected to cook meals but was to eat only after the man finished. With food scarce in most households, women suffered malnutrition and complications or death during pregnancies. This trip also began

Steinem's thirst for national and international travel.

I knew of Steinem's reputation and role as an activist and journalist, but I didn't know her as a compassionate, sensitive, even humble and genuinely down-to-earth person, until I read her most recent book, "My Life on the Road." In it she writes kindly and affectionately about her father and his influence on her wanderlust, about her Native American and Black friends, about getting to know and appreciate truck drivers and taxi drivers and so many other ordinary people.

This memoir and the many anecdotes in it made Gloria Steinem alive to me and I'm glad to know her better.



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# “For All of Us, One Today: An Inaugural Poet’s Journey”

BY RICHARD BLANCO

Book Review by Nancy P. McGinnis

It’s enlightening to pause for a moment and reflect on where we were, individually and as a nation, on Jan. 21, 2013. It was on that occasion, the inauguration of Barack Obama for his second term as President of the United States, that Richard Blanco, a resident of Bethel, Maine, took his place in history as the first immigrant, Latino, and openly gay man to serve as the inaugural poet.

The invitation had come directly from the White House, a mere three weeks before. Blanco admits he was taken utterly by surprise, having had no prior connections with President Obama or his administration.

Blanco is also the youngest, the first “part time” poet (he is actually a civil engineer by training and profession) and the first Mainer for this honor. How did this come to pass and what was it like for Blanco to follow in the esteemed footsteps of a handful of poets, including Robert Frost and Maya Angelou?

The answers can be found in Blanco’s eminently readable memoir, “For All of Us, One Today: An Inaugural Poet’s Journey”. Blanco’s prose is as astute and observant, and as warm and welcoming, as his poetry. Its broad appeal assures that this book is not just for poetry lovers, although those who read it may find themselves inspired to explore, or revisit, the genre. The reader feels drawn into the unfolding story, as well as Blanco’s deftly described emotions, behind the scenes from that fateful phone call to his moment in the spotlight at the inauguration podium where he introduced the nation to “One Today”.

Taking his assigned mission in utmost earnest over those few weeks, Blanco actually created not just one but a trio of poems, from which the Inaugural Committee would select the one deemed most fitting to be read aloud for the occasion. All three works, “What We Know of Country,” “Mother

Country,” and “One Today” are included in their entirety in this volume. They appear side by side in English and in Blanco’s native Spanish, along with his insights into the process by which they were formed, and the thoughtful historical context from which they arose.

The story began, he insists, not with that invitation from the Inaugural Committee, but rather “a long time ago in another journey full of sorrow and loss that would end with hope and triumph.” While Blanco was still in utero, his parents exiled themselves with his 6-year-old brother Carlos to Spain, leaving behind everything and everyone they knew and loved in Cuba. The family emigrated to America only a few months after his birth.

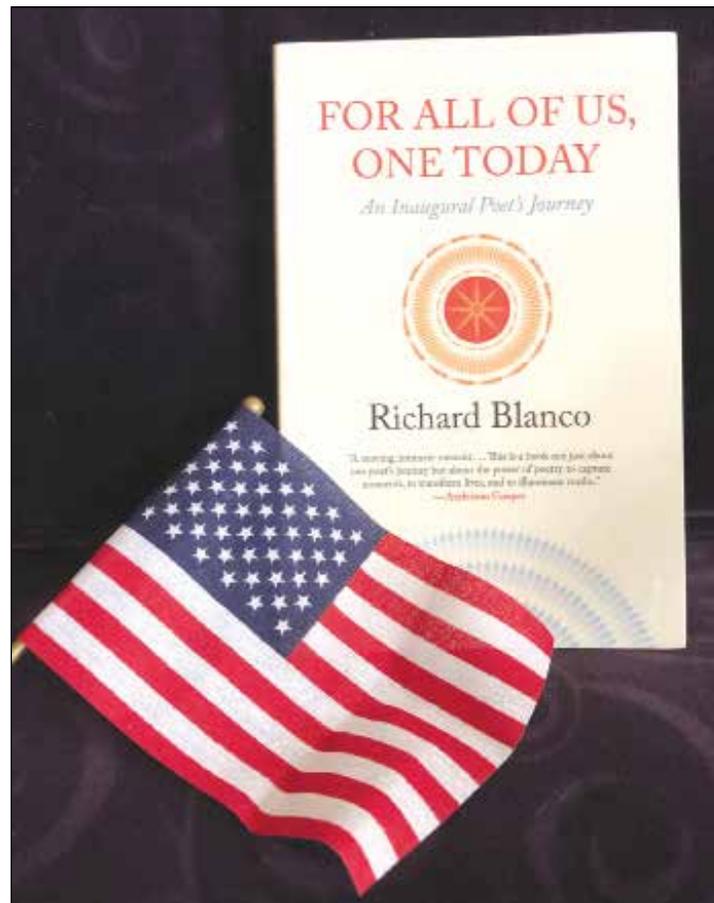
“My first baby picture was for my green card,” he writes. “I’m 45 days old, a character in a story who already belongs to three countries.”

Growing up in a modest suburb with similarly exiled families outside Miami, Blanco learned about his Cuban heritage second-hand from family photos and snippets of conversation. He learned about America from TV reruns of “Leave it to Beaver” and “The Brady Bunch”. He relates how, as a youngster, he innocently believed that the lyrics to the American national anthem began with “O Jose, can you see...”

Looking back now to that time, he sees himself in a “waiting place . . . caught between . . . both stories: part of one story that I wouldn’t weave together until . . . forging through the creative process of writing the inaugural poems.”

As a young man whose parents had urged him to pursue a practical career in civil engineering, Blanco’s foray into creative writing began, ironically, with drafting reports, proposals and client letters for his employer.

“I began paying very close attention to the way language worked to organize my thoughts, argue a point or create a persona



Taking his assigned mission in utmost earnest over those few weeks, Blanco actually created not just one but a trio of poems, from which the Inaugural Committee would select the one deemed most fitting to be read aloud for the occasion. All three works, “What We Know of Country,” “Mother Country,” and “One Today” are included in their entirety in this volume.

. . . I discovered that language had to be engineered in a way, just like the bridges and roads I was designing.”

The next step — a pivotal, life changing one — was to develop an appreciation for the transformational power of imagery. In Blanco’s own words “. . . understanding the discipline of the craft behind the magic of the art . . . I got poetry as a real, living thing.”

Blanco was hunkered down in creative incubation at his kitchen table in Bethel, immersed in acknowledging, exploring, and sorting out the contradictions in his own cultural identity, when the news broke of the shootings at the Sandy Hook Elementary School. According to Blanco, who had led a poetry workshop with middle schoolers in Connecticut only days before, Sandy Hook “affected me more than any other American tragedy in my lifetime . . . all of America wanted to hold and comfort the grieving families.”

Blanco resolved to pay homage by honoring and remembering them in his inaugural poem.

On learning that only one single guest could be by the poet’s side on the podium, Blanco’s life partner, Mark Neveu, kindly insisted that that honor should rightly go to his mother, Geysa Blanco. But Neveu and a “village” of close supporters and mentors accompanied Blanco to Washington D.C. and proudly attended the ceremony.

And thanks to Blanco’s candid, detailed description of the intense hours leading up to and following the big day, every reader of “For All of Us, One Today” vicariously shares his once-in-a-lifetime experience.

It seems perfectly natural that a poet who so exquisitely embraces others’ stories and humanity would irresistibly invite us into his own.

“One Today” is for all ages.

From her first read Susan Rich, an editor at Little, Brown Books for Young Readers immediately recognized the potential of Blanco’s inaugural poem, “One Today”, as a children’s book.

“It is a dawn-to-dusk, coast-to-coast celebration of a nation, of American life, and diversity, that also celebrates the extraordinary in the ordinary . . . a gorgeous poem that encapsulates bustling cities, vast landscapes, working people, families and communities. It is the everyday America we know,” she said. Rich brilliantly paired up Blanco’s luminous words with Dav Pilkey (beloved creator of the Captain Underpants series), for illustrations to create an artful picture book version. To Blanco’s delight, Pilkey strived for a contemporary but dreamlike, American primitive folk art style, inspired by Marc Chagall, Ezra Jack Keats and William H. Johnson. The stunning result of this collaboration was published in 2015 — a perfect keepsake family treasure and conversation starter for all ages.

# It takes a healthy life to create healthy shiny hair

BY WANDA CURTIS  
Correspondent

A Huffington Post article “Hair and History: Why Hair Is Important to Women,” states that “hair and beauty is a multi-billion dollar industry and the average woman spends about \$50,000 on her hair during her lifetime and two hours a week washing and styling her hair.” The author notes that a woman’s hair is important not only because women are concerned about their appearance, but also because it represents a woman’s personality, thoughts and beliefs.

## PROPER CARE FOR HEALTHY HAIR

If hair is so important, it’s worth investing time and money to keep hair healthy. According to The American Academy of Dermatology, how hair is washed and the quality of products used both have a big influence on keeping hair healthy and shiny. Their recommendations:

- If hair is very oily, wash it every day.
- If hair is chemically treated or dry, it may not need to be washed as often.
- Cleanse the scalp when applying shampoo rather than washing the entire length of the hair.
- Use conditioner after every shampoo to increase shine, decrease static electricity, improve strength and protect hair from harmful UV rays.
- Concentrate conditioner on the tips of the hair rather than on the scalp or length of the hair because conditioners can make fine hair look limp.
- Select a shampoo and conditioner that’s formulated specifically for hair type.
- Protect hair from the damaging effects of chlorine by wetting and conditioning hair before swimming. Wear a tight-fitting swim cap and use a shampoo specially formulated for swimmers and a deep conditioner after swimming.

Beth Morse, who owns and operates the Hair Builders salon in Vassalboro, also advises her customers to use only high-quality hair care products.

“Using the proper hair care products is as important as your salon service to keep your hair healthy and shiny,” she said.

Morse specializes in non-surgical hair replacement for both men and women. For women, she uses hair pieces that attach to the head with tapes or clips. She said that most women prefer hair pieces made with real human hair because they like to curl and style it. She said that she enjoys her work because she gets pleasure from helping people feel like “a whole person” again.

## A HEALTHY DIET IS ALSO NEEDED

In addition to using high-quality hair care products, Morse said that it’s important to eat a healthy diet. She said that she’s seen a lot more thinning hair in recent years and she believes that the type of diet people eat today may contribute to that. She recommends eating more organic foods and staying away from food with lots of additives.

According to WebMD, certain foods help promote healthy hair. A few of the foods they recommend eating to promote hair growth and prevent hair loss:

- fish like salmon, sardines, and mackerel which are high in omega-3 fatty acids,
- Greek yogurt which contains vitamin B5 (pantothenic acid) and protein,
- dark green leafy vegetables that contain iron, folate, vitamins A and C, and beta carotene,
- foods high in iron such as beef, organ meats, dark leafy vegetables, shellfish and iron-fortified cereals
- and foods high in protein such as chicken and turkey.

When considering the effect of dietary intake on hair health, it’s important to remember how important it is to drink enough water. Inadequate water intake will make the hair dry and brittle. Water intake also affects hair growth. Not drinking enough water can prevent hair from growing at its maximum rate. The Institute of Medicine recommends that women drink nine glasses of water each day unless their health care provider instructs them to limit their fluid intake.

## THE RIGHT WAY TO BLOW DRY HAIR

To blow dry hair, some experts recommend using a hair dryer with a nozzle attachment that targets air flow and a diffuser to distribute heat more evenly. They also recommend using a hair dryer with multiple settings and using a lower setting to avoid damaging the hair. To protect hair from the heat of blow dryers and/or curling irons they recommend using hair products that are designed to protect the hair before applying heat. Some of those products contain silicone, which coats the hair and protects it.



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# Variety! — A non-stop line-up of entertainment to come to the Opera House October 19

**BY WATERVILLE CREATES!**

*Special to the Women's Quarterly*

On Saturday, Oct. 19 the Waterville Opera House will once again become an epicenter of entertainment when Waterville Creates! brings Star the Dancing Horse (and her Intuitive Horseman, Kevin Crane) to town to star in Variety! – an evening of exceptional entertainment. A fundraiser in support of Waterville Creates!, Variety! will help keep accessible arts programming running year-round as only 41 percent of the organization's revenues are raised by ticket sales annually.

Want to know more about our star, Star? Star the Dancing Horse, while a fit mare indeed, weighs close to 1000 pounds. She is a quarter horse, 14.2 hands tall and was also a rescue horse. While dancing on stage, Star will be joined by her partner, Kevin Crane, Intuitive Horseman, who rescued Star when she was in need of a loving home. Star and Crane have competed together for many years, focusing in versatility, team penning, sorting and cowboy dressage and giving horsemanship clinics. Performing a choreographed dance together is a first for Star and Crane and they're excited to bring the art of horsemanship back to the historic opera house stage. Star and Crane have a beautiful relationship – the love is apparent, and we can't wait for you to see their original act performed in Waterville.

Star and Crane will not be the only talent taking to the stage at Variety! Waterville Creates!, which often partners with the Waterville Public Library to promote the literary arts in Waterville, is thrilled to announce that Joao Victor, the 2019 Maine Poetry Out Loud state champion, has joined the acts presented at Variety! and will share two of his original poems with attendees. A recent Lewiston High School graduate and Angola native, Victor is seeking asylum in the United States.

Extra! Extra, read all about it – the cast of "Disney's Newsies: The Musical," opening at the Waterville Opera House on Friday, November 8, will perform the high-energy number "King of New York" at Variety! This will be the first chance to get a sneak peek at this musical hit. But that won't be the only number from a theatrical musical performed at Variety! Waterville High School will perform a number from their upcoming musical "Cinderella" which opens Friday, November 21.

Known primarily for her work behind the scenes, Waterville Opera House box office manager Emilienne Ouellette will lend her beautiful vocal talent to Variety! An artist, actor and writer from Oakland, Ouellette has been the manager for nearly four years, a position that she regularly refers to as her "dream job." At Variety!, she will perform "Begin the Beguine" – one of her all-time favorites.

As Variety! is a reflection of all the performing arts championed by Waterville Creates!, the Maine Film Center and the Maine International Film Festival also have a lead role to play in entertaining Variety! patrons. Jak Peters, an accomplished performer and cinematographer and valued Railroad Square Cinema projectionist, will share selections from the unique collection of trailers he has created for the Maine International Film Festival over the past nine years. Joining Peters to bring the magic of film to Variety! are two very special students, Isabelle and Phoebe Rogers – twin sisters from Temple. Visual artists and musicians, the Rogers sisters create short films together as well as writing



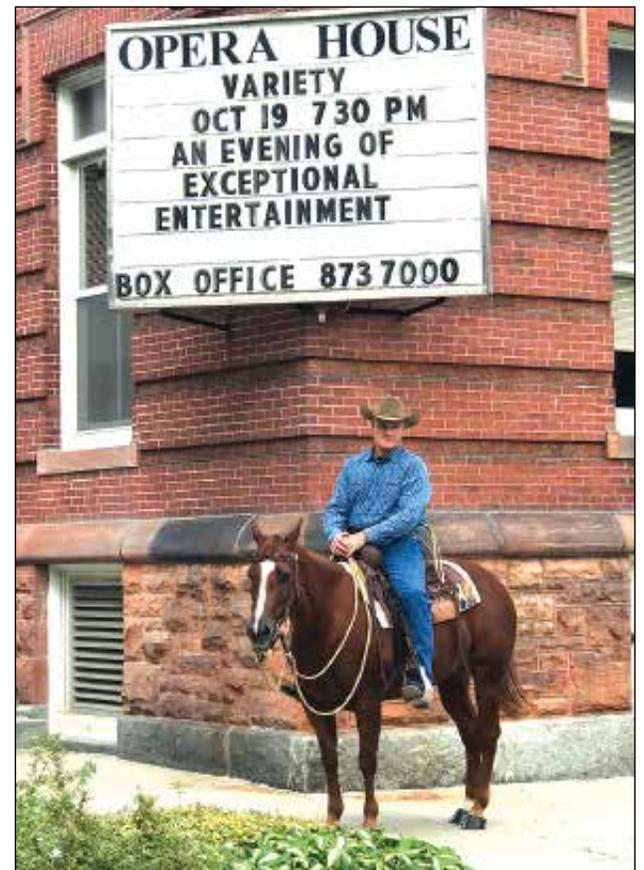
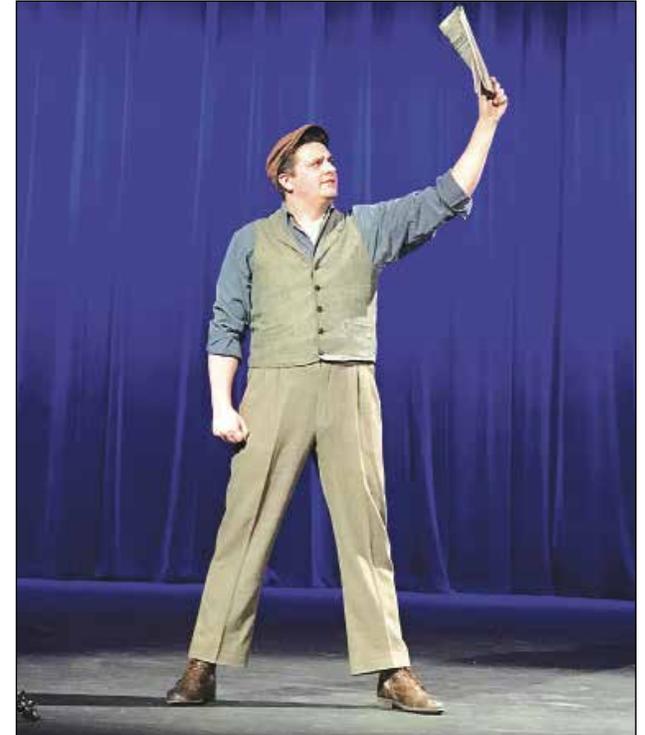
*Contributed photos*

Above: Waterville Opera House box office manager Emilienne Ouellette will lend her beautiful vocal talent to Variety! Top right: Extra! Extra, read all about it – the cast of "Disney's Newsies: The Musical," opening at the Waterville Opera House on Friday, Nov. 8, will perform the high-energy number "King of New York" at Variety! Lower right: Performing a choreographed dance together is a first for Star and Crane and they're excited to bring the art of horsemanship back to the historic opera house stage.

and performing original music in their band, Sagittarius Rising. During Variety!, the twins will show "Ocean Child," their first animated short film, which won the Huey Award at the Maine Student Film and Video Festival at the 2019 Maine International Film Festival.

What's a variety show without tap dancing? Thanks to TNT Dance Studio's Tap Company, there will be incredible tap-dancing at Variety! showcasing fast feet with intricate rhythms for the ear's pleasure. Choreographer Terri Glidden has created a unique routine named Happy Hoofers, to be performed by Kali Lozada, Haley Libby, Hannah Butler, Hunter Hamlin, Maya Gray and Rowan Saucier. TNT always makes the stage come alive. Keeping the night musical as well as magical will be Automat – a band formed in the style of the Jerry Garcia Band. Automat is Gary Coons on drums, Steve Fotter on guitar, Dan Dubord on keyboard, Greg Goulette on Bass, Waterville Creates! board chair Jim LaLiberty on guitar and Christine Poulson, lead singer.

Variety! – an evening of exceptional entertainment – is set for Saturday, Oct. 19 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets can be purchased online at [operahouse.org](http://operahouse.org) or by calling the Waterville Opera House Box Office at 873-7000.



# Instant heartburn relief from a quarter-sized device

BY JOHN D. BEGIN  
*MaineGeneral Marketing  
 & Communications Department  
 Special to Women's Quarterly*

Chronic acid reflux and heartburn caused by a large hiatal hernia made Debra Fuller's life miserable for years. She often felt bloated and uncomfortable and simple acts like bending over caused her reflux to act up.

"I just dealt with it for a long time," the 57-year-old South Gardiner woman said. "I had a lot of heartburn and probably was taking seven or eight antacids at a time to deal with the symptoms. And that never really helped."

Fortunately for Fuller, relief finally came in late July with the LINX® procedure, a new form of anti-reflux surgery now available to patients thanks to Dr. Ian Reight and his colleagues at MaineGeneral Surgery.

"I had to stay in the hospital overnight after my procedure and when they brought me a regular breakfast the next morning, I was able to eat it and it wasn't painful," she said. "I'm now a little more than a month out and I don't have any problems with reflux. My experience with Dr. Reight and his staff was wonderful!"

## What is the LINX® procedure?

LINX® offers immediate relief for patients whose chronic gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) can't be controlled medically, including through the daily use of medications such as proton pump inhibitors. Unlike other standard surgical treatments, LINX® uses a tiny bracelet of magnetic titanium beads connected by a thin wire – about the size of a quarter – to surround and compress the lower



MaineGeneral photo

MaineGeneral Surgery's Ian Reight, MD, displays the LINX® device that is bringing area residents relief from chronic acid reflux.

esophageal sphincter, which normally prevents stomach fluids from backing up into the esophagus.

The device's magnetic beads prevent gastric pressure from opening the muscle but are flexible enough that the force of swallowing allows them to expand as needed to allow normal passage of food into the stomach.

Reight, who has done seven LINX® cases in recent months, said the procedure takes about 30 minutes to complete. All of the cases were done using MaineGeneral's surgical robot technology.

"Our patients are very happy with the results," he said, adding that he currently has "another seven cases in the pipeline and I see at least three LINX® consults per clinic now."

Reight's colleagues, Dr. Nanda Kumar and Dr. Sam Pakraftar, are currently training on the procedure and all of the practice's surgeons eventually will be able to offer it to patients. Reight said the surgical team is pleased to provide a quick, minimally-invasive option for patients whose quality of life has been diminished by acid reflux.

"Reflux affects a large number of people. These people have suffered and, until you fix it, they hadn't realized just how much," he said. "They tell me, 'I can sleep all night and I don't wake up choking and gasping.' 'I can eat things I enjoy and I can bend over and pick up my kids without everything coming up into my esophagus.'"

"When we can give that back to somebody so they're no longer miserable – without having to go somewhere else for their care – we can make their lives so much better," he added. "I really enjoy seeing the difference it makes in their lives. It's incredible!"

Reight noted that the LINX® procedure nationally has better outcomes over the long-term than the Nissen fundoplication – a laparoscopic or robot-assisted procedure performed for patients with GERD.

"I can do a LINX® procedure in a half hour compared to the hour and 15 minutes it takes to do a Nissen with the robot. Patients don't reflux afterward and can return to a regular diet right away," he said. "In terms of recovery, with a Nissen, the patient is staying in the hospital overnight or maybe two nights; with LINX®, if I do the procedure during the day, the patient will go home in the morning – and I think it will become day surgery in the next few months."

"LINX® is something that no one else in the state provides right now," Reight added, "and I think it's an example of us being leaders as an organization and leaders as surgeons in providing expanded services to the community."



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Kevin Crane, Intuitive Horseman with Star the Dancing Horse

The cast of *Disney's Newsies the Musical*

Joao Victor, Maine Poetry Out Loud 2019 Champion

The cast of Waterville Senior High School's *Cinderella*

Emilienne Ouellette, "Begin the Beguine" by Cole Porter

Mike Miclon, Stand-Up Juggler

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