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## editor's note

Some of the things I've gained these past few years are a much greater appreciation for nature and the company of women. In fact, the two seem interconnected. Climbing a mountain or skiing a backwoods trail, while quietly conversing with a friend, kept me grounded through the thick and thin of politics and pandemic. Each time conversation was paused by some surprise of nature, like encountering porcupines carelessly and comically perched on tree branches for a late afternoon nap, any anxiety we'd been feeling would inevitably give way to enchantment. There is something deeply communal about sharing a sense of awe and wonder.

That current has somehow flowed through this issue. When I met with Windham High School's Extended Learning Opportunities (ELO) Coordinator and some students this past March to explore the possibilities of what they might contribute to this issue of *Lake Living*, we naturally gravitated to the connections we find in nature and with each other as women, both of which deepen our appreciation for the world.

How we relate to the world and each other has never been more important. For the most part, women have always been deliberate observers and good listeners, and I think if we have any chance of continuing as a race, we need to listen to each other. This issue is full of wise women who understand the transformative power of quietly listening and caring for the Earth and each other.

Can something as simple as moving through life and our surroundings with tenderness and curiosity, listening deeply, and speaking thoughtfully increase our odds? It's certainly worth a try.

*Laurie LaMountain*

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## This is Your Classroom

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY  
LEIGH MACMILLEN HAYES

Imagine being bussed to a random location near the Old Course of the Saco River, walking along the edge of a dewy field, traipsing through a forest of rusty-colored Cinnamon Ferns, hobbling over Buttonbush and Winterberry shrubs, and suddenly reaching a mucky kettle pond, where you dig test holes, take measurements, note differences in soil color and texture, and form some clay into shapes as you learn first hand about hydric soils.

Further imagine that after comparing notes with your peers, and reflecting upon the experience, you take a longer hobble through more wetland shrubs, over downed maples, across mud that wants to devour your boots, but also gives you a chance to learn the shape of raccoon, moose, bear, and deer prints, and then you break through to a fen and boggy area, where you learn the difference between the two wetlands based on plant species and water acidity.

And finally, the *crème de la crème* moment arrives, when you put your notebooks away and pull a bag from your backpack for you have a treasure hunt to complete. The

gems you seek are located by your feet in the boggy section and dangle like holiday bulbs from stems with alternate leaves that are leathery and green above with a dull white on the underside. The focus of your attention now is to fill your bag with cranberries.

As you do this, you chat with your classmates and teachers about recipes and holiday traditions, and get easily distracted when you first hear and then spot Sandhill Cranes flying overhead, or discover a snake-skin, and watch Autumn Meadowhawk dragonflies mate.

And as promised, you meet Pitcher Plants and learn about their adaptations for life in the acidic bog and stick your fingers into a vessel-shaped leaf to feel the texture of the downward facing hairs, locate the smooth zone below that and touch the water within the leaf, and give thanks that the carnivorous plant didn't decide to let its enzymes digest you.

Actually, no imagining of this vignette is necessary for thirty plus students enrolled in Molly Ockett School's Maine Environmental Science Academy (MESA). This is just one of the field trips the students take each week with both Greater Lovell Land Trust (GLLT) on Thursdays and Tin Mountain Conservation Center on Fridays. Yes, two days a week throughout the school year in all manner of weather, students are in the field, or water, or on a mountaintop learning about the world around them by actively experiencing it.

MESA is an interdisciplinary (science, math, English/language arts), experiential place-based class for sixth through eighth graders at the Fryeburg school. Fifth grade students enrolled in the school, may apply to MESA and then spend a few days shadowing their older classmates so they and the teachers can decide if it's a good fit. Each year, because the students loop through the program for three years, there is a different







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theme: water ecology, earth ecology, and forest ecology.

The program was born out of several brainstorming sessions between Jay Robinson, former Molly Ockett School principal, and four teachers.

Over time it has evolved and currently the students spend Monday through Wednesday in traditional classrooms, and two days in the field with community partners. While in school, they rotate through classes taught by their team of teachers, but even those classes are multi-aged, meaning students are grouped according to ability rather than grade level. Their in-class lessons are enriched by their opportunities to learn from the natural environment and at the same time they are getting to know the local area intimately as they explore the three watersheds, Cold River, Kezar Lake, and Kezar River, that GLLT protects, and follow the course of the Saco River from its headwaters in the White Mountains all the way to the coast with Tin Mountain. (Disclaimer: as education director for Greater Lovell Land Trust, I have the profound pleasure of working with MESA each week.)

Their teachers, Carolyn Lewey, Julie Schoenfeld, and Jotham Oliver, take a holistic approach to this program. “It’s all about these students,” says Mrs. Lewey, “and where we are going with them metaphorically and physically and literally. It’s so involved that it requires much of our attention and intention on what we are doing and why we are doing it.”

Mr. Oliver adds, “With a looping program, we’re getting sixth, seventh, and eighth graders for three years. We really get to know the students quite well and they get to know us so the bonds we’re able to create with our students as well as their parents—I wouldn’t trade that for anything.”

Mrs. Schoenfeld completes the thought with this, “I think when students can see teachers in a different environment, like we are freezing out there just as they are, or we might sprain an ankle, or we might fall on the trail, it’s a different kind of bonding that they get.”

The students are given constant opportunities to develop skills including critical thinking and note taking, and most importantly, an appreciation of the natural world. They develop an awareness of what is going on around them and how things work that many people never notice. And each week, whether with GLLT or Tin Mountain, they build upon concepts learned this year and



in years past.

At the start of the year, students are divided into nine EXP (experiential) groups with all three grade levels present in each. After jotting notes down on any particular topic, they split into these groups and the older students make sure their classmates have figured out the key points. Mrs. Schoenfeld says, “We take time out to teach those skills. The beauty of looping and the three-year program is that we’re teaching the sixth graders from scratch, but the seventh and eighth graders have those skills. Two-thirds of the students are modeling behavior. We’re really big about getting them to lead.”

A typical outing, if there is such a thing because we often resort to Plan B since nature doesn’t always listen to us, begins

the moment the students debark the bus at a predetermined location. The bus driver, by the way, is Mr. Oliver, who earned his commercial driving license so they don’t have to depend upon or pay another driver.

Once they are all off the bus and have donned waders or muck boots or snowshoes or ice stabilizers, all purchased with grant monies rather than the school budget, they form a huge circle. The circle is such a part of their two-day field experiences that they do better in this regard than most adults I lead on field trips. The circle is where the learning begins and the students have notebooks and pencils in their hands. It’s at this point when the community partner, whether it be GLLT or Tin Mountain, or someone else we’ve invited to share knowledge and



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activities, such as a forester, sawyer, arborist, birder, member of Lovell Invasive Plant Patrol Committee or Kezar Lake Watershed Association's LakeSmart and Water Quality teams, Lakes Environmental Association, or staff, board and other volunteers, explains the plan for the day and then introduces a new topic through a game, experiment, or role playing activity.

The group moves along the trail like a snake slithering through the woods. On Thursdays it includes 35 students, three teachers, two GLLT volunteers (thank you Dawn Wood and Jessie Lozanski), and me. We stop at various locations along the way and may dip D-nets to capture macro-invertebrates that help us determine water quality, test pH, learn how to use a dichotomous key, identify plants, trees, and shrubs, recognize various types of wetlands, count egg masses in vernal pools, catch frogs, spot birds, and always, let nature distractions stop us in our tracks. Their eagle eyes spy things we overlook no matter how intentional our focus. Most recently, it was a kill site—where we found entrails, a foot, and mandible of a muskrat, and determined either a mink or fisher had dined on its fellow member of the weasel family.

The day continues in this manner, with time for snack, phenology (they sit quietly on the forest floor and jot down seasonal observations), and most importantly reflection. They ask questions, process what they've experienced, make connections, and come away with fresh learnings. So do we.

Each fall, the class takes a trip to Bryant Pond 4-H Camp. The teachers view this trip as one of the mainstays of their program. "We spend the better part of three days with

### What does MESA mean to you?

*"It's not just a program. It's a family. It has changed my perspective on what 'school' is. It has brought back my curiosity. Everyone is so close and we are always there to help each other learn."* **Clair, grade 6**

*"MESA means learning extraordinary concepts every day."* **Brittany, grade 6**

*"When I think of MESA, I think about our partners and teachers and the amazing experiences they bring us."* **Ann, grade 7**

*"MESA means new experiences, new friends, and a new way to school."* **Nolan, grade 7**

*"MESA is a program where we learn a lot, but in an experiential and interesting way. I learn things about our real world and how to take care of it. I truly love this program because I am learning more about the world I live in."* **Avery, grade 7**

*"MESA is a place where I don't just learn amazing things, get a hands-on outdoor experience, and get to experience real life, but I'm also supported and have people I can trust. I'm so grateful to be a part of MESA."* **Winter, grade 8**

*"I have been in MESA for three years and it has changed me educationally and mentally. MESA means coming back from a trip soaked and with crazy hair. We always rush to the bathroom and then have to get back to class for a listening quiz. MESA means connecting with our EXP groups and others in this program, meeting new people each year, and building strong bonds with the teachers."* **Kassidy, grade 8**



them," explains Mrs. Lewey. "We're in the same cabin and eating family-style meals and doing the high ropes course and it is a valuable time. After that we know our students so well and academics go on cruise control. We can tailor the students' learning because we know their learning style. There's been a lot of research on when students have a personal relationship with a teacher, they are more invested in that class and they work harder. And we see that. We have students who work really hard and care really hard about each other and about the program."

All of the experiences the students have are amazing, but to Mr. Oliver, there are two other gratifying things he takes away constantly. First, the amount of growth he and his colleagues see in the students over three years is overwhelming. "We are able

to affectively impact these students' lives in ways that we probably can't possibly comprehend and it's the really deep level of commitment we get from our kids. It's something I'll always treasure."

Secondly, sharing these experiences with the other teachers has meant much to him. "The period of growth I've had as a teacher and adult and to get to share that with Mrs. Lewey and Mrs. Schoenfeld has had a huge impact on my life and me as an educator and I hope me on them. I've been surfing rainbows for eleven years."

MESA students participate wholeheartedly, listen intently, and make connections. Oh, and they get a wee bit wet and muddy. As they should, because as Mr. Oliver frequently reminds them, "This is your classroom." Indeed. 🌧️





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## the summer camp

BY LAURIE LAMOUNTAIN

Thirty-eight years ago, Nancy Maier, who attended summer camp in Maine as a child, decided every kid should be able to go to camp. So she established a non-profit and enlisted some of her friends, who were also in their mid-20s and had gone to private summer camps, to raise tuition money for a handful of kids from low-income and foster homes to attend camps throughout New England. At the end of the second year, the board of directors decided they could do a better job and serve more kids if they found a base camp of their own to lease. The first site was located in Ware, Massachusetts, but The Summer Camp for Girls has been in Maine ever since. For many years, it was located in Washington, Maine. In 2020, The Summer Camp signed a 10-year lease at Camp Kirkwold on Lovejoy Pond in Readfield, Maine.

Surrounded by 100 acres of upland woods, wetlands and streams, the former Girl Scout camp provides abundant space in



a beautiful setting. The board immediately launched a capital campaign to make significant improvements to the site, including two new camper cabins, kitchen updates, renovations to the health center, and a new director's cabin.

An amazing thing about this grassroots effort is that six of the original members still serve on the board today—as do some of their children. In this way it truly is a family affair. Nancy still sits on the board as well.

Tracy St. Onge-May joined The Summer Camp family as the first year round executive director in 1994. The camp's administrative office is located beside her home in Bridgton. Despite having lived in Maine for 34 years, traces of her midwestern roots occasionally reveal themselves in Tracy's speech. She grew up in Minnesota and started her camping life at Camp Courage in Maple Lake, Minnesota, where she was a counselor. After graduating from the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse with a double major in Psychology and Therapeutic Recreation, she spent the next fifteen summers working at Camp Walden in Denmark, Maine. The last seven of those years she worked year round as part of the administrative team, so the move to



camp director at The Summer Camp was a natural one.

The differences, however, between a private summer camp like Walden and The Summer Camp are vast. The latter is a 501(3)(c) that depends on donors, foundations, and grants to fully fund the camp's operations, administration, and transportation. On average, 7% of campers live in foster homes and 86% reside in single parent households. Camp provides a place for them to escape personal burdens such as divorce, domestic violence or neglect, for which, sadly, Maine ranks first in the nation. It's a place to "forget about real life for a while and embrace the chance to play as children." Scholarships are awarded based on income qualification and are distributed among 80 social services agencies, including schools, shelters, and community centers, throughout New England and New York City, with an overall 60 to 70% return rate and between 30 to 40% of campers hailing from Maine. The cost of transportation from New York City and its suburbs and New England is also covered and has been provided by Wilson Bus Lines for the past 28 years.

An important part of their mission is to mix urban and rural kids together. Girls from all of New England and New York are brought together with girls from rural Maine.

"We're not steeped in tradition, which is a plus because we can make left and right decisions as we need to . . . or U-turns for that matter!" says Tracy. "I don't think you'll find another camp like ours in the State of Maine as far as diversity and the mix of urban and rural campers. We expose our Maine kids to people 'from away.' We match up people who would never meet in the real world without camp."

One example of this is the lasting friendship between Elena from New York City and Maris from Turner, Maine. The two met at camp when they were seven years old and still maintain close contact in their mid-20s.

Camp consists of five sessions per season, with around 65 campers per session. Over the past 38 years they have provided the camp experience to over 10,000 girls. Four 10-day sessions and one 13-day session consist of a mix of land and water sports, including archery, dance, pottery, canoeing, kayaking, paddle boarding and swimming. The 13-day session combines regular activities with a two-night hiking and canoeing adventure. All campers, regardless of age, benefit from The Summer Camp's Literacy program. Electronic devices are nowhere to be seen.



Campers aged 13 to 14 are encouraged to take part in the Leadership Training program in which they plan activities for younger campers and assist counselors. Campers aged 15 to 18 can take part in a Counselor-in-Training program if they are graduates of the Hiking and Canoeing and Leadership Training programs and have attended camp for consecutive sessions. Through these programs, many of the campers go on to become counselors.

"I work very hard to hire counselors who reflect our camper population. Many of them are first generation college kids and/or from the foster system, and certainly any number have come from the roles our kids are coming from, so for them to see our counselors succeed and get into college is really great role modeling for our kids," says Tracy. "Typically our counselors come to camp for all the right reasons; to be role models and maybe teach our kids that they were sitting right where they were at one point."

Jessy Stacy, who has been with The Summer Camp for 21 years, is Development and Outreach Manager. The Outreach program was initiated about six years ago to engage and support campers throughout the year and to assist them in prepping for college. Not only does it help with SAT fees and

the application process, it allows them to mentor campers year round. College tours, Finance Authority of Maine (FAME) and Let's Get Ready! are other resources they use to help campers apply for financial aid, create resumé's, and visit prospective colleges.

"The mission of The Summer Camp is to empower girls, young women, to challenge themselves, become stronger. I want them to learn to be kind and accept people for all their different color, race, religion, sexual orientation or personal beliefs. We try to teach the girls that the world is a big place and we all belong here. We do a lot of education in pre-camp training for our staff to discourage discrimination. And I think overall the kinds of counselors I hire completely understand who we are."

I ask Tracy what happens when the weather is as rainy as it's been this first week of May. She recalls one session in Washington when it rained every day and there were a lot of arts and crafts projects. She admits that camp is certainly easier when the sun is shining.

"I never used to let them watch movies, but I've mellowed on that." 🌸

For more information or to donate, visit [thesummertimecamp.org](http://thesummertimecamp.org)





## To Zambia, with love from Maine

BY LEIGH MACMILLEN HAYES

What began as a Habitat for Humanity project in the village of Kaoma (Kah-oh-ma), located in Zambia, Africa, turned into an empowerment program for women and children with the help of some Mainers.

Lynn Twitchell and Cindy Fuchswanz of Maine, along with Amanda Robinson of North Carolina, were part of that building project in 2001. They quickly recognized the profound poverty in this area of the Western Province hard hit by HIV/AIDS and wanted to help beyond the initial cause. The three returned to the States with a goal of helping African women become self-supporting by giving them hope.

The first step in this new journey was to provide a sewing machine to Margaret Mundia, a woman they realized was a talented tailor and leader. As the mother of eight, she had experienced abandonment

and felt the need to care for her own children, but also teach others how to sew so that they could clothe their families and earn money. More sewing machines were provided and it soon became evident that a women's center was needed.

In 2004, Margaret and another woman formed what was initially called Lynn's Women's Empowerment Center, but has since been renamed Kaoma WISE Trust. That inspired the U.S. group to start a non-profit named WISE (Women's Initiatives that Strengthen and Empower) based in Maine, with Lynn as president and Cindy as Vice President one year later.

The two groups work together to help improve lives and communities. The women's center was located in a work space visible to the entire community and funded



by baskets and fabric items they made and sold, plus support from U.S. WISE donors. They received all types of training, including agricultural skills to help improve their food security both at home and within the greater community.

Though Lynn and Cindy have stepped down from organizational duties, there is still a woman from Lewiston/Auburn who was so moved after learning about the work in Africa during a talk by them in 2010, that she knew she wanted to get involved. In 2013 Joanne Bollinger, aka Jo-Jo, made her first trip.

She went to Zambia with the intention of it being a one-time visit and then contributing to the cause. Instead, she returned each year and joined the board in 2015, as the board and Zambian staff refocused its mission. Currently, Jo-Jo serves as Interim Board Chair and Secretary.

"It didn't take me long to get involved once I met these people who have so little,





but a great sense of joy about life,” she said. “These women are welcoming and friendly. Zambians are proud to be known as friendly people. They have great passion for their families and especially children. While visiting, they’d say, ‘Let me show you my house,’ or ‘Come and eat.’ Going to church services touches your soul. The joy in their music is amazing.”

With the new board structure, the program has grown. They’ve hired an executive director to oversee policies and programs in Zambia and that person just happens to be Margaret’s daughter, Maggie Indopu. Education became the impetus because a tremendous number of girls do not have opportunities to attend school beyond grade 7. Instead, marriage and pregnancy have been the traditional alternatives.

Maggie said, “WISE is on a mission to empower and create economic independence for vulnerable women and children within the province of Zambia.”

“Initially there was great resistance among families to have their girls go to school,” said Jo-Jo. “Many live in remote villages with no clean water. Their latrines are often holes in the ground. When the children attend school, they must either walk an hour or two to get there or board with another family in town. Then it is a huge culture shock for 8th and 9th graders to go into a large boarding school situation.”

The first year they helped 28 students with tuition and the purchase of things like uniforms, shoes, toiletries and school supplies, all items they cannot afford, but are required at the government-run schools. Now, over 500 students, girls and boys, are enrolled in 8th-12th grade and another 62 receive scholarships for college, nursing or vocational school. Mr. Mukela, the education coordinator, and an administrative assistant keep track of all of the kids, their grades, and their family status as the students are enrolled in schools across three districts in the province.

Sister Mate, head of Presentation Secondary School said, “Girls are given an opportunity to explore what they want to do in life. Education is an equalizer and it gives the girls a forum to compete with a boy-child. Girls are not just made for the kitchen. Parents learn that the girl-child can do what the boys can do and even do it better than the boy-child.”

“For us to develop as a nation,” said Maggie, “education has to be accessed by every child.”

She requires that all students sign a contract that they will volunteer while in high school as a way of giving back. And for those in college, they must sign a contract stating that after one year of employment they will commit 6% of their salary for seven years to help others in the program. When Jo-Jo interviewed a number of the college graduates, they said they felt it was important to give back because of the huge support WISE had provided to them and their families.

“One of the challenges,” said Jo-Jo, “is that there is sometimes a stigma about going to trade school. A young deaf woman was the first to attend for carpentry. She already has a bank account and plans to open her own shop.”

Security is a real issue in Kaoma because in a place where poverty is so prevalent, things like computers, quickly disappear. This is where the story gets even more interesting.

In 2019, some time after Jo-Jo had finished recording a radio podcast, she received an email via her WISE Zambia address that began, “I’m writing this with a sense of apprehension, but it might answer some questions.”

It turns out, the email was from a son she’d long ago given up for adoption. James had had a wonderful life, but after hearing the podcast, that cemented his intention to reach out. The relationship has proven not only to bring joy to Jo-Jo and her other two children, plus she gained two grandchildren, but also James works for HDR, Inc., a company with a foundation that gives grants to non-profit proj-

ects employees recommend. Initially, with James’s endorsement they provided a majority of the security fence around the WISE campus; Lewiston-Auburn Rotary funded the first small portion. Now, a non-profit team out of HDR, known as Design for Others (D4O), has started designing Phase 2 of WISE’s Learning Center, a campus of modern classroom buildings featuring enhanced learning environments and dorms. James serves as the liaison between D4O, staff in Zambia and the U.S., and HDR. And he’s looking forward to a trip to Zambia.

Meanwhile, Phase 1 is the current Buy a Brick campaign which will fund a traditional style school building in Zambia, but includes a computer lab, the area’s first library, and a science lab/classroom.

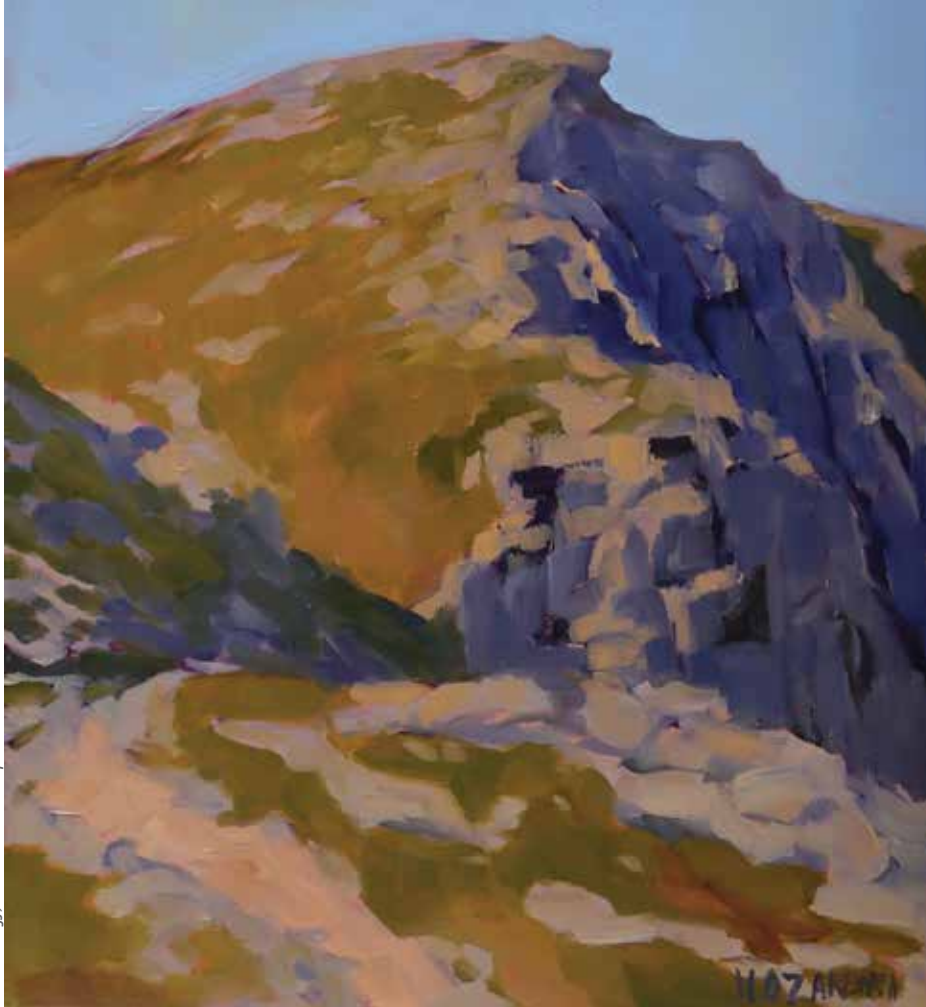
“Education helps transform lives,” said Maggie. And we can all be a part of that transformation by contributing to their capital campaign for Phase 1 of the Learning Center. It will take 7,000 building blocks to complete the building. Think of it this way: \$5 = 1 block; \$20 = a window sill; \$50 = a door frame; \$1,000 = an entire wall. Consider buying a brick to help WISE Zambia grow with love from Maine. 🧱

FMI: [wisezambia.org](http://wisezambia.org)  
Buy a Brick: [wisezambia.harnessgiving.org/campaigns/9413](http://wisezambia.harnessgiving.org/campaigns/9413)





Bond Cliff, 9x12" oil on panel



Hemlocks, 8x8" oil on panel



## Lovely Small Moments

BY LAURIE LAMOUNTAIN

Jessie Lozanski is by her own estimation a self-taught artist and passionate naturalist. It's evident, however, in the dozens of paintings in her Conway, New Hampshire, studio that she has found a very good teacher in Nature.

She points out that the role of naturalist goes hand in hand with artist; that to be a naturalist you have to some degree be an artist, because in both cases you need to notice things, like the minute details of a spotted salamander or club moss or the intricate patterns in lichen.

"As an artist, as a naturalist, you develop the skill of being able to see things. It's hard to learn that skill if you don't know what to look for, and so with my painting I feel like I can help people know what to look for or start to develop an eye to see things. Because I think when you start to notice things, you start to develop a love for them. That's what I want to do is help people make those connections to where they're living – to love the landscape they're in."

It was about six years ago, while she was pursuing a degree in biology from Carleton University in Ottawa, and working part-time at Algonquin Provincial Park, Ontario, that Jessie found her artistic inspiration. Tom Thomson, a self-taught Canadian landscape artist who served as a guide in Algonquin Park in the early 1900s, was deeply enamored with the park and painted many of his most significant paintings there, including *Canoe Lake* and *Early Spring*, *Canoe Lake*, which sold in 2009 for \$2,749,500 CAD. In a strange twist of fate, Thomson drowned on Canoe Lake just shy of his 40th birthday, but his life and legacy were a leading influence in the formation of The Group of Seven, also known as the Algonquin School of Canadian landscape painters. When Jessie researched Thomson she fell in love with the Impressionist style with which he captured her familiar northern Ontario landscape. She ran right out and bought the cheapest watercolor paints she could afford on a student budget.



These days Jessie's preferred medium is oil, but she also works in watercolor and gouache. She likes that oil paint takes longer to dry, allowing her more time to move it around on the canvas. She has also dabbled in linocut, embroidery, and tapestry weaving. And because she gets that art is a profession, she intentionally created a line of note cards and stickers to supplement her passion.

"I've done about 50 paintings since I moved here. I didn't have anything to do for months but now I can work, so it's good."

The work she's referring to is a seasonal land steward at Greater Lovell Land Trust. Jessie and her husband, who is also a graduate of Carleton University, have lived in western Maine since their marriage last June. He grew up in Eaton, New Hampshire, and met Jessie at Carleton. Once they decided to marry and make their home in Maine, they had to endure a two and half year COVID-complicated separation while Jessie waited to get her visa. She wisely reflects that you don't take a relationship for granted when you can't have it. During that time she "worked her butt off" and saved money to tide her over until she got her green card. Since then, she's been painting up a storm.

"When I get the chance I do like plein air painting. I get to spend an hour or so just sitting still in a landscape, listening to it, studying the shadows, so I feel I can really engage with it. But I really like photography, so if I'm out on a hike without my paints, I will just take photos and work from them."

Whether she's working from a photograph or outside, she usually begins with a small pencil sketch to establish different values and shapes. Her style has evolved over time from detailed and precise to the looser style she now favors because she feels it allows her to bring more emotion into her paintings.

"I would say I paint in a somewhat Impressionist style. I'm not very particular about getting all the details exactly right. I care more about the feeling and the colors. I feel sometimes like I approach the composition of my paintings the way a writer would approach their writing. I don't want to have clichés in my painting, so I try to create more unique compositions. I think it brings a better connection to the person looking at it—that they can relate to it more."

My art is very rooted in place. I want to celebrate the landscape I live in, and not only the vast mountain views but the lovely small moments you find in a sunlit creek, a



Foss Mountain in Blueberry Season, 12 x 16" oil on panel

forgotten marsh, or a shaded road. Everyone should have the opportunity to appreciate where they live and I hope my art can help people notice beauty in their everyday lives."

Jessie reflects on slowing down to listen to the wind in the trees. She says that hemlock makes a different sound than birch that you will only decipher if you take the time to slow down and listen.

"It's taking time to not race through the landscape. I notice it every time I go for a walk with the land trust docents, if you stop for a second and look carefully you'll find something you might have missed."

On July 26th Jessie will lead "A Walk Through Time: Lichens, Mosses, and Club Mosses" as part of Greater Lovell Land Trust's summer programs. She admits to getting pretty excited about lichens and mosses, mostly because they are such small things and are therefore often overlooked.

"When I started learning about them I was like, wow, look at this whole entire world of all these different species with their own discreet lives that I didn't even notice before. I just walked right past them!"

Jessie is also a writer and a very good photographer. Before leaving her native Canada for western Maine, she regularly contributed to an environmental publication and authored a guide focused on her hometown of Stittsville, a suburb of Ottawa, Ontario. *Wild Stittsville: A Guide to Our Ecosystems and How We Can Re-Wild Our Community* was part of a project she completed as an alumna of the Canadian



Conservation Corps. In her time with the Corps she finished a two-week canoe trip on Georgian Bay and a four-month placement with the Kawartha Land Trust.

Leaving one's homeland is a pretty big deal. Jessie's parents have since moved from Stittsville to Halifax, Nova Scotia, to be nearer her brother and sole sibling. In her adopted home in western Maine, Jessie has found a landscape in which she can grow new roots—one where she can capture the lovely small moments.

You can view Jessie's artwork on Open Studio Saturdays in her studio at 45 Washington Street in Conway, New Hampshire. She will also be exhibiting at Art in the Park in Bridgton and the Art and Artisans Fair in Lovell, Maine, and at Art in the Park Festival in North Conway and Tin Mountain Conservation Center in New Hampshire. Her work is also on display at the The Met Cafe, The Local Grocer, and White Birch Books, all in North Conway, New Hampshire. 🌸

[www.jessielozanskifineart.com/gallery](http://www.jessielozanskifineart.com/gallery)



## PERFORMING ARTS

Please note that events are subject to change.

**Brick Church for the Performing Arts:** Theatre and music will take place in this historic and acoustically perfect setting. [lovellbrickchurch.org](http://lovellbrickchurch.org), 207.925.1500

**Deertrees Theatre:** June through September performances mark the 87th season at this enchanting Adirondack-Style theatre nestled among the pines of Harrison. [deertrees-theatre.org](http://deertrees-theatre.org) 207.583.6747

**Denmark Arts Center:** Once serving as the Odd Fellows Hall, this community gathering space will offer a season of surprises in 2023. [denmarkarts.org](http://denmarkarts.org), 207.452.2412

**The Hayloft at Dragonfly Farm:** Historically a dairy farm, the renovated barn provides event space and musical programs for 2023. [www.hayloftatdragonfly.com](http://www.hayloftatdragonfly.com) 207.749.6160

**Lake Region Community Theatre:** Providing community performing arts opportunities, this summer's show will be *The Sound of Music*. [LRCTMaine.org](http://LRCTMaine.org)

**Ossipee Valley Music Festival:** String Camp, July 27 - 30 Featuring an omnivorous blend of genre-defying sound in South Hiram. [ossipeevalley.com](http://ossipeevalley.com)

**Oxford Hills Music and Performing Arts Association:** Staging productions highlighting local talent. June performance: *Misery*; November performance: *Jykell & Hyde*; at Norway Grange. [ohmpaa.com](http://ohmpaa.com) 207.613.5232

**Schoolhouse Arts Center:** Appealing to audiences of all ages, a variety of shows will be performed in Standish throughout the summer months. [schoolhousearts.org](http://schoolhousearts.org) 207.642.3743

**Sebago-Long Lake Music Festival:** Celebrating their 51st season with Chamber music from various periods at Deertrees Theatre in Harrison. [sebagomusicfestival.org](http://sebagomusicfestival.org)

**Stone Mountain Arts Center and The Queen Post Cafe:** Nestled in the foothills, national acts and delicious food are offered Thursdays through Saturdays. [stonemountainartscenter.com](http://stonemountainartscenter.com) 207.935.7292

## MUSEUMS & HISTORY

**Bridgton Historical Society:** Town artifacts are on display in downtown Bridgton, housed in an old firehouse and former church. [bridgtonhistory.org](http://bridgtonhistory.org) 207.647.3699

**Clarence Mulford Room:** Fryeburg Public Library is home to a room dedicated to Mulford's fictional character, Hopalong Cassidy, and includes a collection of books, research notes and other memorabilia. [fryeburgpubliclibrary.org](http://fryeburgpubliclibrary.org), 207.935.2731

**Col. Samuel Osgood House and Ham Research Library:** Tour Fryeburg Historical Society's historic home and/or conduct genealogical research on site. [fryeburghistorical.org](http://fryeburghistorical.org), 207.256.3001

**Hazel & Owen Currier Doll Museum:** Dedicated exclusively to dolls, this museum is owned by Fryeburg Historical Society. [currierdollmuseum.org](http://currierdollmuseum.org), [Whitaker9244@roadrunner.com](mailto:Whitaker9244@roadrunner.com)

**Kimball-Stanford House:** The 1839 house owned by Lovell Historical Society serves as a museum, while the ell houses the Research Center. [lovellhistoricalsociety.org](http://lovellhistoricalsociety.org), 207.925.3234

**Maine Mineral & Gem Museum:** Nineteen interactive galleries explain the history of pegmatite mining in western Maine, topped off with Space Rocks: The Stifler Meteorite Collection, Bethel. [mainemineralmuseum.org](http://mainemineralmuseum.org), 207.824.3036

**Museums of the Bethel Historical Society:** Exhibit galleries and period rooms are displayed in both the 1813 Dr. Moses Mason House and 1821 O'Neil Robinson House. [bethelhistorical.org](http://bethelhistorical.org), 207.824.2908

**Rufus Porter Museum:** Learn about the 19th century artist, inventor, musician, and founding publisher of *Scientific American*. June through October. [rufusportermuseum.org](http://rufusportermuseum.org), 207.647.2828

**Scribners Mill & Homestead:** The 19th century sawmill and homestead in Harrison are open on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays from Memorial Day through Labor Day. [scribnersmill.org](http://scribnersmill.org), 207.583.6544

## THE OUTDOORS

**Greater Lovell Land Trust:** Informative talks, engaging walks, paddles, weekly trail runs/walks, pollinator garden, and lots of places to explore, including a storybook trail are among GLLT's summer offerings. [gllt.org](http://gllt.org), 207.925.1056

**Inland Woods and Trails:** Connecting communities through the development, maintenance, and promotion of multi-use recreational trails for human-powered activities for all ages and abilities. [woodsandtrails.org](http://woodsandtrails.org), 207.200.8240

**Lakes Environmental Association:** In addition to conducting valuable research on Maine lakes, LEA offers public programs and workshops, and maintains several miles of trails. [mainelakes.org](http://mainelakes.org), 207.647.8580

**Loon Echo Land Trust:** LELT provides a variety of experiences including walks, paddles, and more at their properties located in various towns throughout the lake region. [loonecholandtrust.org](http://loonecholandtrust.org), 207.647.4352

**Mahoosuc Land Trust:** From the Androscoggin River to mountain summits, MLT offers trails, plus a pollinator garden and monarch festival. [mahoosuc.org](http://mahoosuc.org), 207.824.3806

**Upper Saco Valley Land Trust:** USVLT strives to connect community members with the protected lands through easement explorations of western Maine and eastern New Hampshire. [usvlt.org](http://usvlt.org), 603.356.9683

**Western Foothills Land Trust:** Hikes, walks, races, and paddles are offered that explore the natural history of the Oxford Hills Region. [wflmaine.org](http://wflmaine.org), 207.739.2124

## FAIRS & FESTIVALS

**Windham SummerFest:** June 24. Celebrate the beginning of summer. [windhamsummerfest.com](http://windhamsummerfest.com), 207.892.1905

**Pollinator Fest:** July 1, 2:00 - 4:00pm Celebrate Greater Lovell Land Trust's butterfly-shaped pollinator garden, learn about plants and insects, play games, create crafts, and eat ice cream. [gllt.org](http://gllt.org) 207.925.1056

**Ossipee Valley Fair:** July 6 - 9, A country fair with oodles of livestock events, competitions, demonstrations, and exhibits in South Hiram. FMI: [ossipeevalleyfair.com](http://ossipeevalleyfair.com) 207.256-9658

**Waterford World's Fair:** July 14 - 16 Celebration of rural and historical culture, with competitions and exhibits in North Waterford. [waterfordworldsfair.org](http://waterfordworldsfair.org) 207.890.7669

**Founder's Day and Classic Car Exhibit:** July 15, 9:00am - 5:00pm Music, vendors, crafts, and car show to benefit Hamlin Memorial Library and Museum, Paris Hill. [parishill.org](http://parishill.org) 207.743.2980

**Paris Hill Music Festival:** August 5 - 6, Bring chairs and blankets to enjoy some music under the stars for these benefit concerts. Paris Hill Country Club, South Paris. FMI: [parishillmusicfestival.com](http://parishillmusicfestival.com)

**Gray Wild Blueberry Festival:** August 12, 9:00am - 3:00pm 7th annual family-friendly event featuring food, music, model train exhibit, spelling bee, crafts, and more. 24 Main Street, Gray [wildblueberries.me](http://wildblueberries.me)

**Monarch Festival:** August 12 - 13 Join Mahoosuc Land Trust for workshops, Monarch butterfly tagging, children's activities, lawn games, artisan vendors and more, Valentine Farm, Bethel. [mahoosuc.org](http://mahoosuc.org) 207.824.3806

**Maine Outdoor Film Festival:** August 18 Loon Echo Land Trust and the Maine Outdoor Film Festival present an evening of Outdoor Films. Hacker's Hill Preserve, Casco FMI: [lelt.org](http://lelt.org) 207.647.4352

**Lovell Arts & Artisans Fair:** August 19, 9:00am - 3:00pm 48th annual all-juried fair at New Suncook School in Lovell. [hobbsslibrary.org](http://hobbsslibrary.org) 207.925.3177

**Oxford County Fair:** September 13 - 16 Traditional county fair featuring livestock, exhibits, competitions, shows, vendors, and a midway. [oxfordcountyfair.com](http://oxfordcountyfair.com) 207.739.2204



## OLD HOME DAYS

**Sebago Days:** July 13 - 15 Road race, car show, talent show, kiddie rides, grand parade, music, and fireworks. [sebagodays.com](http://sebagodays.com) 207.787.3732

**Lovell Old Home Days:** July 15 Road race, followed by a parade and exhibits. Find us on Facebook

**Casco Days:** July 29 Fireworks, road race, children's parade, Grand Parade, and midway. [cascodays.com](http://cascodays.com)

**Bridgton Harvest Moon Festival:** September 16 A fall festival for the community by the community. Find us on Facebook

## PLEIN AIR MUSIC

**Music on Main:** Free concert-series each month, May - October 144 Main Street, Bridgton [musiconmainbridgton.com](http://musiconmainbridgton.com)

**Denmarkpalooza:** June 17, 6:00pm Free evening concert; BYOB and chair Denmark Bicentennial Park, Denmark

**Paris Hill Music Festival:** August 4 - 5 Enjoy music under the stars for these benefit concerts. Paris Hill Country Club, South Paris [parishillmusicfestival.com](http://parishillmusicfestival.com)

**Loon Echo Land Trust's Acoustic Sunset Concert:** August 9 Sunset concert featuring Bold Riley at Hacker's Hill, Casco. [lelt.org](http://lelt.org) 207.647.4352

**Dam Jam REVIVAL:** August 20, 3:00 - 8:30pm Featuring Maine's premier bluegrass band Breakin' Strings, and blues guitarist Samuel James! Denmark Bicentennial Park [Denmarkarts.org](http://Denmarkarts.org)

## RUNS & RACES

**Roots & Rocks Ramblers:** May - August, Thursday, 5:30pm Free weekly trail run/walk at various Greater Lovell Land Trust reserves, [Lovell.gllt.org](http://Lovell.gllt.org) 207.925.1056

**Nomad Trail Race Series:** May - October, Thursday, 6:00pm Weekly 5-mile race on wooded trail at Shepard's Farm Preserve, with 2-mile loop for kids, Norway. [wflmaine.org](http://wflmaine.org)

**The Longest Day 5K:** June 21, 6:30pm 5K trail run at Libby Hill Forest, Gray [libbyhill.org](http://libbyhill.org)

**LEA Paddle Battle:** July 1, 8:00am Paddle Board and Kayak Races, Highland Lake, Bridgton [mainelakes.org](http://mainelakes.org) 207.647.8580

**Four on the Fourth:** July 4, 8:00am Four mile race through town, Bridgton Kids Fun Run/Walk July 3 at 4:30pm [fouronthefourth.com](http://fouronthefourth.com)

**Norway Triathlon:** July 8, 8:00am Swim, bike, run in this USAT-sanctioned sprint. [norwaytri.com](http://norwaytri.com) 207.739.2124

**Sebago Days 5K:** July 15, 8:00am Out and back on Route 11 with course closed to traffic. [sebagodays.com](http://sebagodays.com) 207.787.3732

**Tough Mountain Challenge:** July 22, 7:00am Challenging adventure obstacle 5K race, Sunday River Resort, Newry. [toughmountain.com](http://toughmountain.com) 800.543.2754

**Casco Days Country Run:** July 29, 9:30am Four-mile road race [cascodays.com](http://cascodays.com)

**Trek for the Trails:** month of September Hike, bike, skip, or drive all on your own time to support Loon Echo Land Trust, Bridgton [lelt.org/trek](http://lelt.org/trek) 207.647.4352

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## summer bookshelf

BOOK REVIEWS FROM  
THE OWNERS & STAFF OF  
BRIDGTON BOOKS

### JUSTIN'S LIST

David Grann has a gift for bringing history to life in his books, and his latest non-fiction history book *The Wager*, is no exception. The *Wager*, a British warship, left England in 1740 in search of a Spanish Galleon laden with gold and silver in hopes to plunder it on its way back from The Americas. After rounding the southern tip of Patagonia, with the crew already decimated from scurvy, the ship runs aground in stormy seas, leaving the survivors shipwrecked on a desolate island off of what is now Chile. Discipline and order break down, and there is mutiny in the air! Read this wild ride and summer favorite and find out what happens. Grann could write about paint drying and make it interesting, and in his account of the voyage, even the most mundane, day-to-day tasks and events are explained in fascinating detail.

Bostonian author Dennis Lehane knows his city well. His latest crime/mystery novel, *Small Mercies*, is set in "Southie" in the early '70s at the advent of federally-mandated school desegregation, otherwise known as forced busing. Mary Pat Fennessy is a tough, Irish-American woman from the projects, who has already lost a son to drugs, when her only teenage daughter disappears on the same night a black teen boy is killed in their neighborhood. Is there a connection? Mary Pat must tangle with the local mob as well as the police to get answers, and the more she learns, the more she realizes that "us versus them" is not as clear cut as she once believed. Lehane is to be commended for tackling such a difficult subject in an era of rampant racism and hate.

*The End of Drum Time* by Hanna Pylainen takes place in Northern Sweden near the Arctic Circle in the 1850s. This magnificent novel is about the clash of cultures between The Sami people and the Swedish settlers. The Sami have raised and herded reindeer for centuries, but the influx of white homesteaders fencing land and peddling liquor and religion threatens to destroy their culture and livelihood. In the middle of this, Willa, the fiery minister's daughter, becomes enamored with Sami herder Ivvar. A relationship between a Sami and a white settler is previously unheard of and strictly taboo. What will happen? The author constructs a powerful, intense tale,

and her knowledge of the Sami culture and way of life is incredible; that in itself makes this a wonderful read.

After binging on World War II novels, I have become much more selective when I pick one up. *The Postcard* by French writer Anne Berest, is outstanding literary fiction. It follows the Rabinovitch family, who left Russia soon after the Russian Revolution. The most memorable story is the one that lends the novel its title. In 2003, an unsigned postcard arrives at a French translator's house with nothing written except the names of four of her relatives, all of whom died in Auschwitz. Who would send something like that? And why now? Twenty years later, her daughter Anne determines to uncover the secret. A sweeping saga of the Rabinovitch family is told, from their flight from Russia, to World War II and its aftermath.

*Revolutionary Roads* by Bob Thompson is an entertaining romp through our war for independence. This witty, non-fiction work is unique because Thompson visits every battle site he writes about, providing colorful commentary and invaluable insights into what actually happened. The author interviews the local experts and gives you the inside scoop on who did what, all the while illustrating just how precarious our road to victory really was. Anyone who likes Bill Bryson or Sarah Vowell will enjoy this book.

I've been a huge Peter Heller fan ever since his first novel, *Dog Stars*, was published in 2012. *The Last Ranger*, due out

later this summer, is Heller at his best. Ren is a burned out ranger herding hordes of tourists in Yellowstone Park when his friend Hilly, a wolf biologist, is almost killed by an illegal bear trap. Hunters and trappers have always encroached on park boundaries, but this malicious act takes things to another level. Nothing, however, is black and white and Ren is a complex character whose moral conundrums are reminiscent of Jim Stegner in Heller's novel, *The Painter*.

### SUE'S SELECTIONS

Based on a customer recommendation I picked up a copy of *Shadow Divers* by Robert Kurson. It's a fascinating, true story about wreck and deep sea diving along with some unusual WWII history. In 1991, a pair of divers discovered a German U-boat sunk off the coast of New Jersey in a location where there were no recorded wrecks. This began what became a six-year quest to identify the unknown wreck; the final resting place of its crew. It's amazing to see how history was rewritten due to their efforts.

*Demon Copperhead*, by Barbara Kingsolver, is a powerful novel about love and loss. Initially, I didn't want to read it because I thought the content (drug addiction, foster care and poverty) would be too depressing, but being such a great fan of her novels I dove into this one and am so glad I did. *Demon Copperhead*, the main character, is a very independent, determined individual who was faced with many challenges during





his youth. It's a story of hope and survival.

If you're looking for an entertaining, feel-good read, grab a copy of *The Maid*, by Nita Prose. Molly is a very special maid at an upscale hotel who takes her job and cleanliness very seriously. When she discovers one of the frequent VIP guests, Charles Black, dead, a series of events occur that lead to her being suspected of murder. No! Not kind, honest Molly!

## PERRI'S PREFERENCES

*All of humanity's problems stem from man's inability to sit quietly in a room alone.* —Blaise Pascal

Global citizen, deep thinker, and extraordinary writer Pico Iyer sets out to discover the elusive place of hope, dreams, and peace in *The Half Known Life: In Search of Paradise*. The concept of “paradise” is very subjective and varies widely among individuals, cultures and eras. For some it might be a secret garden or a mist-shrouded lake, while others may find it within a temple complex or a “cloud of unknowing.” It could also lie right in front of you, unnoticed due to your inability to see it. In any case, it is unclear, undefinable, and perhaps ultimately unobtainable. Iyer has experienced life around the world and reported his findings in his writing, but his most meaningful explorations are those involving his own soul with “a keen sense of all that could never be fathomed.”

Patti Smith is possibly the coolest person on the planet. She is a cultural icon, poetic genius, and masterful artist, yet she never seems at all impressed by herself. She simply gets on with doing what she does, and she does that so very well: her music, drawing, and books, including *Just Kids*, *Year of the Monkey*, and now *A Book of Days*, which features 366 photographs taken with her beloved 250 Land Camera—one for each day of the year, plus February 29. In the evening, as the day is winding down, it's a special treat to open this book to the current date and see what image awaits: objects on the author's desk, portraits of historical characters, a landscape, a photograph of other photographs, or anything transformed by the grainy, muted tones of a Polaroid. Often these images provide fuel for interesting dreams.

*Kindred*, by Octavia E. Butler, relates the chilling and disturbing experiences of Dana, a young black woman who is inexplicably ripped from 1970s California and transported through time to the pre-Civil War South.



She discovers she has a mission but, although she is obviously an outsider, she is held in the talons of slavery and must deal with its inevitable horrors and injustices. Very unnerving, frightening, and thought provoking, this one will stick with you for awhile.

If I could produce a novel I would want to write like Julie Otsuka. Her spare, elegant prose is like an extended haiku of precise words and carefully constructed scenes leading to a gut-wrenching conclusion. Her latest book, *The Swimmers*, starts out slowly with a group of individuals who regularly swim in a public pool. All is well until a crack appears at the bottom of the pool, disrupting established routines. Things start to drain away into a vortex of confusion, fading memory, and the evaporation of a life. The book is beautiful yet heartbreaking, in line with her previous novels *Buddha in the Attic* and *When the Emperor was Divine*.

*This Other Eden*, by Paul Harding, is compelling, lyrical, and profoundly sad. Generations of the families that inhabit Apple Island, a poor but self-sustaining interracial community in midcoast Maine, have been living there for over a century, mostly undisturbed, but things begin to change in 1912. People on the mainland suddenly decide the island should be used for a different purpose and “progress” is forced upon its inhabitants. Inspired by the unconscionable acts committed on Malaga Island off the coast of Phippsburg, Maine, in the early 20th century, Harding presents a new perspective on this dark, tragic episode in Maine's history.

Reading Ly Tran's memoir, *House of Sticks*, is frustrating and confusing, much

like her family's experiences after leaving the lush landscape of Viet Nam and arriving in New York City during a blizzard. They immediately start struggling to survive—finding somewhere to live, trying to stay warm, making a living, and ensuring the children were educated. Working together as a family, they managed to eke out a living and progress, but past traumas loomed and created unnecessary obstacles and stumbling blocks. This ultimately optimistic story is a testament to the power of cultural traditions, the immigrant spirit, the love of family, and the importance of eye examinations.

In *The Flag, the Cross, and the Station Wagon*, award-winning author and activist Bill McKibben is (as the subtitle states) *a Graying American [who] Looks Back at His Suburban Boyhood and Wonders What the Hell Happened*. McKibben grew up in the “idyllic” suburbia of Lexington, Massachusetts, believing the United States was the best place on Earth and everyone lived as comfortably as his family. Over the years, his viewpoint has been challenged and this book explores how we (Americans) ended up with ongoing racism and inequality, an overblown religious right, and a growing environmental crisis. In an effort to offer some hope for the future, he calls on “people of a certain age” to own up and “open new chapters in the human story” in hopes of “redeeming what came before.”

If none of these recommendations spark your interest, try Howard Mansfield's lovely collection of writings about small-town life in Hancock, New Hampshire, *Summer over Autumn*.



## summer bookshelf

BOOK REVIEWS FROM  
THE OWNERS & STAFF OF  
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### PAM'S PICKS FOR KIDS & YOUNG ADULTS

#### *How Dinosaurs Went Extinct: A Safety Guide*

by Ame Dyckman

Ages 2+

Holy Dino-hilarious! So, how did dinosaurs become extinct? Kids and adults alike will laugh out loud at a family's visit to the museum where dad provides his interpretation of how misbehaving dinosaurs met their fate. Along with playful text and ginormous illustrations, kids will be teaching their parents how to phonetically pronounce twenty-three tongue-twister dinosaur names.

#### *The Hound from the Pound*

by Jessica Swaim

Ages 3+

Miss Mary-Lynn's house was clean and tidy but it was too doggone boring, so she took a trip to the local pound. Well-behaved dogs of all colors, shapes and sizes fought for her affection, but against the trainer's recommendation, Mary brought home the unruly basset hound, Blue.

Missing his friends, Blue lets out a howl that is heard from afar, and Mary's house quickly fills with all the pound dogs. Follow Mary and Blue through this playful story filled with rhyme, humor and a surprise ending. Dog lovers of all ages will pawsitively love this story!

#### *A Rover's Story*

by Jasmine Warga

Ages 9+

Beeps and boops resonate through NASA's lab as scientists meticulously assemble Resilience, a rover built to travel to Mars. His companion, Fly, a drone helicopter, will join Res on his trip to the red planet.

During assembly, Res unexpectedly starts experiencing human emotions that were not programmed and he is warned by other nearby robots to dismiss them because he is about to embark on a very dangerous mission that human feelings will complicate.

If you love *Wild Robot*, you will devour this book and find yourself cheering Res and Fly on as they find courage to carry out their mission, all while applauding the NASA scientists for the sacrifice they make for the future of space.



#### *Penny Draws a Best Friend*

by Sara Shepard

Reviewed by Kira Bowlby Age 10

Do you ever wonder why friendships are so complicated? Well, in this story Penny and her faithful dog companion Cosmo go on wild adventures around her school and at home. If you want something funny and silly with a mix of wild, this book is for you. Oh, and did I mention it is a little weird and suspicious too?

#### *Daybreak on Raven Island*

by Fleur Bradley

Ages 10+

Fear washes over Tori and Noah as they realize the only ferry, with their seventh grade class, just departed Raven Island. A third student named Marvin, who is determined to produce a horror film, has other plans.

Along with a ghost hunting crew, a mysterious caretaker, and a potential killer on the loose, the three misfit kids cautiously set out to uncover a killer and solve the mystery of Raven Island Prison's past, all while avoiding the aggressive ravens and a ghostly ghost.

A nod to the author for also weaving prison reform in America into his narrative.

#### *Belladonna*

by Adalyn Grace

Ages 15+

Wealth, deception, forbidden love and the Grim Reaper make this Gothic Romance a book you won't be able to put down.

Signa Farrow, a soon-to-be wealthy 19-year-old with an undiscovered gift, moves into her only living relatives' dysfunctional family estate. A patriarch mourns his deceased wife and her suspicious death, his daughter's mysterious illness is progressively declining, and his son is determined to repair the family's reputation at any cost.

Signa's bond with a restless spirit makes her determined to unravel the family's mysteries, but her undeniable attraction with a dark shadow tugs at her heart in ways she has never felt.

#### *Anatomy: A Love Story*

by Dana Schwartz

Ages 16+

Curious eyes focus on the deceased woman's body as the infamous Dr. Edward Straine meticulously opens her chest cavity with a razor sharp scalpel. Hazel looks on as adrenaline pulses through her body. After a young resurrection man named Jack helps her sneak into lectures and now into this dissection seminar at the Royal Edinburgh Anatomists Society, Hazel discovers how badly she yearns to become a surgeon, but ladies in Scotland are prohibited from practicing medicine and are groomed to marry into wealth, so Hazel has to craft a way to make her dream a reality.

#### *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow*

by Zoulfa Katouh

Ages 16+

Civil war rages in Syria as the Free Syrian Army fights with determination and heroism for their homeland. No place is safe, and nobody is immune. Salama, a pharmaceuticals student, is now upgraded to a doctor and surgeon as the need for medical staff grows. Desperate to stay alive and tormented by witnessing daily suffering and death, Salama's mental health declines as her imaginary friend, Khawf, constantly reminds her to flee with her pregnant sister-in-law and leave their beloved country behind. Documenting the atrocities is a young man who visits the hospital daily to upload videos of the suffering to YouTube. Together they show the world the Syrian's people's resilience and fight for freedom. This book is tragically beautiful.





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# What's in Your Cup?

BY MASHA YURKEVICH



It's part of an everyday routine: throw a tea bag in a cup, pour boiling water over it, let it steep, and enjoy. Some people miss this most important last step and just chug it down. How often do you stop to look into your cup and think about what's actually inside? That tea bag we throw in, what is it? If it's an Ayurvedic tea, it's a connection to nature and medicine. "Ayur" means life, and "veda" means science or knowledge. Put that together, and you've got a cup of knowledge of life. The roots of Ayurvedic medicine reach back thousands of years in India. Its goal is to cleanse the body and restore balance to body, mind, and spirit through a combination of diet, herbal medicines, exercise, meditation, breathing, physical therapy, and other methods—one of the most common of which is tea.

Sarah Richards is a tea maker and herbalist who has been making tea for herself, friends, and family for over 20 years. For the last 17 years, she has been custom blending and serving tea for customers at her shop on Munjoy Hill in Portland. Homegrown Herb and Tea is a homey little shop where you don't just come for a cup of delicious tea, but also for conversation and bits of wisdom, leaving feeling better than when you entered, warm on the inside as well as on the outside. Like it says on her chalkboard menu, "Warm ups and advice free."

All of her herbs she either grows or gets from other local organic farmers. Spices, like cinnamon, which does not grow in Maine, she sources from other places.

Richards is originally from New Sharon, Maine, but has lived in Portland since 1993.

She was a Spanish teacher for ten years before she made the decision to pull from her resources and open a tea shop. She started making tea from an encyclopedia where she learned a lot about it—how it works, its science, and how to blend different tastes to create new ones.

"Yes, I learned to make tea by making tea," said Richards.

As with most people, her shop grew out of passion and love for what she does.

"I really enjoyed making tea, did it for myself, friends and family, and then decided to open a shop as a place that I myself would like to go to," said Richards. "My craft is making tea, and that comes with a strong focus in Ayurvedic medicine."

And since 2006, that is exactly what she has been doing. Each tea is carefully and thoughtfully blended, combining only the best and most compatible ingredients. Her tea bags are handmade right in front of you, each element delicately blended with the

other, mixed to perfection, and steeped to deliciousness. Once the steaming cup is in your hands and the heavenly aroma dances up to your nose, it is irresistible.

The evolution of her menu comes from people walking in and asking for different combinations of teas and then reflecting on how it makes them feel and how they like it. Her menu changes with the seasons or as a new and wonderful blend is discovered.

"I look at my shop as a lifestyle as much as it is a vocation. When I decided to open, I knew that I would have to be here a lot of the time, so I made a space that I enjoy being in all the time. I enjoy talking to people and hearing their stories and offering wisdom if I can. If I feel comfortable here, then so do others. If you feel comfortable then you're going to share, and if you're going to share, you're going to get advice. Now put that all on top of a nice cup of tea and you've got yourself a home run."

Walking into the little tea shop is like taking a break from the outside world of chaos, noise, and hurry. It is the best definition of the difference between a house—a location made of four walls and a roof—and a home—a place where the soul can relax and feel welcome. As soon as you step through the threshold of her shop, you are flooded with the scent of fresh herbs, a feeling of peace enhanced by interesting decor that brings the whole positive vibe of the place together. For the moment, you forget about the world beyond the four walls of the sweet little shop. It feels like you are at home.

"My decorations are a combination of things that I have acquired throughout my life and that people have given me," said Richards.

From the guitar and the live plants to the lights and shelves, everything has its place. Along one of her walls is a beloved bench from the front porch of a good friend who sold her house. There was no room for the bench in her new home, so she passed it along to Richards and it has found its perfect spot in her shop.

Homegrown Herb and Tea didn't happen overnight. Instead, it came with many sacrifices and difficult days, when things just didn't go as planned.

"There are ebbs and flows in business, as well as within us and our passions and interests," said Richards. "You always







have to be feeling it out through the tough times, take advantage of good times, and harmonize with people in the community. Everything is an opportunity, you just have to take it. It is important to foster diversity within yourself and do what makes you happy and fulfilled. There is never a loss as long as you love what you are doing.”

When asked about what her favorite tea blend is, she responds with a chuckle.

“Asking what my favorite blend is, is like asking who my favorite musician is; it varies and changes depending on the energy and the moment. It depends what you need at that moment: a throat soothing blend, a stress relieving combination, a mood boosting, energy uplifting mixture.”

She does allow that one of her current favorite blends is her Equinox slimmer—a mood lifting blend she recently created.

“I’m still a teacher in many ways, I’m just not a classroom teacher,” said Richards. “Instead of teaching students Spanish, I teach people how to feel better.”

For Richards, tea is a passion, a connection, a sense of mother nature, healing, and

much, much more. Tea leads you down this very reflective path of balancing yourself, both inside and out.

“All of that, has always been for me to kind of connect with my body and reflect, enjoy life, enjoy the taste of life. Tea is really just good tasting medicine. Instead of stuffing your body with antibiotics, one of the best things that you can do is restore balance in your body. The road to feeling better again is listening to your body.

We are nature. If we understand nature and recognize the wellness of it, we see that it is constantly bringing itself back into balance. Everything from the water cycle to the food chain is an example to us of how nature maintains a certain equilibrium. When you know yourself and how to bring yourself to feel well, that’s the most important thing in the world. I don’t think you can have wellness without being connected to nature—it’s like saying that the body and the mind are not connected. You cannot put yourself in an artificial box with artificial light and artificial nature and expect yourself to be well, you’d go insane,” said Richards.

So the next time you toss that teabag into your cup, prior to drowning it in boiling water, take a minute to sit down and reflect on how balanced you are, both inside and out, and connect yourself with nature as it will connect itself with you. Let it fill you with its constant reminder to bring life into balance, to make it the best it can be and to function at its optimal level. ☀

*Masha (Maria) Yurkevich is a 2023 graduate of Windham High School with a passion for journalism. She hopes you have enjoyed her article and invites you to visit [homegrownherbandtea.com](http://homegrownherbandtea.com) for more information and inspiration, or to order online.*



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# Life Lessons Learned from Wild Mushrooms

BY LORRAINE GLOWCZACK

While ago, I participated in a mushroom walk along the paths of the Black Brook Preserve in Windham. I joined in on this adventure, not because I am a forager of wild foods (although my plan is to explore the possibility this summer) or a seeker of their “illuminating” effects, but because I enjoy photographing the diverse arrays of fungi that pop up spontaneously from the wet forest floor.

While I did manage to capture a few unrefined snapshots during that two-hour spore tour, I was caught off guard to discover that mushrooms offer more than a photo op, a culinary feast, or a possible spiritual journey toward enlightenment.

During that early Saturday morning walk, I discovered that mushrooms provide vital contributions to forest ecology—both above and below the Earth’s surface. The more I learned, the more I thought how uncannily the life of a fungus emulates the life of a human, and more specifically the socially accepted perception of nature as feminine. (Please note the feminine reference is symbolic and not necessarily a scientific fact).

It made me wonder—what feminine wisdom can be gained from the world of mushrooms? What transformative power can their biological intelligence contribute to humanity, with the many social and environmental challenges it currently faces?

Mycologist and fermentation researcher David Andrew Quist, from Oslo, Norway, shares some of his viewpoints on the subject in a Ted.com presentation. In his 15-minute lec-

ture, Quist “explores how fungi’s innate biological intelligence contributes to their ability to collaborate, showing us new ways to think about complex problems—and may hold the secret to humanity’s survival on Earth.”

As Quist illustrates the different ways spores create sustainable and symbiotic relationships that could very well save the Earth, I find myself recognizing these qualities of biological intelligence, collaboration and communication as feminine traits.

Many fungi and their relationships to everyday flora and fauna have a special interaction in which they feed one another. They provide a necessary balance that can only be achieved by working together. One cannot survive without the other. Most of these symbiotic relationships work quietly but steadfastly underground through a mycorrhizal network.

Louis Giller, a Maine mycologist and Event and Customer Service Coordinator for North Spore based in Portland explains that this network consists of tiny threads of root-like structures, known as mycelium.

“Mycelia connect individual plants to transfer water, nitrogen, carbon, and other important minerals. Ninety percent of the plants on Earth have these mycorrhizal fungal relationships inside and outside of the root systems.”

Giller goes on to explain that the forest mushrooms are the fruit of the mycelial network, and it is through this network that trees and other plants can communicate by electrical and chemical impulses.

“In this underground collaborative network, mushrooms are facilitating and creating a better environment for plant growth through a proficient and sophisticated system of trading nutrients, water, etc., and decision-making skills.”

It made me wonder if there’s a way we can harness mushroom wisdom by taking collective action to create change – not only to survive as a human species but to live in harmony with each other and the Earth? Can the traits we associate with the feminine in the human species facilitate a collective mycelial network where we can appreciate and honor the symbiotic relationships needed for our survival?

There are multiple articles, self-help books and scientific studies about effective communication - many of which support the opinion that women naturally do it better. Whether or not effective communication can be accurately and scientifically labeled as feminine is subjective. But what is clear to me is what the mycelial network can teach us all about connection through respectful and beneficial communication to make us better humans.

“Many problems in the world, truly—very many come from people not knowing or understanding each other’s needs,” says Robert Wolfe, a facilitator at the Amsterdam School of Creative Leadership as interviewed by the Amani Institute. “Having good communication skills can help you uncover those needs, your own and those of others. This will enhance understanding and with that—empathy. It will also help us set strategies that are more effective in creating actual change.”

Considering both Wolf’s perspective on human connection and Quist’s assessment on mushroom relationships, it’s quite possible that humans can apply the innate biological intelligence of the mycelial network to solve the considerable and complex problems of the world and, in doing so, ensure the Earth’s and our own survival. We can do this by becoming aware of our contributions to the whole, while making sure we do our individual best to give birth to “nutrients” of positive and innovative transformation.

Of course there is no magic mushroom to accomplish this, but the following excerpt from the National Forest Foundation may spark your own contribution to the human version of the mycelial network.

“In healthy forests, each tree is connected to others via this mycelial network, enabling trees to share water and nutrients. For sap-





*mycorrhizal network*

lings growing in particularly shady areas, there is not enough sunlight reaching their leaves to perform adequate photosynthesis. For survival, the sapling relies on nutrients and sugar from older, taller trees sent through the mycorrhizal network. A study on Douglas-fir trees at England's University of Reading, indicates that trees recognize the root tips of their relatives and favor them when sending carbon and nutrients through the fungal network."

One key take away from this healthy


forest example is listening. Trees are "listening" to their sapling counterparts. In human terms, this is often referred to as active, not passive, listening. The skill of active listening requires that you keep your own thoughts to yourself while paying attention to others as they speak about issues they deem important. We have all heard the saying, "seek to understand, not to be understood." What others say may not be valuable to you or influence your own life journey, but it's important to the other

person to share their thoughts - so don't interrupt them with your "amazing" stories (which, after all, may be boring to them). Remember, someone once said these profound words, "If someone is worth speaking to, then they're worth listening to."

Perhaps one life lesson to healing the current social challenges and wounds can begin with simple steps—a beginner's wisdom, so to speak, that can sprout collective and symbiotic action, sparking positive change. Much like the quiet underground connections of mycorrhizal fungal relationships, humans can work together to provide the balance needed that can be achieved—at least in one way—through effective communication and cooperative relationships.

Feminine or not, mushroom wisdom can provide guidance to positive and life-changing reciprocal human relationships. If we 'listen' closely enough to their example, we might gain enough wisdom to address and quite possibly change the direction of the many social and environmental challenges we face today. ✨

*Lorraine Glowczak, ELO Coordinator at Windham High School, is a published author who aspires to write the next "Great American Novel."*




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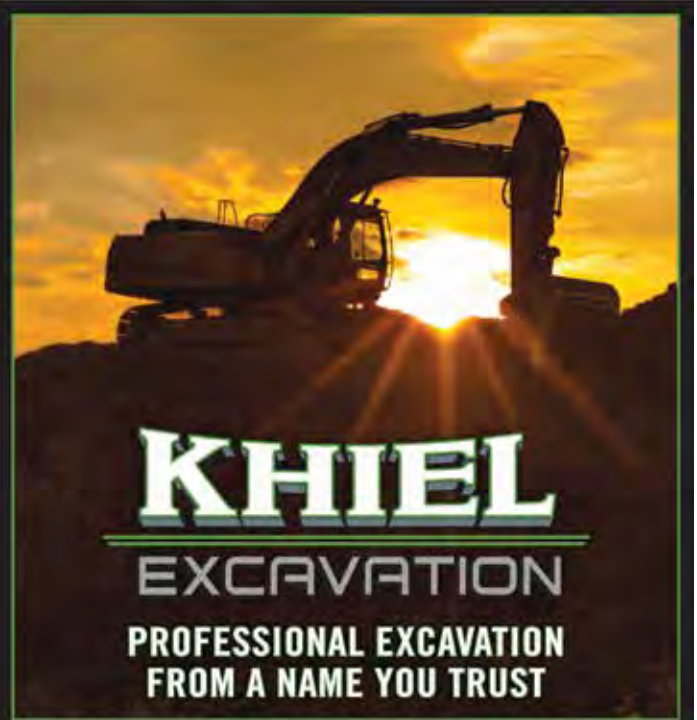


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Whether you fish, swim, or boat, your lake dock is the foundation of your waterfront activities. This year, take your waterfront experience to the next level—with a ShoreMaster dock system from Hammond Lumber Company. ShoreMaster's Infinity Dock System features superior modern craftsmanship and an exclusive assembly system to give you exceptional stability and a dock system that will grow and adjust with you, so you can start with one set-up and make changes and additions as needed.

Your Hammond sales representative will walk you through ShoreMaster's many options and accessories and match you with the right equipment for your waterfront. ShoreMaster aluminum dock systems are lightweight, durable, and easy to install yourself. But if you prefer, Hammond Lumber Company will set you up with an experienced local installer and deliver your new ShoreMaster dock system statewide.

Enjoy life on the water to the fullest, with a ShoreMaster dock system from Hammond Lumber Company.

# Hammond Lumber Company

**22 LOCATIONS ACROSS MAINE  
& NEW HAMPSHIRE**

AUBURN • BANGOR • BAR HARBOR • BELFAST • BELGRADE • BLUE HILL  
BOOTHBAY HARBOR • BRUNSWICK • BUCKSPORT • CALAIS • CAMDEN  
CHERRYFIELD • DAMARISCOTTA • ELLSWORTH • FAIRFIELD  
FARMINGTON • GREENVILLE • MACHIAS • PORTLAND  
ROCHESTER (NH) • ROCKLAND • SKOWHEGAN



2021 • 2022

**ProSales**  
DEALER OF THE YEAR