



Summer 2016  
**Women's  
Quarterly**

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Advertising Supplement

**KENNEBEC JOURNAL • Morning Sentinel**



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**Dreading the BIG birthday was a waste of my energy**

*Just a Thought*

**BY TERRI HIBBARD**  
*Correspondent*

This year I had the BIG birthday. On June 21, I became officially old—even by Boomer standards. It seems that 80 is NOT the new 40.

I wanted to avoid it because I didn’t want to be old—but dying didn’t seem to be a better option. Friends and family started making noises about a birthday party and I told them—again and again—no party. None. Nada. Thank you anyway.

For me, a birthday is a day to do exactly what you please. Going to the beach with a good book, my journal and a picnic has always been a perfect day for me. If someone wants to come with me, all the better. But no celebration. Period.

Decade birthdays *can* be a jolt. Forty was tough because I felt mired in housewifery stuff rather than the accomplishments I’d looked forward to in college. Fifty was a breeze. I was having a great time as a reporter and feature writer at the Morning Sentinel. Sixty, however, was the pits. My husband had decided the year before that he really wanted to be single again and the newspaper decided to eliminate several jobs just before my 60th birthday. One of them was the features editor post that I had happily accepted the year before.

Seventy? I felt great and had recently retired from Inland Hospital. I was making plans to do the traveling I’d waited so long to do, my retirement funds were in OK shape and I believed I would finally have the time and peace of mind to write, read good books and enjoy life without a tight schedule.

Then my knee and back issues got serious, some family problems destroyed peace of mind, my retirement funds melted in the great recession and—here comes 80. OY VAY!! At 80, what is there to look forward to, be excited about, to accomplish? What’s a reasonably intelligent, mostly mobile, Social Security-funded newly-old woman to do?

For one thing, take a cue from the women around me. There’s Nancy, 89, whose big smile and welcoming and generous heart reflects her total immersion in life and the people in it. And Hilary, who at 93 is always ready to get up and go where there’s someone or something interesting. What’s more, her creativity and creations are stunning. Meg, 92, who despite a serious disability, has the grace and wit to shrug off the things she cannot do, enjoy everything else and keep her amazing mind going full-tilt. And Marjorie, my 96-year-old cousin who lives independently, still drives, and knows absolutely everything that’s going on with her huge family and community. She cooks her meals, tends her chickens and constantly knits beautiful hats and mittens for children who have none. These women don’t cave in to a chronological number. And neither will I.

My house is on the market and when it sells I’ll move into something way less expensive. I’ll have a little nest egg then. I could invest wisely, live frugally and leave a little inheritance to my wonderful children—but, hey, they’ve still got years to make money and do what they want. So, instead of being financially sensible, I’ll shake off my poor-me-I’m-old attitude, renew my passport and look for a low-cost trip to Ireland. Or Greece.

Without a big house and yard to care for, I’ll have more time to hang out with my children and grandchildren, and if that doesn’t make a person happy to be alive, well...you’re beyond help. I’ll spend more time with people who aren’t mobile and who appreciate a chatty visit. I’ll make more soups and casseroles for them. Socializing and helping has been proven to boost personal happiness and health.

And about the birthday celebration I didn’t want. On the Saturday before, my daughter, son and daughter-in-law and two little ones showed up in the driveway with a 15-passenger rental van, announcing that we were all going to the beach to celebrate my birthday on Sunday.

Later, in walked a son from Colorado with his girlfriend, lifting me out of my chair with a shriek.

Sunday, 11 of my family (ages 4 to 79) piled into the van and took off for the beach, along with a ton of food they’d bought or prepared. After a day at the beach, we went to TOOTS in Yarmouth for ice cream (a family tradition after beaching). That evening, we had a cookout by the pool and fire pit at my daughter and son-in-law’s home. Monday, the whole gang headed to Bar Harbor for a couple days of food, hiking and enjoying each other.

Turning 80? Fantastic!

# Nona Boyink's career in the health care field spans decades

*Strengthening service delivery has been a top priority*



MaineGeneral photos

Boyink at the groundbreaking event celebrating MaineGeneral in the Hathaway Creative Center in Waterville.

**“With home- and community-based services, MaineGeneral has a broad reach into the community. We’ve brought community connections to the hospital through hospice, home care, WIC, RSVP and outpatient mental health and substance abuse services.”**

**NONA BOYINK, MAINEGENERAL**

**BY JOY MCKENNA**

*Director of Marketing & Communications  
MaineGeneral Health  
Special to Women's Quarterly*

In her 41 years serving the Kennebec Valley, Nona Boyink is most proud of her role in strengthening links between health services and the communities they serve.

That path has taken her from overseeing the regional community health center development and growth beginning in 1975 — now 11 facilities operated by HealthReach Community Health Centers — to overseeing MaineGeneral's long-term care facilities, home care and hospice programs and prevention services designed to tackle the community's greatest challenges.

As she approaches retirement from MaineGeneral in September, the Mount Vernon resident said her goal has been to empower communities and bring services directly to those who need them most.

“With home- and community-based services, MaineGeneral has a broad reach into the community,” Boyink said. “We’ve brought community connections to the hospital through hospice, home care, WIC, RSVP and outpatient mental health and substance abuse services.”

This deepened connection with the community became possible when MaineGeneral took over all but the community health center part of HealthReach in 1999.

As HealthReach's CEO at the time, Boyink assumed her new role in MaineGeneral as senior vice president for home care and hospice, as well as long-term care facilities and Granite Hill Estates. She also oversees the Center for Prevention and Healthy Living, the Edmund N. Ervin Pediatric Center and Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.

These growing responsibilities came at a time when she and her equally busy husband, Dr. Doug Boyink, were raising their family.

As a professional woman, then and now, Boyink said, “You need to accept that you cannot do it all. It's also important to make sure you're in a place that gives you the freedom to make those choices.”

Boyink also tells women “not to be put off by road blocks. Keep an open mind to the possibilities and take time to know what's important to you. Choose a company or work situation that mirrors your personal values.”

As for the next challenges in health care, Boyink noted the need for more care for those with Alzheimer's and dementia.

In addition, she sees expanding coordination among all health providers to benefit the patient and community.



Sometimes referred to as Population Health Management, this level of collaboration keeps people healthy and helps them manage chronic diseases so they don't get worse and require hospital stays.

“Patients plan and direct their care, with all providers working together to ensure those wishes are honored, no matter where a patient is in his or her journey and no matter where in the system they are,” Boyink said. “We are partners in their health every step of the way.”

In its 50th anniversary year, MaineGeneral HomeCare is a great example, Boyink said, of health care meeting the needs of aging Mainers.

“In the '70s and early '80s, we provided less technical care and gave more support with life activities. Now our care is more complex. The acuity has become more significant, so we are doing more high-tech services, including sophisticated home therapies, wound care and wound vacs (treatment) and home IV antibiotics.”

MaineGeneral HomeCare provides these skilled services to reduce the need for hospitalization. “People want to stay in their homes,” Boyink said. “We provide the services to help them do that. Demand for these services is only growing.”

MaineGeneral CEO Chuck Hays said of Boyink: “Nona has been a true leader in the development of health services throughout the greater Kennebec Valley region. Over her many years of service she has been instrumental in helping develop the population health infrastructure at MaineGeneral Health. We have been truly fortunate to have such a great leader in our community.”

As her career at MaineGeneral draws to a close, Boyink is most proud of engaging with communities and helping to develop future health care leaders in our area.

“It's been most rewarding to see these links and watch young leaders grow,” she said.

What does the future hold for Boyink?

“I'll be traveling more with my husband, including trips to see our 1-year-old granddaughter,” she said, “and continuing to be involved in my community.”

# Western Avenue home says “An artist lives here”

## *Prontniki exudes vitality*

BY JEAN ANN POLLARD  
Correspondent

Driving on Western Avenue in Waterville, the first hint that someone special lives in a small, white house on the corner is a lawn that's been entirely turned into gardens.

Claire Prontnicki is the gardener's name, and she thinks lawns are over-rated.

“I think people like having one because it's so controllable,” she said with a smile. “You get on that mower and it's done. But if you have a garden you have to give everything individual attention.”

With a seldom-used front door facing the Avenue, a welcoming entrance on the side-street shows a patch of grass to the left of driveway and garage. It's totally surrounded by a thick, extra-wide border of blossoming shrubs, perennial flowers, ferns, even high-bush blueberries along a fence behind the garage, and a huge old apple tree whose apples, she said, are small “but just right for cooking because they hold their shape well.” A compost heap is tucked underneath, while —between the garage and house — a line of raspberry bushes looks eager to produce.

Invited into the house, one passes a white door waiting for repairs, its doorknob already surrounded by a painted blue starburst and vines curling up one side. There's also a blue, ladder-like creation decorated with “burnt-out electric stove burners, pieces of veggie steamers, upholstery springs, parts of electric fans, and other interesting shapes” painted yellow and silver:

“We had birds nesting in it one year,” Prontnicki said.

And this, perhaps, is the first inkling that a truly creative artist/gardener with a pixyish sense of humor is at work here. The “ladder” is an amusing sample of “found art.”

Prontnicki's kitchen is stunning. Climbing three crimson-carpeted steps from a narrow greenhouse, one enters a room absolutely bursting with sunshine.

“The color is officially called Rubber Ducky yellow in stores,” she said. “I said I wanted something as bright as the stripe down the center of the street, and this is it!” She laughs.

But it doesn't stop there. Over the sink hangs a red and blue stained-glass parrot “because I like color and light,” and two flowering vines (again) climbing one side of a doorframe. “I'd just seen an artist paint her whole house like that in a movie,” she said, “so when I came home, I got out the paints and started. I got that far and gave it up.”

Her eyes are alight with amusement. “I also wanted to use up the paint I had left over.”

It's the second inkling that this is an artist who does some very unusual things with a charming innocence, that her talent is big and obvious but, unlike some others, she plays with it. She can even “let things go”



Claire Prontnicki, left, and her sisters Diane Sarona and Joan Belzin the garden.

if they're not finished, or “didn't turn out right.”

A cupboard made with secondhand doors says it again.

“They were originally off-white and didn't close properly,” she said, “but I drew a tree stretching its branches across them, applied blue paint around limbs and leaves for water and sky, then yellow-gold for land. Yellow buds were added, but only on one door; and I glued on a palm tree ‘I found somewhere.’ I wanted to produce the idea of a window,” she explained, “but that's as far as I got, so it's winter on one side and spring on the other.”

Prontniki's home is full of surprises. An adjoining room boasts one wall painted a dark cerise. The other three are coral. And there are unusual art objects everywhere from paintings to pottery to exquisitely woven and embroidered hangings, to...

Well, the outdoor gardens.

### The rest of the story

“I grew up in Clifton, New Jersey,” Claire recalls, “the youngest of three sisters. All of us seem to have inherited the must-do-art and get-hands-in-the-dirt gene.

“From our neighborhood you could see New York's skyline, but it seemed a world away, like Oz. When I was 12, I planted sunflower seeds, which turned out to be those mammoth, 12-foot kinds,” she said. “They made an impression! But I didn't begin gardening until working in Boston after college, and living in a second floor apartment where, of course, there was no place to grow anything except in a narrow slice of ground between the road and building. I put in a couple of little things down there, like two turnips and a carrot.” She grins. “But when the maintenance company came along to mow the grass and I'd hang out the window yelling ‘don't mow the garden!’ I knew I had

“Art is a big thing. It's not just painting or sculpting, it's all the creative parts of ‘one's self.’ I do it because creating makes me happy, whether it's a garden, a birthday card or a decoration painted on a door frame.”

CLAIRE PRONTNIKI, WATERVILLE



to get away and live in a house.”

So, in 1987, when she and her husband purchased the home in Waterville, she was “wild to grow everything I could.”

For a first try she planted a strip of flowers on the front lawn, but grass kept moving in. To kill it off, she covered the entire area with old, discarded rugs.

“It was a horrible mess for a couple of summers; then one by one I'd peel off the rugs, dig out everything underneath, end up with a lot of dirt, and begin shaping and planting.”

One result (still a favorite) is a pool in a rubber bucket in the ground, surrounded by moss and ferns, and bubbling with a tiny recirculating pump.

“When there isn't too much traffic going by, the ‘babbling brook’ sound still carries all through the garden, even into the kitchen when the windows are open. And it's fun to watch robins and song sparrows splashing in the water.”

Today, passing a gigantic spruce and some yew trees planted by original owners, Prontniki's red-brick walk curves through a magical puzzle that fits together perfectly near the front door facing the Avenue. In one section, a Bridal Bush due for pruning will allow new beds of hostas and daffodils. Other spots blossom with Lily of the Valley, Candelabra Primroses, and all the other springtime flowers, soon to be followed by summer phlox, additional perennials, and a host of annuals. Forsythia and Rhododendron form edgings. There's even a swing chair topped by a lace of vines, and an arch of cedar posts boasting Christmas lights and Morning Glories.

And she doesn't forget vegetables.

“Good potatoes are always available in the markets, and sweet corn appears later on every corner,” she said.

Each year, though, she plants the crops she really enjoys: lots and lots of greens in the greenhouse for early spring, with asparagus, blueberries, raspberries and strawberries outside. A raised bed grows edible-pod peas, string beans, arugula and tomato plants, as well as yellow beets and basil.

Most amusing is lettuce in hanging baskets: “The Hanging Gardens of Waterville,” she jokes.

Amazed by the intention and joy of Prontniki's creativity, one gains a deeper sense of who she is.

“Art is a big thing,” she muses. “It's not just painting or sculpting, it's all the creative parts of ‘one's self.’ I do it because creating makes me happy, whether it's a garden, a birthday card or a decoration painted on a door frame.

It's also more than that. One of her long-term projects is the “raising of two maple trees in a small, bare playground at the in-town end of Western Avenue. One of them was among six saplings planted by the city which suffered vandalism and over-eager weed-whackers.”

When it got down to one surviving ‘treelet,’ she said she took matters into her own hands, bought metal trellises to surround and protect it, and added another sapling that had been growing in a pot in her backyard. Since then, she has watered, weeded, mulched and pruned them.

“I have hopes,” she said, “that someday they'll be big and strong enough to take care of themselves, provide shade and make that end of the street more beautiful.”

# Lori Roming remains passionate about Unity and community

## *New job adds another element to her busy career*

BY GREG GLYNN  
Correspondent

Growing up, Lori Roming had two idols, her school librarian and Miss Money Penny from the James Bond movies.

Today, as the research and program officer of Unity Foundation and on-loan director of operations for the Maine Development Foundation (MDF), her job includes the same skills as her idols and a lot of the behind-the-scenes work that helps other people and organizations achieve success.

In high school, Roming didn't have an exact career path, but she knew the skills she would need to be ready for when her "dream job" came along, so she took high school and college classes to improve her typing, her shorthand and other administrative skills.

Originally from Alexandria, Virginia, where her parents both worked in government jobs, she used her skills to land an internship at the Pentagon in the Defense Industrial Security Clearance Office (DISCO), where she reviewed records and helped identify people that might be a threat to the nation's security.

So how did Roming end up coming to Maine?

Many of her ancestors were from Unity, Maine, including her grandmother who she remembers often visiting on vacation.

"I like to say that I am half from Maine and half from away," Roming said about living in Maine. "Unity is a really special place to me and my family."

In her early 20s, she bounced back and forth between Virginia and Maine, working in commercial real estate and for the Thorndike Press. In 1992, she came back to Maine for her sister's wedding and never left. The special bond she shares with her sister, Anni, is very important to her.

"Our little slice of heaven on earth is located at our family camp on Lake Winnecook. We spent many years growing up there, learning about ourselves, and learning how to become good cooks, strong women and keepers of tradition and history," said Anni Roming, the younger sister.

Unity also is the place where Lori Roming took her first job in economic development with the Unity Barn Raisers, an organization that works proactively to enhance small-town character and rural environment, while nurturing a thriving community-based economy. She helped with the development of the Unity Community Center, and also took

**"I like to say that I am half from Maine and half from away. Unity is a really special place to me and my family."**

**LORI ROMING, NEW ON-LOAN DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS FOR  
MAINE DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION**



Photo courtesy: MDF

Lori Roming stands next to the Kennebec River in Augusta where she begins her new role as on-loan director of operations for the Maine Development Foundation. Roming is the research and program officer of Unity Foundation and on-loan director of operations for the Maine Development Foundation.

on the role of secretary for the Unity Historical Society.

The late Bert Clifford, owner of Unity Telephone Company (now UniTel, Inc.), had heard of Roming's abilities and the

impact she was having with the Unity Barn Raisers and at the historical society. In 2000, Clifford and his wife Coral started the Unity Foundation and hired Roming; she has worked there for the

past 15 years. She credits a lot of her success to her mentor Larry Sterrs, CEO and chairman of the board at the Unity Foundation.

"Lori is incredibly organized and has a systematic way of bringing order and progress to developing and even chaotic situations. She is one of the most honest, trustworthy and loyal people I have ever met," said Sterrs.

Roming loves working in community development and appreciates the impact her role can have on nonprofits across the state. As research and program officer at the Unity Foundation, Roming still works closely with several nonprofit boards and gets excited when organizations come together to do so much good. She cites Waterville Creates!, an arts and culture collaborative that is working to enhance Waterville. Roming was involved in forming the organization and facilitating the early meetings, and became the interim executive director in 2014. She now serves on the board and several committees.

She also enjoys creating partnerships for the Unity Foundation. She is particularly proud of the work she has done through the Jumpstart Our Youth (JOY) Program, a partnership with JMG, Maine Community Foundation and UniTel, Inc. that gives Maine students enrolled in JMG the opportunity to become philanthropists in their own communities.

Roming will continue to work for the Unity Foundation as she takes on a new challenge as the "on loan" director of operations at MDF. MDF provides leadership, trusted research and creative partnerships to enable Maine business, community and policy leaders to drive Maine's long-term economic growth.

"I see myself as a stage manager, rather than on the stage. I love allowing others to shine. I am really looking forward to the challenge of helping make more Maine communities better and stronger, and bringing my skills and ideas to the table," Roming said.

Yellow Light Breen, who became the CEO at MDF nearly a year ago, is excited about Roming's new role.

"I am very appreciative for the commitment and creativity of the Unity Foundation to invest in supporting the mission of MDF with such a responsive and impactful resource as a loaned executive. This is another example of Unity Foundation's great commitment to economic and community vitality. I am really looking forward to working with Lori; I know we will lean on her a lot," Breen said.

# Oakland dancer signs contract with New York ballet company

**BY DAN CASSIDY**  
*Correspondent*

Gabrielle Perkins is a petite 20-year-old ballerina from Oakland who is headed to New York City to work with the American Ballet Theater Studio Company. The position will be with either American Ballet Theater main company, or other companies around the world.

Perkins attended Messalonskee High School in her freshman year. She also studied at Maine Classical Institute in Pittsfield during her sophomore year, so she could train in ballet. She returned to Messalonskee, to get in more classes and earned her high school diploma in three years.

"It worked out because I got into Vaganova Ballet Academy in Russia, because I had all those extra classes. I was able to graduate a year early and train in Russia for a year in 2013-2014," Perkins said.

She contacted the director of the San Francisco Ballet and told them she was interested in attending their training program.

"I was accepted there and spent two years dancing in their summer program, where I just finished up," she said.

Perkins, a tenacious young woman, has been dancing since she was 4 years old. When she was seven, she realized that she really wanted to do ballet. She also studied ballet at Pacific Northwest Ballet's summer course in Seattle, along with the San Francisco Ballet's summer program.

Perkins was offered a contract with Mariinsky Theater at the Primorsky Stage, but turned it down as she already had signed

a contract with American Ballet Theater Studio Company. She is going to New York City in September, "I am very excited," she said.

## Local performance scheduled

Perkins will be performing for Bossov Ballet Theater, the school she trained at when she was very young. She'll be dancing in a ballet based on the story Don Quixoté. She will also perform as a solo dancer at one point in the show, and there will be other dancers performing in Corp De Balle. The show will be held at 7 p.m. July 29 at Lawrence High School in Fairfield.

"I really like performing and working hard in the field and constantly wanting to improve," she said. "With that, the more you improve, the more you gain, and the best part is being a ballet dancer on the stage and performing."

"It's like other athletes who are constantly trying to improve, and we, ballet dancers, are doing the same thing, trying to improve. It's an accomplishment. Down the road, I'm hoping to continue dancing and staying healthy, and being able to do what I love."

Perkins grew up in the Oakland, Sidney area. Her parents, Mike and Kelly, have watched her perform in San Francisco and have been instrumental in her career. She also has an older brother, Chris. Mike Perkins is a retired police officer, runs a driving school and is transportation supervisor for RSU 18. He currently is running for State House Representative in Oakland and Sidney.

Gabrielle Perkins appears well on her way to possibly becoming a prima ballerina someday soon.



*Photo courtesy of Erik Tomasson*  
Gabrielle Perkins dances at the San Francisco Ballet School.

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# The Country Manor creates a multi-business complex and restaurant

## *Former hotel, restaurant is transformed*

BY SUSAN VARNEY  
Correspondent

The former John Martin's Manor is transforming from an aging white elephant at 54 College Avenue in Waterville into a multi-business and function center called Country Manor.

The business today includes Country Manor Beer & Steer, a steakhouse and bar; Divine Consigns, a consignment shop; a one-stop bridal shop; a banquet facility; a conference center for meetings, reunions and weddings; a quality used furniture space for antiques, vintage items and jewelry, and a Sunday outdoor flea market able to accommodate 100 vendors.

Erika Russell of Oakland, husband, JR Russell, and their children have embraced the 35,000-square-foot building owned by Patrick Casey, which has undergone many needed upgrades, renovations and repairs. Their excitement and creativity have filled the building with activity, color, diversity, food, drink and music.

Erika Russell is a successful real estate broker and she and her husband have been a top real estate team in the state at Century 21 Surette Real Estate. When asked why she took on this enormous project, she laughed and said, "No one has ever asked me that. I got in touch with the owner of the building thinking I could sell or rent it for him, but upon seeing it I could see the possibilities.

"If it feels right, I do, if it doesn't, I don't," she said. Russell said she was running out of space at Divine Designs, her consignment shop on Kennedy Memorial Drive in Oakland and saw exciting possibilities for the space on College Avenue.

Her enthusiasm has come alive with striking changes.

As visitors come through the door, a greeter helps guide them to the restaurant downstairs or the vintage furniture showroom to the right, the consignment shop beyond or the wedding gowns and children's shop upstairs.

Russell's husband, besides being a realtor who also works in Philadelphia as a water operator, has taken on management of the Country Manor, as the Russells now call it. JR has mechanical ability and says they both work with and alongside their employees. The grand opening will be Thurs., July 21, all day, with door prizes and giveaways, including 2 pit tickets to the Darius Rucker concert scheduled later this month.

Country Manor is open for business. The restaurant and bar are open, the shops are open but there is still a lot of construction and finishing touches



JR Russell and Erika Russell, at the Country Manor at 54 College Avenue in Waterville, where they have opened a restaurant, consignment shop, one-stop wedding shop, children's shop, vintage furniture shop and banquet and meeting center.

being done. Erika Russell said they are working hard to get the Manor ready for a grand opening; she said they meet with the staff at the end of each day to discuss what worked, what didn't work, and what needs to be changed to improve the situation.

The Russells say the job is about teamwork, from designing the menu to making sure the food is fresh and tasty. Beer & Steer is open Wednesday through Saturday with house music on Wednesday and Thursday, a disc jockey on Friday night, and a live band on Saturday night.

Jeremy Vachon, the head chef, said he loves to cook, presenting a varied menu, from "Cowboy Caviar" to "Kickin' Cactus Pickles," and "Drunken Crab" appetizers, soup and salads — along with entrees from burgers to Cordon Bleu, pork tenderloin with mango chutney and stampede penne with spicy Italian red sauce. Erika Russell says he has a cowboy rub for steak made of coffee and brown sugar that is delicious.

Max Russell, 16, is the pastry chef with some innovative tastes of his own.

The banquet center can accommodate 580 people; as a wedding venue, it can seat 270 people. Erika Russell said she has a very dear network of people she works with, including Visions for flowers, Paula Derosiers at Got Cake, photos by David Adamson and Mike Davis for entertainment. They also offer a selection of dreamy/creamy wedding gowns, mother-of-the-bride dresses, ball gowns and prom dresses.

Everywhere in the building, there is something exciting going on and Russell is like a whirling dervish at the center of it all, stopping to help a customer in the consignment shop or talking to the plumber or liquor salesman. Her smile never fades and her excitement is infectious.

"Practically everyone who comes to the new Manor has stories about working at the Jefferson Hotel, or coming with family and friends to John Martin's Manor, (who) now love seeing it resurrected," she said.

Erika and JR Russell work with their 25 employees and their children Max, 16, Josie, 11 and Dovelyn, 9 — ironing out

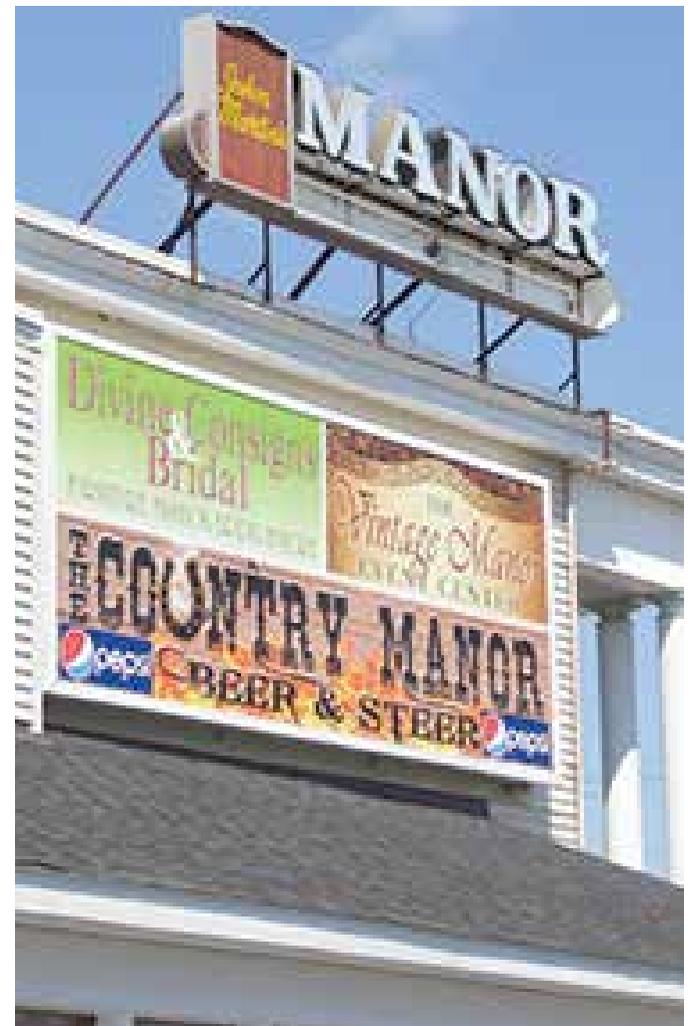
"Practically everyone who comes to the new Manor has stories about working at the Jefferson Hotel, or coming with family and friends to John Martin's Manor, (who) now love seeing it resurrected,"

**ERIKA RUSSELL, WHO WITH HUSBAND, JR RUSSELL, RUN THE COUNTRY MANOR BEER & STEER AND SEVERAL OTHER BUSINESSES IN THE NEWLY-REOPENED COMPLEX**



the details and are having a great time doing it. The oldest daughter Ashley, 21, works at Appleby's in Brunswick.

For visitors, it's very exciting seeing all the new and fresh activity at a business built in 1901 as the 32-room Jefferson Hotel — turned into John Martin's Manor in 1977 and most recently used as a off-track betting facility — come alive again.



Home decor and furniture for sale at the Country Manor. The new sign sets below the old one as the Manor is resurrected to include several businesses. *Susan Varney photos*

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# Health agency breaks down barriers on mental health issues

## *KBH fights stigma against women*

BY ELIZABETH KEANE

*Kennebec Behavioral Health  
Special to Women's Quarterly*

Approximately 43.8 million American adults experience a mental illness within a given year regardless of race, ethnicity or gender, but around 60 percent of those individuals don't receive or access mental health services. Men and women face some similar but also many different battles when dealing with mental illness.

Compared to men, women have higher incidences of mental disorders such as depression and anxiety, and while they may be more likely to reach out for help, they still face many barriers, including stigma, in trying to access treatment and services. The stereotyping about mental health that women face is often different than that of men, but no less discouraging.

Lack of access to mental health services is a major deterrent to receiving treatment and Kennebec Behavioral Health (KBH) continually strives to improve the number of ways in which clients can learn about services and receive them, according to its staff. The Access Center at KBH is the first point of contact for entry into care and often deals with this issue.

"The Access Center at KBH is always trying to expand how people initially find our services and the time it takes to get them into treatment," said Dennis Dix, Access Center director at KBH. "We have made enhancements, including a better call center with staff who been trained to improve the efficiency of care delivery. We also expanded our web-based capabilities to include self-referrals on the KBH website ([kbhmaine.org](http://kbhmaine.org)). All of this allows people in need with more options to obtain services."

Stigma, another prominent obstacle women face, manifests itself in a phenomenon of social isolation. Outdated information and the media can paint inaccurate pictures



of the mentally ill and can cause issues of self-stigma, and often undermines self-efficacy in people with mental illness, he said. Women experiencing a mental illness often face stereotypes that target their physical image as well as their families, particularly their children.

Self-stigma can sometimes be even more challenging as people struggle with mental illness. Women dealing with a mental health challenge often detach themselves from others and can be caught in the "why try" attitude, undermining their self-confidence and affecting their relationships, careers and overall health, according to officials.

To raise awareness about mental health, KBH created and has been airing radio ads that focus on wellness, with specific topics including women's health and services at KBH to educate the public about mental well being and how important mental health care is for individuals, families and the community. These efforts have been made as part of an initiative to break stereotypes that have prevented people from wanting to get treatment.

A program at KBH called Behavioral Health Home Service helps people with

mental health challenges and co-occurring physical health issues by fostering a sense of self-sufficiency and using a team approach to provide integrated care and improve overall wellness.

During treatment in the clinics, gender specific information is available and staff connect women facing issues such as stigma with resources and support groups. Clinicians rely on nonjudgmental realization to help clients process their illness and help them learn how to work toward and maintain a healthier and happier life.

Kathleen Dumont, an Outpatient Clinician at Kennebec Behavioral Health, said support is important.

"One group I use as a support system for women I see deals with women's sexuality or spirituality and their illness and helps strengthen neglected areas in their lives," Dumont said. "We want to provide a safe environment to promote an increase in knowledge and skills which can help battle the stigma they face."

The agency and specific KBH programs, such as the three vocational clubhouses —

High Hopes Clubhouse, Capitol Clubhouse and Looking Ahead Clubhouse — further fight this battle by creating environments for members with mental illnesses to gain skills and build confidence with employment and training opportunities. Clubhouse members themselves help to educate the public about stigma by participating in events such as the NAMI Maine Walk.

"Our members not only receive an education themselves that highlights their own strengths and purpose in the community, but they then go out and spread that knowledge to the businesses they work at," said Lisa Soucie, High Hopes Clubhouse director.

The importance of breaking down the barriers anyone faces in accessing mental health care has become a pivotal part of KBH's culture and plan. Access to care and stigma are just a couple of these obstacles that men, women and children with mental illnesses face, but they are obstacles that Kennebec Behavioral Health come into contact with on a daily basis and ones that the agency will continue striving to overcome, according to its leaders.

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# Summertime meals can be tasty and healthy

BY TERRI HIBBARD  
Correspondent

Summertime meals have to be quick because we want to get outside and soak up our luscious Maine summer weather. And because we're smart, we want food that helps us enjoy life rather than makes us sick, fat or tired. We want fresh food that tastes great and boosts the local economy.

**Farmer's and seafood markets.** This is where to find real food, real fresh that puts money into the pockets of other Mainers rather than some far-off conglomerate. There's got to be a farmers market near you. Just check [getrealmaine.com](http://getrealmaine.com) for an alphabetical list by county.

Farmers markets are wonderful community gatherings where a customer can find all the best people strolling around, visiting and enjoying the vibe. Vendors love to chat about their products and give advice about preparing them.

Any quick meal, including a PB&J sandwich, will benefit from a fresh vegetable and lots of these yummy veggies don't need cooking: cucumbers, radishes, sugar snap peas, carrots and sweet peppers. Cut them in easy-to-handle pieces and kids will love them if they have their own little dish of yogurt or salad dressing to dip them in.

The Winslow Seafood Market, a seasonal seafood shop on the corner of the China Road in Winslow, or Augusta Seafood or Hal-lowell Seafood and Produce, all offer a great

variety of fresh and delicious meal-makers. Fish and shrimp can be grilled for easy healthy dinners. For something quick and cool, try crabmeat rolls, or crabmeat or shrimp added to a pasta salad. Remember that lobsters can often be cooked where they're purchased.

**Grill it.** Who doesn't love hot dogs and hamburgers? But, AAARRRGGH! You don't want to think about what's in those hot dogs, right? Good news! There is an all-beef (grass-fed, pasture-raised, no antibiotics, etc.), uncured, honestly delicious hot dog. Applegate is the brand and they're available at Walmart of all places. The fat in those burgers can be a problem, too, but if cooks buys local lean beef at the farmers market, a local butcher shop (Try Joseph's in Waterville or Jason's in Albion), they can enjoy a burger without regret.

Unfortunately, the buns for dogs and burgers are filled with mystery ingredients. Call the local bakery and ask if they make chem-free buns. I buy mine at Hillman's Bakery in Fairfield.

(In the interest of full disclosure, my son-in-law owns the bakery.)

**Have a set piece.** One trick for easy meals is to have a set piece – a nice plump roasting chicken, or turkey breast, lean pork tenderloin, or pot roast. Best are those with no antibiotics, hormones or added anything. Nature's place meats at Hannaford, for example. Meat can be roasted in the cool of the evening. Pot roast can cook all day in a crock

pot. And you've got a tasty, no-added-ingredients protein for sandwiches, salads, stir-fries, burritos, quesadillas or tacos.

**Try a tortilla.** A flour or wheat tortilla crisped just a bit in a toaster oven, sprinkled with cheese and crisped, then topped with tomato slices and salt and pepper makes a light lunch. A couple of corn tortillas crisped up and spread with guacamole (mashed avocado, lime or lemon juice, salt and salsa) and topped with chopped lettuce is another winner. Tortillas are wraps for sandwiches or filled and folded turn-over style; fried in a skillet with a little olive oil they become quesadillas.

**Visit a bakery.** If a crazy schedule or simple weariness make cooking out of the question, check your local bakery for meal-makers that are healthier and far less expensive than dinner at a fast food joint or take-out pizza. At The Bankery in Skowhegan, for example, there are turkey pies, tourtiere pies, and meat or veggie lasagnas. Hillman's also sells those dinner delights plus a chicken pot pie.

How about pizza? Homemade pizza is quick, cheap and who doesn't love it? Try Portland Pie Company pizza crust from the supermarket, top with sauce, cheese, all kinds of good fresh veggies and yes, a little — I say little — pepperoni isn't going to kill you. Here's my recipe for pizza sauce and don't be put off by the long list of ingredients. It takes less than 10 minutes to put together and needs to simmer only briefly.

## Authentic Pizza Sauce

(More than enough for a cookie sheet pizza.)

1 can tomato sauce

1 Tbsp. olive oil

A sprinkle of dried garlic (maybe a quarter teaspoon)

1 tsp. dried onion

¾ tsp. oregano

¼ tsp. each marjoram, basil, thyme and rosemary

1 bay leaf

• Put about a tablespoon of good olive oil in a sauce pan, sprinkle in a few dried garlic bits and dried onion bits (buy them at Uncle Dean's) and cook on low heat until the fragrant garlic smell makes your mouth water.

• Add the tomato sauce and spices, cover and simmer on low heat for maybe 5 minutes. Shut off the heat and leave it – all day if you're going off to work. This sauce is better than any you can buy – with no unpronounceable ingredients.

• When the dough is thawed and soft (see package directions) stretch it to cover a cookie sheet for a thin crust or a pizza pan for thicker crust. Top with sauce, cheese, veggies (and pepperoni).

• Bake at 475 degrees for 10-15 minutes until bottom is brown, not long enough to heat up the house but long enough to make the place smell scrumptious.

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# Your Money: A professional financial advisor can help you make the most of it

BY NANCY P. MCGINNIS  
Correspondent

A woman often is the day-to-day household “financial manager” when it comes to staying on top of mortgage and utility payments, writing checks for daycare and summer camp, and so on. Nationally, women control a whopping almost \$25 trillion in household assets, says Julie Barter Lucas, an Augusta-based financial advisor with Edward Jones.

But are we as knowledgeable as we should be about the bigger picture: lifelong financial goals, choices and challenges? Too often, women are in the dark — and many end up regretting it.

And almost everyone, regardless of gender or marital status, can benefit immensely from working with a financial advisor: The choices made now will have a huge impact on the possibilities later on — whether your goals are to travel the world, own a vacation home, pursue a special life project or passion, or leave a legacy for your children and grandchildren.

At what age should a person be thinking about financial planning? And how do you figure out if you should even bother?

“Twenty five is an ideal age to get started investing for the future,” says Lucas.

She acknowledges that some people, including 20-somethings, fresh out of school and earning their first “real” paycheck, may feel they have no “extra” funds to invest.

But the magic of starting early, Lucas explains, is the power of compounding accrued interest over time. Committing to set aside for your own future as little as \$50 or \$100 a month can lead to a fulfilling, enjoyable lifestyle years down the road, as well as create options to address the unforeseen in the meantime.

“Creating a habit of saving — and it does become second nature — not only puts you at a real advantage, but is an empowering process,” she said. In nearly a decade, only a handful of her clients have decreased their saving strategy or stopped altogether. “It comes down to three choices: spend less, save more, or work longer before retirement.”

At any age, financial guidance can be critically important when significant life events occur, such as a marriage, divorce, birth of a child, loss of a spouse, or receiving an inheritance.

How to succeed at saving? “Pay yourself first,” Lucas says. “It may seem like you spend every penny you earn, so it’s impossible to set aside anything. But diverting a modest portion off the top is a strategy that really works. You don’t miss what you don’t have.”

It’s a smart move to seek help from a financial advisor to maximize the return on your investment.

“You may already be saving 10 percent of your income — and that’s awesome,” Lucas said. “But what if I could show you that 11 percent is the tipping point — and how finding an extra 1 percent to set aside would make all the difference to your lifestyle and your

opportunities, years from now?”

Of course, many of those seeking financial planning advice are well beyond their 20s. They focus first on establishing a home and career and perhaps raising a family, not switching gears to thinking about retirement until after the kids are off to college and/or on their own.

“Folks sometimes drag their feet about meeting with an advisor because they fear it’s going to be a grim and depressing experience. But it’s empowering to realize you can do this, and you don’t have to go it alone.”

Lucas’ oldest client is 96. Legacy planning is also part of what she does. Since the “Financial Workshop 101” course that she proposed to UMA Senior College a few years ago, she now teaches a classroom full of students all 50 years of age and over, every fall.

So the short answer? Now is a great time to start asking questions and learning about options for financial decision-making.

Education is essential to successful investing, Lucas said. A financial advisor can provide a historical perspective and help a client to determine her or his personal risk tolerance and time horizon.

“In other words, awareness of the inherent possibility that there may be occasions when you have less in your portfolio than you started with... although given enough time, there will be growth,” she said.

“There is absolutely no cost or obligation to come in and have a conversation,” said Lucas, whose office is one of 54 Edward Jones branches in the state of Maine. Trying to navigate financial planning can be overwhelming and downright intimidating, and it can feel awkward to share personal details even though they’re the basis of a meaningful discussion. But financial advisors are bound by a strict professional code of ethics, practicing discretion and confidentiality.

“Our business is really all about relationships — building trust and confidence on every level,” Lucas said.

#### A few more considerations, especially for women:

1) Not only do women often earn less than men, but they are also more likely to take time out of the workforce — perhaps 10 years or more — to have and raise children and/or to look after aging parents. The wage gap, and the prolonged time away, can adversely impact their social security and/or employer-sponsored retirement benefits.

2) Dad may have a life insurance policy, but for Mom it’s not so likely. We tend to overlook the true cost of caring for the children and keeping the household running. “I have clients whose monthly childcare expenses exceed their mortgage payment,” says Lucas.

3) Statistically, women live longer than their significant others. This means that, ready or not, they will be left with the responsibility of money management. “The majority of the wealth in this country will be inherited by women,” Lucas said.

4) Since women tend to live longer, sound financial guidance can provide peace of mind



Nancy P. McGinnis photo

Women are often responsible for managing the day to day expenses of their household, but developing a relationship with a financial advisor like Julie Barter Lucas can be an empowering way for women to feel more confident and in control of the big picture, too.

by helping them prepare strategically for age-related health expenses and long-term care costs, at home or in other settings.

5) Professional financial advisors are happy

to collaborate with CPAs (Certified Public Accountants), attorneys, and others — pooling their knowledge and expertise to provide a “value added” resource for their clients.

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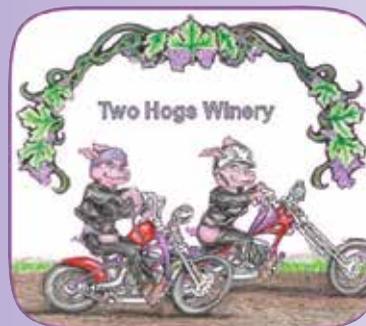
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# BOOKTALK: “Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet”

BY NANCY P. MCGINNIS  
Correspondent

“Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet” may be the most important book on this year’s summer reading list. A word of caution: be sure to have sunscreen handy before settling in with it on the beach or patio. It’s all too easy to become totally swept up in this epic tale as it unfolds, and difficult to resist putting it down until the unexpected and exquisite conclusion nearly 300 pages later.

The author, Jamie Ford, has created a work of historical fiction that also happens to offer its readers a timely opportunity to reexamine, and perhaps rethink, our perspectives. It is an innocent coming of age story, a tender romance, a thought-provoking chronicle of an ugly era in American history and, in the end, a tribute to “blind faith with nothing to lose.”

The story spans three generations, and ultimately unfolds across the entire country. It begins in Seattle in the World War II era. The title refers to the actual historic landmark Panama Hotel, which still stands to this day. In the 1940s it served as a gateway between Chinatown and ‘Nihonmachi,’ or Japantown. More than half a century later, as the story opens, it has become a boarded up ghetto gateway for street gangs and prostitutes.

The protagonists are Chinese American Henry Lee, who lived nearby during “the



war years,” as he likes to call them, and Keiko Okabe, the Japanese American girl who changed his life at the tender age of 12 — only to vanish a few months later.

“The old hotel, like Henry, seemed caught between worlds,” writes Ford in the first chapter, in which the Panama Hotel’s new owner is addressing a press conference to reveal the discovery of a time capsule of sorts in the basement. Hidden away for decades in all the belongings of 37 families were old suitcases, a steamer trunk, packing crates, cloth-

ing, a vintage rice cooker, candlesticks and family photograph albums, “saved for a happier time that never came.”

But what catches Henry’s eye is a dusty red and white Japanese parasol painted with decorative orange koi goldfish. He is unmistakably certain it belonged to Keiko, whom he had last laid eyes on in 1942 when she was interned with her family.

They were among the 4,000 other Japanese Americans at the Minidoka Wartime Relocation Center. After waiting six hours for a message to get through, clinging to her for a few precious moments through the Visitors Center barbed wire in the cold rain, their 13-year-old lips met spontaneously in a first kiss that, sadly, had also been their last.

Ford switches masterfully back and forth between past and present, revealing the twists and turns of Henry’s young adulthood, his father’s stroke and his parents’ declining health. We learn of his marriage to Ethel, the kind young Chinese woman at the Post Office who consoled him when Keiko stopped responding to his letters and, years later, his wife’s decline as she succumbed slowly and painfully to cancer — faithfully tended at home till the end by Henry, who refused to hear of a modern nursing home despite the urging of their son, Marty.

It is painfully evident that Henry has distanced himself from Marty, dismissing

him in his own mind as an ungrateful “rebel against the Confucian ideal of filial piety”— ironically failing to notice how his father had done the same to him a generation earlier.

But, in the end, it is Marty and his fiancée, Samantha, whose steadfast belief in tradition and loyalty open the door to possibilities that a despairing Henry had long ago resigned himself to stop imagining.

The author’s one page after note is as satisfying as the story’s ending, and as beautifully written as the rest of the book. Ford, who grew up near Seattle’s Chinatown, is the great grandson of Min Chung, who emigrated from Kaiping, China to the mines of Nevada in 1865. He explains his goal as an author to quietly and accurately “recreate the historic landscape without judging the good or bad intentions of those involved at the time,” deferring to the reader’s sense of what is just and moral and letting the facts speak for themselves.

Exquisitely linking the tale to reality just as he has woven together the loose ends of the story, Ford reassures us that “yes, the Panama Hotel is real, the 37 families’ belongings still reside in the dim, dusty basement”... and he highly recommends the lychee blend to anyone inclined to stop by the hotel tearoom, where a sampling of the artifacts is now on permanent display.



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Laurie Danforth, owner of The Homestead in Farmington, with FSB’s Mike Mansir.

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# Inland OB/GYN practice earns special safety award

BY SARA BARRY

Director of Community Relations  
Inland Hospital  
Special to Women's Quarterly

Inland Women's Health Care, an obstetrics and gynecology practice in Waterville, is the first OB/GYN practice in Maine, and the tri-state region (Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont) to earn a special safety certification.

The practice has been awarded the "Safety Certification in Outpatient Practice Excellence" (SCOPE) for Women's Health. SCOPE is a patient safety-focused program of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG).

According to ACOG, Inland Women's Health Care, is among only 85 of 180,000 OB/GYN practices in the country to earn the safety credential.

## What is SCOPE?

SCOPE is a comprehensive patient safety review program available to all OB/GYN medical practices. The program assesses the use of patient safety concepts and techniques in the

**"The team really went the extra mile to demonstrate their effectiveness in providing safe, high quality care,"**

**DR. WILLIAM BRADFIELD, MEDICAL DIRECTOR OF WOMEN'S HEALTH  
AT INLAND HOSPITAL, WATERVILLE**

office setting.

ACOG conducted a rigorous inspection and review of Inland Women's Health Care in March as part of the certification process. Participation in the SCOPE program is voluntary and involves a lengthy application process requiring documentation of patient safety policies and protocols. According to ACOG officials, by achieving SCOPE certification, Inland Women's Health Care has demonstrated excellence in patient safety processes.

"We are very proud of the providers and staff at Inland Women's Health Care," said John Dalton, Inland Hospital president and CEO. "The practice always puts their patients first—keeping them safe and delivering the respectful, personalized care that every woman deserves. This certification shows that the

practice is committed to the very best care and safety — which leads to the most positive medical outcomes."

Dr. William Bradfield, medical director of Women's Health at Inland, agreed.

"The team really went the extra mile to demonstrate their effectiveness in providing safe, high quality care," Bradford said. "Our patients can now be assured that the care provided at Inland Women's Health Care is among the safest in the nation."

**About Inland Women's Health Care**  
Inland Women's Health Care is a practice of Inland Hospital. The office is located in the Medical Arts Building next to Inland Hospital on Kennedy Memorial Drive in Waterville.

In 2015, the practice earned recognition from the National Committee for

Quality Assurance as a Patient-Centered Specialty Practice for its responsiveness to patients and medical colleagues.

In addition, the OB/GYN practice was recognized for its key role in Inland, earning the Women's Choice Award as one of America's Best Hospitals for Obstetrics the last four years. Providers are Dr. William Bradfield, Dr. Mark Klemperer, Dr. Mary Vaughan, Sally Stothoff, family nurse practitioner and Helen Price-Wharff, family nurse practitioner. For more information about the practice, call 872-5529 or visit [inland-hospital.org](http://inland-hospital.org).

## About the American Congress of Obstetrics and Gynecology

The American Congress of Obstetrics and Gynecology is the professional membership organization for OB/GYN physicians. Based in Washington, DC, ACOG has more than 57,000 members and is the leading group of physicians in the U.S. providing health care for women. For additional information on ACOG and the SCOPE program, visit [acog.org](http://acog.org) or [scopeforwomenshealth.org](http://scopeforwomenshealth.org).

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# Summer and Watermelon: a Match Made in Heaven

BY NANCY P. MCGINNIS  
Correspondent

Think of “summer” and “fruit” in the same sentence and, chances are, watermelon comes to mind. A cool slice of watermelon is a sweet, sticky slice of heaven on a hot afternoon in the back yard or at the beach.

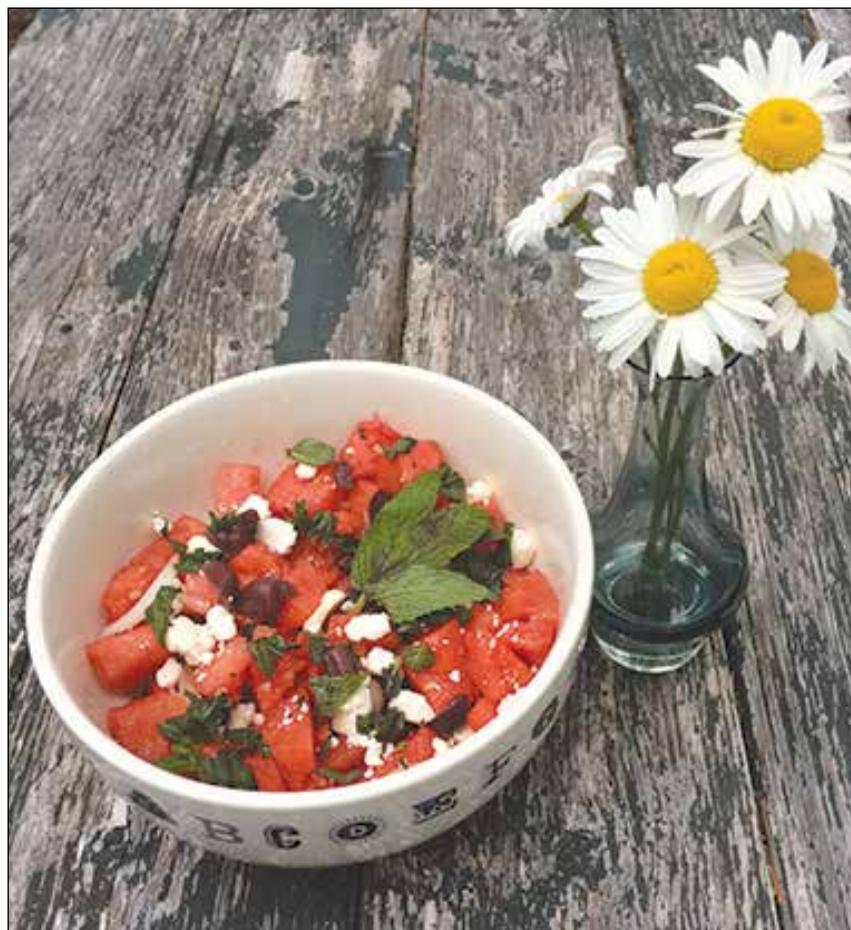
But watermelon is not technically a fruit — it’s actually considered a vegetable (don’t tell the kids!) since it’s a member of the squash, pumpkin and cucumber family.

Good news for the health- and-fitness-minded: according to USDA statistics, watermelon consists of over 90 percent water. So it’s not only low in calories, but can be a source of essential hydration, helping to stave off headaches and fatigue.

And what’s in the remaining 10 percent? There’s a gold mine of A and C vitamins, potassium, super-antioxidant lycopene, and dietary fiber. If only all vegetables tasted like fruits and still were this good for you!

And its signature sweetness also lends unique interest to salads. This unusual watermelon recipe not only appeals to the eye, it also comes together quickly, its flavors enhanced by other fresh ingredients. The surprising addition of hot sauce and Greek olives lends character, but can be omitted altogether if desired. Queso fresco may be substituted for feta if a milder taste is preferred.

Best of all, however you prepare it, there’s no need to turn on the oven or stove to serve this colorful side dish at your next cookout or barbecue.



## WATERMELON SALAD WITH FETA AND FRESH MINT

- 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
  - 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice (squeezed from one large lemon)
  - Up to 1 teaspoon hot sauce, such as Tabasco, to taste
  - Up to 2 teaspoons salt, preferably kosher
  - 1/2 teaspoon or more freshly ground pepper
  - 10 cups chilled watermelon balls or chunks (from one 8 lb. melon, seeds removed, and melon scooped or cut into bite-sized pieces)
  - 1 1/4 cups kalamata olives, pitted and coarsely chopped (optional)
  - 1 sweet Vidalia or red onion, coarsely diced
  - 1 generous handful coarsely chopped mint leaves, plus a few reserved whole leaves for garnish
- In a large serving bowl, make the dressing by whisking together the olive oil, lemon juice, hot sauce, and salt and pepper to taste.
  - Into the same bowl, add the watermelon, cheese, onion and olives and toss gently just until combined.
  - Just before serving, toss the ingredients lightly with the chopped fresh mint and garnish the salad with a few whole mint leaves. Makes 12 servings.

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